

# פרשת תצוה

Parshat Tetzaveh

Shemot 29:5-9

וּלְקַחְתָּ אֶת־הַבִּגְדִים וְהַלְבַּשְׁתָּ אֶת־אַהֲרֹן אֶת־הַכֹּהֲנֹת וְאֶת־רֹאשׁוֹ וְאֶת־הָאֵפֹד וְאֶת־הַחֹשֶׁן וְאֶפְדָּתָהּ לוֹ בְּחֹשֶׁב הָאֵפֹד: וְשָׂמַתָּ הַמִּצְנֶפֶת עַל־רֹאשׁוֹ וְנָתַתָּ אֶת־נֹזֶר הַקֹּדֶשׁ עַל־הַמִּצְנֶפֶת: וּלְקַחְתָּ אֶת־שָׁמֶן הַמִּשְׁחָה וַיִּצְקֶתָ עַל־רֹאשׁוֹ וּמִשַּׁחְתָּ אֹתוֹ: וְאֶת־בָּנָיו תִּקְרִיב וְהַלְבַּשְׁתָּם כְּתֹנֶת: וְחַגְרָתָם אֹתָם אֲבִנֵי אֶהָרָן וּבָנָיו וְחִבַּשְׁתָּ לָהֶם מִגְבָּעֹת וְהִיתָה לָהֶם כְּהֹנָה לְחֻקַּת עוֹלָם וּמִלֵּאתָ יַד־אֶהָרָן וַיִּד־בָּנָיו:

And you shall take the garments and clothe Aaron with the tunic, with the robe of the ephod, with the ephod, and with the choshen, and you shall adorn him with the band of the ephod. You shall place the cap upon his head and place the holy crown upon the cap. You shall take the anointing oil and pour [it] on his head and anoint him. And you shall bring his sons near, and you shall clothe them with tunics. And you shall gird them with sashes, Aaron and his sons, and you shall dress them with high hats, and the kehunah will be a perpetual statute for them, and you shall invest Aaron and his sons with full authority.

## **Ariella Ruben: Class of 2021- "The Fine Details"**

This week's parsha -- Parshat Tetzaveh -- details several holy proceedings within the confines of the Beis HaMikdash in addition to those concerning the Cohanim, such as what oil to use in the Menorah as well as detailed instructions as to Aaron and his sons' week-long initiation into priesthood. It is an all-in-all informative parsha more than anything, although it is a bit narratively lacking.

One of the more interesting parts of this week's parsha is the actual anointing of Aaron and his sons and all future Cohanim. What interests me, however, and what the passukim do not really address is the fine details of the anointing. When the passuk says "ומשחת אותו" ("and annoint him [with oil]"), what exactly does that entail? Rashi fills in the blank:

**"אף משיחה זו כמין כי, נותן שמן על ראשו ובין רסי עיניו ומחברן באצבעו"**

"This anointing also, was in the form of a X: he put a drop of oil on his head and another drop between his eyebrows and joined them with his finger into this shape"

Although this little detail is quite interesting to me, I have to wonder why the X shape is significant. It does add a little bit more detail to the picture the Torah paints with the anointing, but I am nevertheless unsatisfied. No other sources that I looked at really offered such insight as this, though, no matter how minute a detail it seems to be.

### **Jake Teller- Class of 2021:** Meaning behind the clothing of the Kohen

This part of the parsha discusses the clothing of Aharon and his sons, including exactly what they will wear and giving them their official power as Kohanim. There is a focus on the specific clothes that the Kohanim wear, and the Torah goes into great detail about every single article of clothing that they wear. This begs the question, “Why do we care about the specifics of every single piece of the Kohanim’s outfit?” Very interestingly, **Rabbi Abba Wagensberg**, a popular lecturer in Israel and former student of Rabbi Chaim Pinchas Scheinberg, writes that each of these articles of clothing correspond to an sin and the atonement for that specific sin. The cloak, reminiscent of Yosef’s cloak, atones for the crime of murder. The pants, designated to cover nakedness, atone for the crime of immorality. The hat, symbolizing haughtiness, atones for pride. The sash, covering the trunk of the body, atones for illicit thoughts of the heart. The Choshen (“choshen mishpat”) atones for judgments (“mishpat”) that are false or corrupt. The apron atones for idolatry. The robe, with its pleasant-sounding bells at the hem, atones for the negative sound of evil speech (“lashon hara”). The tzitz atones for shamelessness. Putting all of these garments on every day is a constant reminder to the Kohanim that we cannot fall into possessing these bad attributes on a daily basis.

