



*Parasha Tetzaveh*

March 4, 2023

*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 and deals with a number of things. It begins with providing oil for the menorah and also deals with Aaron's High Priestly garments and his and his son's ordination. Today is also the Shabbat before Purim which is next Tuesday. This Shabbat is traditionally called "Shabbat Zachor," the Shabbat of remembrance, because of ADONAI's words in the special Purim reading: 17 "Remember what Amalek did to you along the way as you came out from Egypt— 18 how he happened upon you along the way and attacked those among you in the rear, all the stragglers behind you, when you were tired and weary—he did not fear God. 19 Now when Adonai your God grants you rest from all the enemies surrounding you in the land Adonai your God is giving you as an inheritance to possess, you are to blot out the memory of Amalek from under the heavens. Do not forget" (Deuteronomy 25:17-19 TLV)! The first word in verse 17 is zachor, זָכוֹר, "remember." There is also an additional haftarah reading for Tetzaveh, 1Samuel 15:2-34, which deals with King Saul's failure to carry out ADONAI's instructions regarding blotting out the Amalekites. Today, we don't know who the physical Amalekites are because they have blended into those whom we recognize as Arabs. However, we definitely recognize the spirit of Amalek in those who want to eliminate Israel. While we pray for them, we also confront them physically and spiritually. Spiritual warfare is necessary because we battle not with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers and the spiritual forces of wickedness in heavenly places who have taken up residence in them. (Ephesians 6:12). We must always be on guard and remember, but Purim is the time of the year that we especially "zachor."*

The title of the message today is: "From Abraham to Amalek and Aaron to Yeshua." In it, we will consider information from our *parasha* and also about *Purim*. *Avraham* was the father of *Yitzchak*, Isaac and Isaac was the father of *Esau*, Esau. Esau was the father of *Elifaz* and *Elifaz* was the father of Amalek through his concubine *Timnah*. the father of Amalek through his concubine *Timnah*. It's difficult for us to imagine this, but Israel's greatest enemy is descended from Abraham through his grandson Esau and they became enemies after only 4 generations. Amalek became the enemy of his great grandfather's descendants. The most probable reason for this was that Amalek took up Esau's offense. While we are not directly told that Esau had an offense against Jacob, it appears to have developed in his descendants. Not taking up someone else's offense is very good advice for us today. That kind of activity has been the end of many good friendships and also the cause of not a few splits in congregations. Here are Yeshua's instructions for us: 15 "Now if your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault while you're with him alone. If he listens to you, you have won your brother." (Matthew 18:15 TLV). But, unfortunately, all too often, the offended party tells another friend who says "That's terrible." You have definitely been wronged" and then takes up the offense. The two may then even add more friends to their group who nurse and rehearse the offense. Listen to Yeshua. Quickly seek a peaceful resolution of the problem.

The Amalekites were the first to attack Israel after ADONAI brought them out of Egypt. And they did it in a very cowardly way, from the rear: *8 Then the Amalekites came and fought with Israel at Rephidim.* (Exodus 17:8 TLV). Their actions did not please ADONAI and He said to Moshe: *14 ... , "Write this for a memorial in the book, and rehearse it in the hearing of Joshua, for I will utterly blot out the memory of the Amalekites from under heaven."* (Exodus 17:14b TLV). In *Parasha Ki Tetze*, ADONAI made this an even stronger command: *17 "Remember what Amalek did to you along the way as you came out from Egypt— 18 how he happened upon you along the way and attacked those among you in the rear, all the stragglers behind you, when you were tired and weary—he did not fear God. 19 Now when Adonai your God grants you rest from all the enemies surrounding you in the land Adonai your God is giving you as an inheritance to possess, you are to blot out the memory of Amalek from under the heavens. Do not forget!"* (Deuteronomy 25:17-19 TLV). Tonight, we are remembering!

