

# Parashat Tetzaveh

Exodus 27:20-30:10

March 6, 2020



## SUMMARY

This week we read that *Moshe* is still on Mount Sinai receiving all the details about building the *Mishkan*, the portable sanctuary. Our portion describes the gold *menorah* and gives instructions for lighting it. The *menorah* is the model for the *ner tamid*, the eternal light that we find in our sanctuaries to this day.

*Tetzaveh* also describes the special clothing that *Aharon* and his sons, the *kohanim*, should wear. Their special clothing includes a long, sleeveless shirt called an *ephod*, a breastplate containing gemstones--each one standing for a different tribe of Israel--and the *ureem* and *tummeem*, which many believe helped the *kohanim* predict the future. The *kohen* also wore a special head covering with the words: “*Kodesh La’A-dona’*” or “Holy to G!d” written on it.

The *parasha* describes the seven-day process for priests to get ready to serve in the *Mishkan*. This includes putting oil on the high priest or *kohen gadol* and touching the blood of a sacrificed ram to the priest’s right ear, thumb, big toe, and clothing.

Who is not mentioned in this *parasha*? *Moshe*! *Parashat Tetzaveh* is the only *parasha* since *Moshe* was born where his name does not appear. G!d calls him “you,” but does not mention his name. During our chanting, see how many times you can hear us say “*Aharon*”.

### From Our Commentators:

#### Exodus 28:3

וְאֶתָּה תְּדַבֵּר אֶל-כָּל-חַכְמֵי-לֵב אֲשֶׁר מִלֵּאתִיו רוּחַ  
חָכְמָה וְעָשׂוּ אֶת-בְּגָדֵי אֶהְרֹן לְקִדְשׁוֹ לְכַהֲנֹנֹלִי

Speak to every wise-hearted person, who I have filled with the spirit of wisdom so that they may make *Aharon*’s clothes--to make them holy, to *kohen* to me.

#### Netziv

אל כל חכמי לב. החכמה אין מקומו בלב כ”א  
במוח. אלא כל מקום דכתיב חכמי לב הביאור  
יראת ה'. שהוא ראשית חכמה ומקומה בלב כידוע

Wise-hearted. We usually think of wisdom as being in the mind. Every place that “Wise-hearted” is written, the explanation is that this means refers being amazed by G!d. Being amazed by G!d is the beginning of true wisdom (Psalms 111:10) and it is well-known that the place a person feels this is in their heart.

### FOR DISCUSSION:

1) If wisdom is usually about using your brain well, what do you think it might mean--in this case--to be wise-hearted?

2) Why do you think G!d would tell *Moshe* to speak to (all) wise-hearted people about making special, holy clothing for *Aharon*?

3) G!d gives *Moshe* special instructions for the clothes that *Aharon* will wear when he serves G!d in the *mishkan*--the tent in the center of the Israelite camp where G!d will live. *Aharon*’s clothes will have to be very beautiful and very different from what other people wear, and G!d tells *Moshe* that they should be made just for *Aharon* to wear when *Aharon* is serving G!d. Why do you think G!d would want the clothes that *Aharon* wears when serving G!d to be different from his regular clothes?