



Parasha Tetzaveh

February 24, 2024

Torah: Exodus 27:20-30:10

Haftarah: Ezekiel 43:10-27

Ketuvim Shlichim: Hebrews 13:10-17

Shabbat shalom Mishpacha! Parasha Tetzaveh is the second *parasha* about building the Tabernacle. It begins with providing oil for the *Menorah* and also deals with Aaron's High Priestly garments and his and his son's ordination. It begins: 20 "Also you are to command Bnei-Yisrael, that they are to bring to you pure olive oil beaten for the light, to cause a lamp to burn continually. 21 In the Tent of Meeting, outside the curtain which is before the Testimony, Aaron and his sons will set it in order, to burn from evening to morning before Adonai. It will be a statute forever throughout their generations, on behalf of Bnei-Yisrael" (Exodus 27:20-21 TLV). The words "burn continually" in verse 20 are translated from *ner tamid*. *Ner*, נֵר, means lamp and *tamid*, תָּמִיד, means continuity or continually. As long as the Tabernacle and Temple stood, the *kohanim* kept the *Menorah* lighted continually. A single flame called the *ner tamid* has also been a fixture in synagogues for thousands of years. Called the "eternal flame" or "eternal light" and hanging above and before the *Aron Kodesh*, the Holy Ark, it has several different meanings. For some, it represents the pillar of fire which guided Israel through the wilderness. For others, it represents the *Menorah* which stood in the Tabernacle and the Temple. It represents that for us as well, but more specifically it represents the western-most light on the Temple *menorah*, the one closest to the Holy of Holies, for us, a reminder of Messiah Yeshua, the eternal light of the world. While we don't have the Temple *menorah* to keep lighted today, we obey ADONAI's command to keep a *ner tamid*, an eternal flame lighted before Him. The *ner tamid* hanging before our *Aron Kodesh* is not just a decoration, but has spiritual significance. Light became a very significant symbol throughout the early time of the *Torah* and the Prophets and particularly with regard to Yeshua. The oil for the *Menorah* is another whole subject, one which we will deal with later.

We know that the Tabernacle built by Moses was a replica of the heavenly Tabernacle (Hebrews 8:5), but there is no specific information about the *Menorah* in Scripture other than how to construct it. But, what we do know leads us to believe that there is a *Menorah* in the heavenly Tabernacle, the original one, after which the earthly one was patterned. After first describing the Ark and the Table for the Bread of the Presence, the last thing described was the *Menorah*. And, then ADONAI said: 40 "See that you make them according to their pattern being shown to you on the mountain." Exodus 25:40 TLV).

Going back to last *parasha*, we read this about the *Menorah*: 31 "You are to make a *menorah* of pure gold, by hammered work. Its base, stem, cups, bulbs and flowers are to be one piece." (Exodus 25:31 TLV). People wonder how in that early time, that a *Menorah* so intricately constructed as to have cups, bulbs and flowers, could be made to be one piece. I can tell you how it was done from experience. The verse says that it was to be a hammered work. Pure 24 carat gold is soft and small pieces can be hammered onto and attached to the larger piece. I can tell you this because of my dental school training. We were taught how to create what was called a "gold-foil restoration" in a tooth. First the decay was removed

and then the preparation in the tooth was shaped to receive the gold. The gold was in very thin sheets of 24 carats. Small pieces of gold sheets were hammered into the preparation in the tooth by placing a flat-ended instrument on the gold and then tapping it with a small hammer, continuing to build it up layer by layer. In that regard, a gold-foil dental restoration was a hammered work just like the *Menorah*. They went out of fashion not too long after I graduated from dental school 50 years ago because of newer, modern materials and the increasing cost of gold. But, we can understand how *Bezalel* (Exodus 31:2; 38:22) would have constructed the *Menorah* of hammered gold.