Many years later when Saul was king, the Prophet Samuel reminded him of ADONAI's command: *1 Then Samuel said to Saul, "Adonai sent me to anoint you as king over His people, over Israel. Now therefore, listen to the voice of the words of Adonai! 2 Thus says Adonai-Tzva'ot: 'I remember what Amalek did to Israel, how he set himself against him on the way while he was coming up from Egypt. 3 Now go and strike down Amalek and put all he has under the ban of destruction—so have no pity on him; but kill both men and women, children and nursing infants, oxen and sheep, camels and donkeys.'"* (1Samuel 15:1-3 TLV). Saul defeated Amalek, but he disobeyed ADONAI's command by taking Agag, the Amalekite king, alive and also by sparing the good sheep and cattle. Afterward, Samuel said to Saul: *23 "For rebellion is like the sin of divination and stubbornness is like iniquity and idolatry. Since you have rejected Adonai's word, He has also rejected you as king."* (1Samuel 15:23 TLV). Other translations read: "the sin of witchcraft." This is a good word for us today. It is rebellion against the will of ADONAI, His word, His *Torah*, which is extremely important and some take it so lightly. Now, moving ahead in time, Saul and his sons were fighting the Philistines on top of Mount Gilboa when he and his three sons were killed. Afterward, David was inquiring of a man how the battle went. (2Samuel 1). The man told David that Saul was mortally wounded and asked him to kill him and he did. The man who killed Saul was an Amalekite. That is ultimate irony. Saul disobeyed ADONAI's command regarding the Amalekites and it was an Amalekite who killed him. Then, David had the Amalekite killed.

Moving ahead in time again to about the year 485 BCE, Achashverosh, whom we also know as Ahasuerus, ascended the throne of Persia. Soon after that, he married Vashti who was the granddaughter of Nebuchadnezzar. He was also known by other names, Xerxes I of Persia and Artaxerxes. His time period connects somewhat with Daniel's time and we read about him in Daniel 9: *1 "In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of Median descent, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans,....* (Daniel 9:1 TLV). According to Daniel, Darius the King was the son of Achashverosh, Ahasuerus. This means that Darius was possibly the son of Esther, *Hadassah*, but we don't know for sure.

In the Book of Esther, we see even more results of King Saul's disobedience: *1 Some time later King Ahasuerus promoted Haman, son of Hammedatha the Agagite, elevating him and setting his chair above all the officials who were with him.* (Esther 3:1 TLV). Haman was an Agagite, a descendant of King Agag. Saul let Agag live, but even though he was killed by Samuel, some of his descendants survived. We don't find the Amalekites in the Scriptures other than in the *Tanakh*, but Psalm 83 very specifically tells us who Israel's enemies were: *4 They make a shrewd plot against Your people, conspiring against Your treasured ones. 5 "Come," they say, "let's wipe them out as a nation! Let Israel's name be remembered no more!"*

6 For with one mind they plot together. Against You do they make a covenant. 7 The tents of Edom and the Ishmaelites, Moab and the Hagrites, 8 Gebal, Ammon and Amalek, Philistia with the inhabitants of Tyre, 9 even Assyria has joined them, becoming a strong arm for Lot's sons. Selah. (Psalm 83:4-9 TLV). We have none of these actual nations today, but it seems that these people groups have intermixed to some degree and some of Israel's enemies today are descended from these nations. Their own relatives are among Israel's enemies. Edom is descended from Esau, the Ishmaelites from Abraham, Moab and Ammon from Lot and Amalek from Esau. The Hagrites are said to be descended from Hagar and associated with the Ishmaelites and also may have been relatives. These people had an unnatural hatred of Israel and it continues today in many of her enemies. Their hatred is "the spirit of Amalek," a demonic entity related to the spirit of anti-messiah.