### **Avidan Abramson: Class of 2023 : An Original Thought**

In this week’s parsha, Parshat Teztaveh, we read about various requirements regarding the priests who were to work in the Mishkan. In the above pesukim, we are told about how some of the items that the priests and high priest had to wear. During these pesukim, the chumash seems to make a specific mention of how Moshe is supposed to dress the priests. What is the meaning of this? Aren’t the priests capable adults? If they are fit enough to work in the Mishkan, then surely they should be fit enough to dress themselves. Why does Moshe seem to have to coddle them by helping them get dressed? This seems like something one would do to a child who you don’t trust to do things themselves. Shouldn’t our level of trust in the priests be more than that of our level of trust in an average man, since we are entrusting them to represent us spiritually?

After thinking long and hard about this question, I came up with multiple answers. One possibility could be that the priests should be completely focused on their duties in the Mishkan and not have to worry about all the trivial intricacies of their clothing. This answer, however, did not satisfy me. I then thought that the reason for this could be so that Moshe doesn’t feel left out of the service of the Mishkan. However, he already got to construct it

himself, so this answer didn't satisfy me either. After much more consideration, I came upon an answer that I think is quite suitable.

The pesukim immediately before and after these pesukim talk about bringing offerings to the mishkan. These pesukim seem to be interrupting the chumash's train of thought. The pasuk before ends with Aron and his sons "presenting" a variety of things and the pasuk after begins with them leading these things to the front of the Mishkan. This could be contributing to the fact that the priests had to pause before the beginning of their service and get in the right mindset for their duties. Not only did they have to pause and get ready before slaughtering the animal, but they had to have someone else dress them to add to the irregularity of the action. The priests, as well as ourselves, had gotten dressed countless times in their lives, and by now, especially with the limited fashion choices in biblical days and the concept of school uniforms, they, and we, probably didn't have to think too much about getting dressed. However, when someone else dresses us, however weird this may seem, it turns our attention to ourselves which in turn gives us a chance to reflect on ourselves and get us ready for the task ahead. In our case, this task would be going to school and succeeding. But for the priests, this task was serving Hashem in the Mishkan which is far more important. We can learn from this to always make sure that we are in the right mindset for the task that lies ahead of us. Whether that task be davening or behaving in the proper way during class, should be irrelevant. Good Shabbos.

### **Eliana Ruben- RMBA Alumni (Class of 2019) currently studying at Amudim**

With Purim coming up, something on my mind recently has been costumes and dressing up- should I get a cool expensive costume, put together something shticky and fun, or just give up and don a sports jersey? If I dress up as a witch I can cackle and be evil to all my friends, and if I'm a movie character I can spout their lines all day. No matter what though, Purim only lasts a day (unless you find yourself in Israel and can get a take two with Shushan Purim, but I digress), and after the day is over, I can go back to being normal old Eliana for the next 364 days until the next opportunity I get to become someone else. That's really the fun in dressing up- it's a fun, but fleeting time.

This excerpt from this week's parsha explains the first time Aharon and his sons put on their Cohen garb, a new and exciting outfit full of layers and details and color to his iconic look. One may think that this sounds like an incredible costume, but in truth, this outfit is the beginning of Aharon's whole new identity. He does not have the option of taking off his clothes and going home to shmooze with his friends and talk about all the hot gossip from the mishkan- when he gets this outfit he is transformed into a complete servant of Hashem. From now on in the torah, Aharon has a role that he cannot step out of for even a moment- this is most evident in a few parshiot when (spoiler alert) two of his sons die, and he is not given time to mourn before going back to work in the mishkan. It is the opposite of a costume- these clothes are who he is, which is both a little scary and kind of amazing- his exterior completely matches his interior, a very positive trait according to many in Judaism, most notably the

rabbis of Bavel. Aharon is an amazing example of someone who wears his clothes and does not let his clothes wear him.

So while we all have fun and dress up as something special and new this Purim, we can consider how we dress on a day to day basis and how we present ourselves normally- are we dressing the way we act? When I put a skirt over my pajama pants and my hair in a terrible bun, is that how I feel on the inside? Yes. Shabbat Shalom.