The *Menorah* produces light so that the priests would be able to see within the Holy Place where it was located. Light is also used as a metaphor for spiritual light. The psalmist wrote: 105 *“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path”* (Psalm 119:105 TLV). The key words in this verse are word, (*devar*) דְּבַר, lamp, (*ner*) נֵר, and “light,” אֹר (ohr). The scroll of the *Torah* is the *ner*, the lamp, which contains the written *devar*, the Word, which shines forth the *ohr*, the spiritual light, light which we need to walk, to *halakh*, without stumbling. It is from *halakh* that we get *halakha*, how we are to walk guided by the *mitzvot*, ADONAI’s commands which direct our spiritual path. We take this literally, understanding that ADONAI’s commands which can be obeyed today are His directions for us which keep us on the path which He has laid out for us. It’s not an option. It is very real spiritual direction from ADONAI coming through Yeshua who said that “not one command would pass away until heaven and earth pass away.” (Matthew 5:18).

ADONAI commanded in Exodus that the *Menorah* was to give off light continuously. We have seen in Psalm 119 that *Torah* is a lamp continuously giving light. Solomon concurred: 23 *For the mitzvah is a lamp, Torah a light, and corrective discipline the way of life...* (Proverbs 6:23 TLV). The *mitzvah*, the commandment, is a *ner*, a lamp and *Torah*, teaching and instruction, is an *ohr*, the light for the way of life and corrective discipline. This is Hebraic doubling, saying the same thing in two different ways. Commandment is a lamp and Law is a light both mean the same thing and show that ADONAI’s teaching and instruction containing laws guides our lives and provides both correction and also discipline.

Yeshua said; 8 *“I am the light of the world. The one who follows Me will no longer walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”* (John 8:12b TLV). The Greek word for light is *phos*, the word from which we get phosphorescent, the equivalent of the Hebrew *ohr*. As we determined in Psalm 119:105, the scroll of the *Torah* is the *ner*, the lamp, which contains the written *devar*, the Word, which shines forth the *ohr*, the spiritual light. According to John 1:1, Yeshua is the Word, *logos*, the equivalent of Hebrew *devar*, which according to Solomon, shines forth the spiritual light. If we follow Yeshua’s light, we will also follow ADONAI’s teaching and instruction which causes us to have “the light of life,” a metaphor with several possible meanings. It could be a reference to eternal life, but also that our lives are light. We reflect the light of the one who gives us light through our obedience as lights to the world.

Yeshua’s words lead us further: 14 *“You are the light of the world. ... 15 Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a basket. Instead, they put it on a lampstand so it gives light to all in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before men so they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven”* (Matthew 5:14a; 15-16-16 TLV). Who is the light of the world? We are, and we are not to hide our light. We are to be reflected light, the light from our Messiah just as the moon reflects light from the sun. As we saw in Psalm 119:105, the written *devar*, the Word, shines forth the *ohr*, the spiritual light. The light is *mitzvot*,

commandments, which guide us in our walk. Our obedience to *Torah* leads us to good works which men see and because they see our good works, they glorify ADONAI who is in heaven.

Yeshua also said: 13 *“You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt should lose its flavor, how shall it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men”* (Matthew 5:13 TLV). This reminds us of ADONAI’s covenant of salt which is pictured throughout *Torah*. Salt is symbolic of endurance, preservation, and freedom from corruption, which is also a picture of our Creator Himself. We see this covenant in the salting of the Tabernacle sacrifices which were to perpetually remind the Israelites of their covenant responsibility to ADONAI. 13 *“Also you are to season with salt every sacrifice of your grain offering. You are never to allow the salt of the covenant of your God to be lacking from your grain offering. With all your sacrifices you must offer salt”* (Leviticus 2:13 TLV). Even the incense used in the Holy Place of the Tabernacle was to include salt. 34 *Then Adonai said to Moses, “Take the sweet spices—stacte, onycha and galbanum. The spices and pure frankincense are to be in equal measures. 35 Make a fragrant mixture from them, a blend like the work of the perfumer, seasoned with salt, pure and holy”* (Exodus 30:34-35 TLV). To the Israelites, salt represented purification and was symbolic of unending friendship, honesty, and loyalty. When Jereboam rebelled against King David, Abijah said to Jereboam and his men: 5 *“Don’t you know that Adonai, God of Israel, has given kingship over Israel to David forever—to him and his sons by a covenant of salt”* (2Chronicles 13:5 TLV)? A covenant of salt is an everlasting covenant. David’s kingship is a permanent kingship, preserved by a covenant of salt for the coming anointing of Yeshua, Son of David.