In our *parasha* today, ADONAI described Aaron's garments. He instructed Moses that they were to be both dignified and beautiful: 2 "*You are to make holy garments for your brother Aaron, for splendor and for beauty*". (Exodus 28:2 TLV). Aaron's garments were set apart, holy, for the purpose that ADONAI ordained them and only for that use. The *Talmud* tells us that when Achashverosh gave a feast for his advisors and officers, he sought to impress them with his greatness. He took off his own royal garments and put on the clothing of the Israelite High Priest. According to the *Talmud*, those priestly garments had been in the possession of Babylon since the First Temple was destroyed. (Megila 12a). Media Persia conquered Babylon and took possession of all that Babylon had carried away from the Temple. If this account is true, by putting on the High Priest's garments, Achashverosh was guilty of the highest form of mockery of ADONAI's *Torah*. That same account also tells that he brought out and displayed the gold and silver containers which were taken from the Temple in Jerusalem.

The garments of Aaron and his sons were essential in order for them to function in their sacred capacity in the Tabernacle. Scripture alludes to this in the description of Aaron's turban: 36 "*Also you are to make a plate of pure gold and engrave on it, like the engravings of a seal, 'HOLY TO Adonai.'*" 37 "*Attach it with a violet cord onto the turban, on the front of the turban.*" 38 "*So it will rest on Aaron's forehead, so that Aaron will bear away the iniquity committed regarding the holy things, which Bnei-Yisrael set apart as all their holy gifts. It is to be always on his forehead, so that they may have favor before Adonai*". (Exodus 28:36-38 TLV). The Temple Institute in Jerusalem has recreated the High Priest's garments. The uniform which he wore all year round consisted of 8 different pieces and were called the "golden garments." The parts were ephod, breastplate, robe, tunic, turban, belt, crown, and pants. These garments were made of "wool and linen." That they were made of these materials combined may be the reason that ADONAI commanded that no one is to wear garments made of wool and linen even though He gave no reason for this command. There was a second uniform which was only worn by the High Priest on *Yom Kippur*, the Day of Atonement. It consisted of 4 different pieces; tunic, pants, turban, and belt. They were called the "white garments," and were made totally of linen. Exodus, chapter 28 describes the remainder of Aaron's High Priestly garments with its precious stones in the breastplate and on his shoulders. The Jews of Jerusalem are ready today to recreate the activities of the Temple whenever the political climate and most importantly, ADONAI's will, allows.

Aaron was arrayed in these extravagant garments because he stood before ADONAI, who Himself prescribed the beautiful garments. In the Tabernacle and later in the Temple, it was the *Kohen Gadol*, the High Priest, who was ADONAI's mediator. He stood between man and G-d when ADONAI's Presence came down to the Tabernacle. After Moses, Aaron

and his successors were the only Israelites that could meet ADONAI and live. ADONAI's holiness was so great and powerful that human flesh could not withstand His radiance. But, as High Priests, Aaron and his sons each eventually did what all men do. They died. The writer of Hebrews commented: *23 Now on the one hand, many have become kohanim, who through death are prevented from continuing in office.* (Hebrews 7:23 TLV). Being human, Aaron also had to offer sacrifices for his own sins before he could make an offering for the sins of the people: *3 For this reason he has to make offerings for sins—just as for the people, so also for himself.* (Hebrews 5:3 TLV). As priests in the Levitical priesthood, Aaron and his descendants faithfully fulfilled their purpose until ADONAI changed the system.

What kind of a *kohen* do we need now? The writer of Hebrews tells us: *26 For such a Kohen Gadol was fitting for us: holy, guiltless, undefiled, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. 27 He has no need to offer up sacrifices day by day like those other kohanim g'dolim—first for their own sins and then for the sins of the people. For when He offered up Himself, He did this once for all.* (Hebrews 7:26-27 TLV). The next chapter tells us that we do have exactly that kind of *Kohen HaGadol*: *1 Now here is the main point being said. We do have such a Kohen Gadol, who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens. 2 He is a priestly attendant of the Holies and the true Tent—which Adonai set up, not man.* (Hebrews 8:1-2 TLV). Yeshua is now our High Priest. He is that kind of *kohen*, the perfect Mediator between man and G-d. Dressed in His priestly garments, our High Priest sits at the right hand of the Father, ADONAI, in heaven. His garments most likely look very much like Aaron's, for splendor and for beauty. *Sha'ul* told us: *34 ... Messiah, who died, and moreover was raised, and is now at the right hand of God and who also intercedes for us.* (Romans 8:34b TLV). In the Tabernacle, the Levitical High Priest ministered through the Golden Altar of Incense with the rising smoke being symbolic of the people's prayers. Now, Yeshua receives our actual prayers and as High Priest, He is constantly interceding for us in His role as Mediator between us and the Father.

