



ALIYA-BY-ALIYA SEDRA SUMMARY

RABBI REUVEN TRADBURKS
RCA ISRAEL REGION

PARSHAT TETZAVEH

The commandments concerning the special garments of the Kohen Gadol as well as the garments for the regular Kohanim are given. The commands for the 7-day inauguration of the Kohanim and the altar are given. The commands of the daily offering and the altar for incense are given.

This parsha introduces the *activity* of the Mishkan. There are 2 parts to the Mishkan: the building. And the people.

Last week was the building. A building is static. The gold covered walls don't move. The Menorah is stationary.

The *activity* in the Mishkan will be done by the Kohanim. The Kohanim ambulate.

Our parsha deals with the people. How the Kohanim are to dress and how they are to be inaugurated.

In the verses describing the kohen's garments I will indicate in bold which are for the kohen Gadol and which are for the rest of the kohanim.



1ST ALIYA (EXODUS 27:20-28:12)

The Menorah shall be lit every evening. Take Aharon and his sons to serve Me. Make them holy garments for honor and glory. **Kohen Gadol, Garment 1:** Make the **Efod**. It is woven of techelet, purple and red. It is a skirt with shoulder straps. An ornate jewel with the names of 6 tribes is fastened to each of the shoulder straps. Aharon carries the names of the Jewish people as a remembrance before G-d.

There are 2 different sets of garments for the kohanim. The regular kohanim wear 4

white linen garments. The kohen gadol wears these 4 white linen garments as well as an additional 4 fancy coloured and gold garments over the white ones.

The kohen gadol's garments are introduced first. These are regal garments. The colors are the same colors as the beautiful curtains of the Mishkan. The colors remain as colors of pomp and ceremony to this day: gold, red, purple, techelet blue. The kohen gadol is festooned in the same royal colors as the Mishkan.

But wait, isn't that, well, a bit presumptuous? The Mishkan is the dwelling in this world of the Divine. The King of Kings. His home needs to be regal, the colors of nobility, palatial.

But then to dress the kohen gadol in those same colors? A tad presumptuous is it not.

However, this is not *our* idea. This is how we are *commanded*. You are *commanded* to adorn the kohen gadol to appear majestic, royal, noble.

The command to dress regally conveys to us how G-d views us. Obviously in decorating G-d's Home we would use regal colors. But dressing our representative, the kohen gadol in those same regal colors conveys a simple notion. That we are royalty. The majesty of the kohen gadol represents the regal station of the Jewish people.



2ND ALIYA (28:13-30)

Kohen Gadol, Garment 2: Make the **Choshen Mishpat**. Four rows of 3 different precious jewels, each with a name of a tribe of Israel, mounted upon a colored woven background. Fasten this breastplate with gold chains to the shoulder straps

of the Eford and to the skirt. Aharon will bear the names of the Jewish people on his heart when he enters the Holy place. As a constant remembrance before G-d. And place in this breastplate the Urim and Tumim.

The names of the 12 tribes are inscribed twice. The first, 6 names on one jewel, 6 on another, mounted on the shoulder straps of the Eford, the apron-like garment. And second, the names are inscribed individually on each stone of the breastplate.

The kohen gadol carries the names of the tribes of the Jewish people on his body, representing the entire Jewish people, approaching G-d. Twice.

And the Torah tells us why: as a remembrance of the Jewish people before G-d.

In fact, all 4 of the kohen gadol's garments perform a function, of remembrance or presence or gaining favor.

That is a remarkable idea. The kohen gadol does not *perform* the service in the Mishkan, except for Yom Kippur. On a regular day he is expected to be *present* in the Mishkan. And by simply wearing these clothes he is bringing a remembrance of the Jewish people before G-d.

This expresses a profound philosophy of Judaism. The kohen gadol is to linger in G-d's Home. In the Mishkan. Representing us. Or expressed more figuratively: our lives are represented by his, the kohen gadol's, a life of lingering in the House of G-d. We do not merely walk on this earth of ours. Rather we linger in His Home.

On a daily basis we light the Menorah, a symbol of the Divine Presence, the Light. And the incense, the smoke of His Presence, like on Sinai.

And our representative, the kohen gadol, lingers in His Presence, carrying our names. The Jewish People while living on this earth

linger in His Home.



3RD ALIYA (28:31-43)

Kohen Gadol, Garment 3: Make the *Me'il*, a completely techelet colored robe with an opening for the head. At the bottom hem, place pomegranates of colored woven wool and golden bells in an alternating pattern. Aharon's entrance and exit before G-d will hence be heard. **Kohen Gadol, Garment 4:** Make the *Tzitz*, a golden headplate with Holy to G-d engraved on it. Fasten it to the turban so it rests on the forehead. Through this, Aharon will bear the sins committed through holy service and through it the Jewish people gain favour before G-d. **All Kohanim, 4 garments:** The kohen gadol and all kohanim during service wear 4 garments. 3 of these are white linen: 1. **pants**, 2. robe (**ketonet**) and 3. **turban** for the head. The 4th is a **belt** of colored woven wool. The kohanim wear these garments during service; the Kohen Gadol wears only these 4 when he enters the Holy of Holies. He wears these 4 and the 4 fancy gold and coloured garments, a total of 8, during the rest of the year.