How does salt apply to us today? Yeshua said: *“You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt should lose its flavor, how shall it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men”* (Matthew 5:13 TLV). The symbolism of salt used by Yeshua teaches us that we cannot take our calling to follow Him lightly. As His *talmidim* we are to be the ‘salt of the earth’, but if we lose the characteristics of salt, there is nothing that can be done about it. There is no middle ground. Salt cannot be “slightly salty.” Something that appears to be salt, but lacks the nature of salt is useless. It is not good for anything. If we claim to be a follower of Yeshua, but lack His nature in our lives, we are good for nothing. In that case, we are His disciples in name only and our covenant of salt is a sham.

But, the *Menorah* still has a specific use, even though there is no Temple. According to Yeshua, the *Menorah* also represents congregations. In the book of Revelation, *Yochanan*, John, had a vision, a vision which in part, was to be a critique of the actions of Yeshua’s followers and how they followed ADONAI’s commands. In this vision Yeshua spoke to the seven congregations in Asia. It seems that these congregations are meant to be representative of congregations today. Their examples of good and bad conduct can show what Yeshua would say to congregations in each passing generation throughout history. In his vision John saw Yeshua standing in the midst of seven golden lamp-stands.

And then, Yeshua explained the mystery of these symbols. He told John that the seven stars were the seven angels of the seven congregations and the seven lamp-stands were the seven congregations. Who are these seven angels? This is important and needs an explanation. Many assume that they are heavenly angels, but they are most likely not ADONAI’s angels. That is because, as His created beings serving His purposes, they would not have failed in their mission. Heavenly angels would not have had to be corrected by Yeshua. The other explanation, and the most likely possibility, is that these angels were and

are men who are responsible for the individual congregations. The Greek word used is “*aggelos*,” meaning angel or messenger. This word was used to translate Yeshua’s quotation of Malachi 3:1 referring to Yochanan the Immerser: 27 “*This is the one about whom it is written, ‘Behold, I send My messenger before You, who will prepare Your way before You’.*” (Luke 7:27). The Greek word in verse 27 is *aggelos*, but in context is translated “messenger.” The *aggelos* in Revelation 1 is the messenger, the agent of the congregation, the congregational leader anointed by Yeshua. Each was responsible to Yeshua for how their congregation was serving ADONAI, but they were not equally successful. We will look at three of them.

Yeshua began by praising the leader of the congregation at Ephesus. 2 “*I know all about your deeds and your toil and your patient endurance, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. You have tested those who call themselves emissaries and are not, and have found them to be liars. 3 You have perseverance and have endured for My name’s sake, and you have not grown weary.*” (Revelation 2:2-3 TLV). According to what Yeshua said, we are to test those who present themselves to us as emissaries, apostles, and not just accept those who seek to minister to us in Yeshua's name. And we are to suffer for His sake without growing weary. We have not yet suffered for Him, but pray that if we do, we will do it without growing weary and falling away. And then Yeshua said this: 4 “*But this I have against you, that you have forsaken your first love. 5 Remember then from where you have fallen. Repent and do the deeds you did at first.*” (Revelation 2:4-5a TLV). What is the first love which they lost? How would you answer this question from Yeshua? 17 ..., “*Simon, son of John, do you love Me?*” (John 21:17b TLV). If He asked you, what would you say? Isn’t the love which Yeshua expects a fervent love, a love with all of the heart, mind and strength? All acceptable works flow from this type of love. When the majority of believers in a congregation have that fervent love, it is very evident. Yeshua continued speaking to the congregational leader of Ephesus: 5 ..*If not, I will come to you and remove your menorah from its place—unless you repent.*” (Revelation 2:5b TLV). We read Hebrews 13:17 in our *Torah* Service today. The writer of Hebrews states that leaders have responsibility for their flock and must give an account. If that kind of fervent love is not evident in our congregation, Yeshua will take away our *menorah*. If His spiritual *menorah* is removed from us, the light and power of our congregation's witness through the *Ruach HaKodesh* is removed. We would be a synagogue without ADONAI’s Spirit; a dead congregation. I don't believe that applies to us, but these verses are a wake-up call to all congregations and individuals, especially during this time of decline in Yeshua’s world-wide body.