There are some very cryptic verses in Hebrews 13: *10 We have an altar from which those serving in the tabernacle have no right to eat. 11 For the bodies of those animals—whose blood is brought into the Holies by the kohen gadol as an offering for sin—are burned outside the camp. 12 Therefore, to make the people holy through His own blood, Yeshua also suffered outside the gate. 13 So let us go to Him outside the camp, bearing His disgrace. 14 For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the one that is to come. 15 Through Yeshua then, let us continually offer up to God a sacrifice of praise—the fruit of lips giving thanks to His name.* (Hebrews 13:10-15 TLV).

What does verse 10 mean? It says: *10 We have an altar from which those serving in the tabernacle have no right to eat.* (Hebrews 13:10 TLV). To understand this, we look back at *Torah* where the initial instructions were given. According to the Book of Leviticus, the priests had the right to eat certain of the sacrifices which were brought to the Tabernacle, but there were also sacrifices which they could not eat. The reference to “an altar” is a reference to a specific kind of sacrifice. The regular sin offering, one brought by an individual, was one type of offering that the priests could eat, but there was also a second type of sin offering which could not be eaten. Regarding the sin offering, it says: *22 Every male among the kohanim is to eat of it—it is most holy. 23 But no sin offering from which any of the blood is brought into the Tent of Meeting to make atonement in the Holy Place is to be eaten—it must be burned up with fire.* (Leviticus 6:22-24 TLV). The sin offering brought by individuals was to be eaten by the priests, but not the flesh of the sin offerings whose blood was taken into and sprinkled in the Holy of Holies. This is a reference to the blood of the bull and the goat which were

offered on *Yom Kippur* as sin offerings. Verse 11 says: *11 For the bodies of those animals—whose blood is brought into the Holies by the kohen gadol as an offering for sin—are burned outside the camp.* (Hebrews 13:11 TLV). This is what took place on *Yom Kippur*. The High Priest first made atonement for himself and his family by sacrificing the bull and sprinkling its blood in the Holy of Holies. Then, he made atonement for the sins of all Israel by sacrificing the goat and sprinkling its blood in the Holy of Holies. But the flesh of these two animals was not eaten. Their bodies were taken outside the camp and burned.

In verse 12 the writer of Hebrews identifies Yeshua with the *Yom Kippur* sacrifice: *12 Therefore, to make the people holy through His own blood, Yeshua also suffered outside the gate.* (Hebrews 13:12 TLV). Yeshua was sacrificed for our sins outside the gate of the camp, the city gate of Jerusalem, symbolically the place where the body of the *Yom Kippur* goat was burned. In the first century, the place known as Golgotha was outside the city walls of Jerusalem. It was a place of death, shame and disgrace, a place where the Romans had executed many and over time executed thousands of people there. Because Yeshua is sinless, there was only one sacrifice required for our sins. He did not have to make atonement for Himself as Aaron did. (Hebrews 7:27). When the writer of Hebrews said: *Yeshua also suffered outside the gate*, he connected His death with the goat sacrificed on *Yom Kippur*.

Most only think of Yeshua as the lamb at Passover, but the reality is that he is symbolically both lamb and goat, the *Pesach* lamb and the *Yom Kippur* goat. He was also pictured in the Scapegoat, the goat sent off to die in the wilderness on *Yom Kippur*. Yeshua's cousin John, *Yochanan* the Immerser, knew by the Holy Spirit what Yeshua's role was to be. He was immersing at the Jordan River: *29 The next day, John sees Yeshua coming to him and says, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.* (John 1:29 TLV). Yeshua was the very embodiment and also the fulfillment of the Passover Lamb. At His last Passover *seder*, Yeshua verified this truth when he identified His own body and blood with the Passover lamb. (Luke 22:19-20).