The regular kohanim wear white linen garments. This is in stark contrast to the kohen gadol. He is all decked out; they are noticeably simply attired.

The vast majority of the service in the Mishkan is done by the regular kohanim. They

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manage the individual aspirations or disappointments of man, man's offerings.

In that, the offerings we bring as expressions of aspiration or disappointment, we approach G-d with simplicity, humility. Represented by the simplicity of the white garments of the kohen, helping us with our service.

The one individual kohen gadol represents not the individual but the corporate entity of the Jewish people. Oh, that is majestic. Humility of the individual man, against the background of majesty of our people.



4TH ALIYA (29:1-18)

The inauguration of the Kohanim: To sanctify the kohanim take offerings of all the sorts that will be offered in the Mikdash. Dress Aharon in his special garments. Anoint him with oil. Dress the kohanim in their special garments. Bring the various different offerings on the altar – for a pleasing aroma before G-d.

The instructions for the inauguration of the kohanim appear here, while the actual inauguration appears in Parshat Tzav.

**In loving memory of our beloved
Mother, Grandmother,
Great-grandmother
and great-great-grandmother
“Savta Sababa”**

Helen Maisel a”h

מרת חיינה בת דובער ע”ה
on her second Yahrtzeit
She is missed by all of us!!

**May the Torah learned from
this Torah Tidbits be in her merit**

*The Maisel, Bodenheim
and Gottlieb Families
Efrat, Bet Shemesh
and Kiryat Sefer*



5TH ALIYA (29:19-37)

Aharon and the kohanim are inaugurated through the offering of a ram, with blood of the offering placed upon them and upon their garments. The offerings of the inauguration are brought. A future kohen gadol, who will replace Aharon, will wear these special garments for 7 days as their inauguration. They too will repeat this ram offering. Aharon and his sons shall repeat this ceremony every day for 7 days. The altar too is to be inaugurated for 7 days.

Aharon and the kohanim are to be inaugurated in a 7-day ceremony of offerings. That is a long and elaborate inauguration.

It may be such to impress upon the kohanim that while they have a unique position, including gifts and benefits due to their holy work, they are servants of G-d, not lords over people.

Privilege takes a quick path to the head bringing haughtiness and a sense of entitlement. The kohanim, as all public servants, need to be vigilant to remember that they are servers, not served. They serve G-d and the people, not the other way around. Hence, they need a heavy, long inauguration of serving G-d to realize their position as servants of Him and not lords over people.



6TH ALIYA (29:38-46)

2 offerings are to be brought as a daily offering, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. A sheep, with flour and oil, and with wine. It is brought in the Ohel Moed, the place where I meet with the Jewish people. I have sanctified this place, as well as the kohanim. I will dwell amongst the Jewish people and be their G-d. And they will know that I am G-d who took them out of Egypt to dwell amongst them.

The Mishkan representing G-d's Presence invites the Jewish people to approach G-d, to

accept His invitation. We are the active ones in the Mishkan, He the static. Having introduced *who* will make this approach, we now are told *how* and *when* to make this approach.



7TH ALIYA (30:1-10)

Make an incense altar of wood overlaid with gold, 1 square cubit.

Place it in front of the curtain behind which is the Aron, the place upon which I will meet with you. Offer incense twice a day, at the time of the Menorah cleaning in the morning and Menorah lighting in the evening. It is solely for the prescribed incense, not for offerings of flour or wine.

The incense altar is totally out of place. We had all the instructions of the vessels of the Mishkan last week: Aron, Menorah, Table, altar for offerings. What is unique about incense that its altar comes after all the other instructions?

In this I speculate. Incense produces smoke. At Mt. Sinai, when G-d descends to speak to man, His Presence is represented by a thick cloud of smoke. Throughout the rest of the Torah, when His Presence is indicated, it is with a cloud.

Perhaps that is the role of the incense; to produce a cloud of smoke. To indicate His Presence. And it comes at the end of this whole process because that is the culmination. The Mishkan is to be a place for His Presence. The culmination of the Mishkan is His Presence. And so, the final command is to burn incense, to produce a cloud, indicative of His Presence. ■

Maftir Parshat Zachor, Devarim 25:17-19

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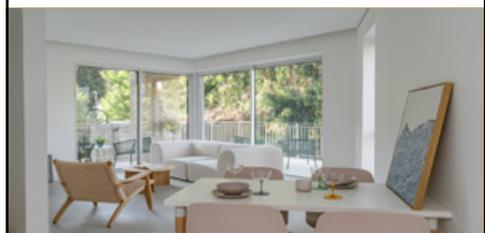
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