The leader of the congregation at Philadelphia is given high praise by Yeshua because the congregation that he leads is fully obeying Yeshua's message and is persevering. 8 “*I know your deeds. Behold, I have set before you an open door that no one is able to shut—because you have little power, but you have kept My word and have not denied My name.*” (Revelation 3:8 TLV). “You have kept My word” is the message that *Torah* has been written on our hearts, that it has not passed away, and will not pass away until heaven and earth pass away? It is this, but also much more, that of loving ADONAI and our neighbor. Especially important for us are these words from Yeshua: 10 “*Because you have kept My word about patient endurance, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is coming upon the whole world to test those who dwell on the earth.*” (Revelation 3:10 TLV). According to Yeshua, the people who fit this description are overcomers who will be kept from the time of trial which is to come upon the whole earth. There is a way to escape the coming tribulation and this is it. Philadelphia is representative of all the overcoming believers in Messiah's body, not just those in a specific congregation. Every person who is a part of our congregation

should be an overcomer, holding to the truth of Messiah Yeshua and resisting false doctrines which seek to creep into all of the Messianic bodies.

The last congregational leader that Yeshua spoke to was the leader of Laodicea. 15 *“I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. Oh, that you were either cold or hot! 16 So because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I am about to spew you out of My mouth.”* (Revelation 3:15-16 TLV). ADONAI hates the condition of being lukewarm, a condition which causes people to have a lack of perception of their true spiritual condition. Because in Laodicea they either had wealth or a perception of wealth, they felt that they had reached a level where they needed nothing. They were guilty of spiritual pride, but in actuality had nothing spiritual about which to be proud. We would rather be described as “on fire.” If we are on fire for Yeshua, we will manifest the physical fruit along with the spiritual fruit.

In addition to the evaluations which Yeshua gave for each of the Messianic communities, He also gave to each a specific promise if they would respond properly to His message, thereby bringing the burden back to the individual level. Although congregational leaders will be required to give an account of the things that happen within their sphere of responsibility, Yeshua primarily speaks to each of us on an individual level and we must stand before the throne of judgment as individuals, responsible for our own actions.

In speaking to Ephesus, Yeshua said: 7 ... *“To the one who overcomes, I will grant the right to eat from the Tree of Life, which is in the Paradise of God.”* (Revelation 2:7b TLV). This applies to each of us who holds fast to our first love through all trials and reaches Yeshua's throne of judgment. We will live forever in ADONAI's Paradise, the new earth under Yeshua's Kingship.

In speaking to Smyrna, Yeshua said: 11 ... *“The one who overcomes shall never be harmed by the second death.”* (Revelation 2:11b TLV). Overcomers will not experience the second death, a total separation from ADONAI described in Revelation 20. This may have relevance to those who only pay lip service to Yeshua as Savior, but have not repented and do not serve him.

To the individuals in Pergamum, Yeshua said: 17 ... *“To the one who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna , and I will give him a white stone—and written on the stone a new name that no one knows except the one who receives it.”* (Revelation 2:17b TLV). Overcomers are promised to receive hidden manna, treasures from ADONAI's Word, understanding beyond what most understand. They are also promised a white stone with their new name inscribed on it, a name which only He and they will know, a sign of the intimacy which they have earned with Yeshua.

Speaking to Thyatira, Yeshua said: 26 *“To the one who overcomes and guards My deeds until the end, I will give him authority over the nations 27 and he shall rule them with an iron rod, as when clay pots are broken into pieces.”* (Revelation 2:26-27 TLV). Yeshua used *remez* to refer to Psalm 2: 8 *“Ask Me, and I will give the nations as Your inheritance, and the far reaches of the earth as Your possession. 9 You shall break the nations with an iron scepter. You shall dash them in pieces like a potter's jar.”* (Psalm 2:8-9 TLV). Overcomers are promised a part in ruling the nations under Yeshua's kingship. These two verses in Psalm 2 promise the Messiah rulership over the nations and he promises that rulership to his bride, the body of overcomers. We will rule with him.