The writer of Hebrews gives us the additional picture. Referring to *Yom Kippur*, he wrote: *11 But when Messiah appeared as Kohen Gadol of the good things that have now come, passing through the greater and more perfect Tent not made with hands (that is to say not of this creation), 12 He entered into the Holies once for all—not by the blood of goats and calves but by His own blood, having obtained eternal redemption. 13 For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh, 14 how much more will the blood of Messiah—who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God—cleanse our conscience from dead works to serve the living God?* (Hebrews 9:11-14 TLV). Goats and bulls were the *Yom Kippur* sacrifices. The ashes of a heifer is a reference to the "Red Heifer." The point being made is that Yeshua entered the Heavenly Tabernacle and placed His own blood on the Ark in the Holy of Holies as a fulfillment of the *Yom Kippur* sacrifice. How much more effective is Yeshua's one time sacrifice than the blood of bulls and goats which had to be offered every year?

Going back to Hebrews 13: *13 So let us go to Him outside the camp, bearing His disgrace. 14 For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the one that is to come.* (Hebrews 13:13-14 TLV). Our salvation takes place at the cross which was outside the camp. We, as followers of Yeshua, in our salvation must share in the disgrace which He bore for us on the tree, symbolically on the cross. Again, we go to the *Torah* for understanding: *22 "Suppose a man is guilty of a sin with a death sentence and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree. 23 His body is not to remain all night on the tree—instead you must certainly bury him*

the same day, for anyone hanged is a curse of God. You must not defile your land that Adonai your God is giving you as an inheritance". (Deuteronomy 21:22-23 TLV). By being hung on a tree, crucified on a tree, Yeshua became a curse for us. We are to identify with His disgrace as being cursed. When we accept Yeshua's sacrifice and His Messiahship, we symbolically go outside the city walls and share in His disgrace of being hung on a tree. But it is much more than worth it, for we receive much more than the cost to us. Sometimes, we are mocked because of our belief, but we must hold onto it and boldly proclaim Yeshua! We have no permanent city now and are awaiting the one to come, the one which will last for eternity. The city which is coming is Jerusalem with Yeshua reigning as *Melekh Mashiach*, King Messiah.

Verse 15: *15 Through Yeshua then, let us continually offer up to God a sacrifice of praise—the fruit of lips giving thanks to His name..* (Hebrews 13:15 TLV). We don't always value what we have received through Yeshua. There is no shortage of verses which tell us that we are to praise ADONAI. *Sha'ul said: 17 pray constantly,...* (1Thessalonians 5:17 TLV). The Greek says *adialeiptós*, (ad-ee-al-ipe'-toce) meaning incessantly which is interpreted as unceasingly; without remission. We should continually be in an attitude of prayer and thanksgiving even as we go about our daily activities.

As we consider Purim tonight, please take this prayer request home with you and remember it especially on the Day of Purim, this coming Tuesday. Our prayers should include prayer for the Nation of Israel and the Jewish people, praying ADONAI's mercy and deliverance for them and that they soon respond positively to their *Mashiach*, their Messiah. The irony of Purim is that Amalek is a descendant of Abraham, the father of the Jewish people. We also pray against the "spirit of Amalek" that is in people in Israel and the Middle East and also in our own nation and around the world. Pray that they would come to know Yeshua and that this demonic spirit would be removed from Israel's enemies and replaced with the Holy Spirit. May "the spirit of Amalek" soon completely disappear from the earth.

The events of Purim were ADONAI's way of preserving the Jewish people until it was His time to send His Son. Yeshua is our only answer today, the answer to all that is going on in the world. *Barukh HaShem* that revival is beginning. Be sure to see the movie "Jesus Revolution." It is touching many lives and its story was also the event which led to the Messianic Jewish Movement in the 1960's. May it happen again but in an even more powerful way! *Shabbat shalom!*