Yeshua promises the overcomers in Sardis: 5 *“The one who overcomes thus will be dressed in white clothes; I will never blot his name out of the Book of Life, and will confess his name before My Father and His angels.”* (Revelation 3:5 TLV).

To those in Philadelphia Yeshua said: 12 *“The one who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the Temple of My God, and he will never leave it. And on him I will write the name of My God and the name of the city of My God—the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God—and My own new Name.”* (Revelation 3:12 TLV). As overcomers we will be pillars in ADONAI’s Temple, marked by His name and a part of the everlasting New Jerusalem. We will also know Yeshua’s new name, the mystery of the ages, maybe even the answer to the mystery of “*echad*” for which we have been waiting.

Finally, to those in Laodicea, Yeshua gives the opportunity for repentance. He knocks on the door’s of the heart’s of those who are lukewarm. If they open and allow him in he gives this promise: 21 *“To the one who overcomes I will grant the right to sit with Me on My throne, just as I myself overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.”* (Revelation 3:21 TLV). This is the time for *teshuvah*, repentance for those who are lukewarm, maybe even the last opportunity. We don’t know when Yeshua will come. When He does, it will be too late.

These promises to the overcomers in each of these congregations is also a promise to each of us who overcomes. And, each of us is promised that we will share Yeshua’s throne if we overcome. *Sha’ul* taught us that: 6 *And He raised us up with Him and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Messiah Yeshua—* (Ephesians 2:6 TLV). Yeshua clearly said it in Revelation 3:21: *“To the one who overcomes I will grant the right to sit with Me on My throne,..”*

The *menorah* has great significance for us. Yeshua has granted *Beit Shalom* the right to have a congregational spiritual *menorah*, the symbol of His recognizing that we meet His standards. But, our relationship with Yeshua is also individual. When John began speaking, he referred to himself as a bond-servant. The TLV says servant, but that is not the full meaning. Here is Young’s Literal Translation to which I have added Messianic terms: **1** *The revelation of Yeshua HaMashiach, which G-d gave Him, to show His bond-servants things which are necessary to happen quickly; and he made it known through His messenger to His bond-servant Yochanan,..* (Revelation 1:1 YLT). The Greek word is *doulos* which literally means “a slave.” John knew the *Torah* well and made this reference to an indentured Hebrew servant: 2 *“If you buy a Hebrew servant, he is to serve for six years, and in the seventh he is to go free, without payment.”* (Exodus 21:2 TLV). The Hebrew equivalent is *eved*, עֶבֶד, meaning slave or servant. In Revelation 1:1, John equated both himself and Yeshua’s followers with bond-servants. You could also say bond-slave, but the meaning is clear. Just as the Hebrew *eved* was required to follow the orders of his master, so are we as bond-servants of Yeshua. There is no middle ground. If we have said “yes Yeshua,” we are obligated to follow Him. But, it goes even further. This verse was for the ordinary bond-servant, but we are not ordinary bond-servants who are released after seven years. We are bond-servants bound to our Master Yeshua for life. 5 *“But if the servant plainly states, ‘I love my master, my wife and my children, and I will not go out free, 6 then his master is to bring him to God, then take him to a door or to a doorpost. His master is to pierce his ear through with an awl, and he will serve him forever.”* (Exodus 21:5-6 TLV). When we trusted in Yeshua, we said to Him, “we will serve you forever,” and symbolically, we have had our ear pierced through with an awl by Yeshua. This is the level of commitment which we made, but many people don’t realize it. There is a

spiritual mark in our ear which is a mark of ownership. We are Yeshua's and not our own. Now is the time that all of us must realize this and take corrective action.

Father, may, not only we, but the whole body of Messiah, recognize these truths and turn around, make *teshuvah*, repent of our sins, and faithfully follow Yeshua, so that when the time comes, each of us will be declared by our Master to be "overcomers." *Shabbat shalom!*