

**Beth Tephila Messianic Jewish Congregation**  
(Under same management for over 5778 years)

**SHABBAT SERVICE**

February 24th – 10:30 AM -- Lolo Community "Synagogue"  
12:30 PM Oneg Shabbat & Interactive Torah Discussion



**Montana Oneg Shabbat**  
**Spring is Coming & Bears are Hungry Too**

"Blessed are those whose way of life is blameless; who live by the Torah of Adonai.  
Blessed are those who observe His instruction; who seek Him with all their heart." Psalm 119



**Exodus 27:20 - 30:10**

וְאַתָּה תְּצַוֶּה | אֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל

v'atah t'tsaveh et-b'nei Yisra'el

And you shall command (the) sons of Israel

וַיִּקְחוּ אֵלֶיךָ שֶׁמֶן זַיִת זָךְ פְּתִית לְמִאֹר לְהַעֲלֹת נֵר תָּמִיד:

v'yik'chu eleicha shemen zayit zach katit la-  
ma'or l'ha'alot ner tamid

and they will take to you oil (of) olive pure, pressed for the  
light to go up light eternal

"And you shall command the sons of Israel, that they bring you  
clear oil of beaten olives  
for the light to make a lamp burn continually."



**Worship: From the Mountain to the Administration  
(Ceremony)**

As we continue God's instructions to Moses concerning the construction of the Mishkan (Tabernacle) and all its elements, we should not forget the principle of worship that God is laying down for His people. The same Almighty God, who created the earth and all that is in it, chose a people to be His people; a people who would worship Him and Him alone. His desire was to be their God, and they would be His people. God sent His people to Egypt, where they would become a mighty nation; a separate and distinct people from all the cultic people groups of the area. God miraculously freed His people

from Egyptian slavery and took them to Mt. Sinai, where He gave them His rules by which they should live. His people, Israel, accepted His rules as a covenant between God and them. Still at Mt. Sinai, God expressed His desire to have a continuing, visible presence among His people. He instructed Moses in the construction of the Mishkan and the process (ceremony) by which His sinful people can become "clean" in order to "come close" to worship Him. In other words, the construction of the Mishkan and the rules for its administration provided the means by which sinful people could have fellowship with our Holy God. One might think that when men realize all that God has done for us, we would quite willing to follow His rules to make ourselves "clean" before Him in worship. Our emphasis in worship should be on God and His glory. Yet we find both in Biblical times and **even today** that our worship tends to emphasize the intricacy of the ceremony and the liturgy...the administration rather than The Administrator. In our desire to be "religious," we emphasize ceremony and ritual. The more "religious" we attempt to become, the more man-made rules we set down to have to work to obey. Who is it that we are trying to impress? Other religious men or God? By emphasizing ceremony we lose sight of who God is, what He has done for us, and we impress only ourselves! Worship is our gift, our offering to God. It is what we give Him, and not what we take for ourselves. Worship should bring a "sweet aroma" to God, not for ourselves. We would do well to remember the Biblical principle of ceremony that God is teaching us in this Torah portion. Ceremony must add to worship but not be a man-made, rule-ordered center of worship! Ceremony is given to us to bring us closer to God and should serve to magnify and glorify Him. Anything additional only serves to magnify and glorify ourselves. Bottom line: The emphasis of our worship should be the reading of God's word (Torah & B'rit Hadasha), putting God's words to us from the written page into our hearts, and then acting them out each and every day. That is our gift to Him! Our Torah service and our daily lives must emphasize our right relationship with God. Without that, there is no sense in trying to engage God and participate in any kind of spiritual or religious activity.

## The Light of the World



Our Torah portion begins with the command from God to make a pure oil which was used in the lampstand. The olives used to make the oil were to be beaten, rather than crushed, so that the oil would be more pure. It would burn brighter and produce less smoke. One of the responsibilities of the priests was to maintain the lampstand with oil, so that there was always light in the Holy Place, where the priests ministered. In most

synagogues today, there is a "ner tamid," an "everlasting light," to symbolize God's presence with His people. The light is lit either with oil or by an electric bulb and has moved from a lampstand to being suspended over the ark containing the Torah. Th symbolic of the fullness or completeness of the light of God. Messianic Jews believe that the lampstand represents Messiah, the light of the world, illuminating God's perfect light to the world.

## The Clothes of a Priest



All of **Chapter 28** has to do with the fabrication of the clothes for the High Priest and his sons. The High Priest (**Kohen Gadol**) and his sons, who attended him, were God's consecrated servants through whom the people could be brought into fellowship with God. Their clothes served to separate them from the people because of their office; the solemn duty they performed. The garments helped present the **Kohen Gadol** to the People with great and appropriate dignity. This would help the People understand and relate to the High Priest as the vehicle of the Divine Presence among them. The clothes of the priests emphasized the purity and holiness of God. They served God with dignity and respect as "Holy to the Lord." Their clothes reflected their role in their "glory" and "beauty." They were made by "skillful persons", whom God endowed with His "spirit of wisdom." **Today as believer/priests**, God tells us how to minister for Him and gives us His "Spirit of wisdom" to accomplish His task. We should dress modestly and with appropriate dignity as servants of God. While our clothes may not reflect God's glory, our character should!

The priest's ephod was a two piece (front and back) garment made of blue, purple, and scarlet material worn over his upper body. The two pieces were to be attached to one another by shoulder pieces of material and braided chains of gold. Mounted in a gold setting on each shoulder piece was an onyx stone engraved with the names of six of the tribes of Israel; six tribes on one shoulder piece and six tribes on the other. Worn over the ephod and attached to the ephod by chains of gold was the "breastpiece of judgment". It was to be made of gold, blue, purple, and scarlet material and fine twisted linen. It was folded double into a 6-9 inch piece to be worn over Aaron's heart. Onto the breastpiece were mounted twelve stones in four rows, each engraved with the name of



one tribe of Israel. The High Priest carried the burden of the people before God over his heart and on his shoulders. These stones were said to be "stones of memorial" for the Lord. Did God need "stones of memorial" to remember His people? Obviously not. The memorial was for God's people, who knew that as the High Priest ministered in the tabernacle, their names were constantly before God. As part of our worship, **we have memorials today** that are reminders for us of our relationship with God. "This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me....This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me" (1st Corinthians 11:24,25). In our daily lives, should we also have memorials? I believe so. If we recorded names of people we wanted to pray for and visibly displayed them on our desks and in our cars, wouldn't we pray more?

Into the folded portion of the breastpiece was placed the urim and the thummim. Without knowing anything more about the urim and the thummim, we cannot say conclusively what they looked like or exactly how they functioned. Their names could translate, respectively, "lights" and "perfections" or "revelation" and "truth" or "illumination" and "completion." From these functional translations, some speculate that they were stones that revealed God's answer to "yes" and "no" questions in times of crisis. It is thought that perhaps one or both of them glowed or somehow illuminated for a "yes" or a "no" response. They can be found in the following scriptures: Lev.8:8; Num.27:21; Deut.33:8; Josh.7:14; 1 Sam.23:9-12; 28:6; 30:7-8; Ezra 2:63; and Neh.7:65. The ephod was the emblem of the office of the Priest (1Sam.2:18). The one who held the ephod held the priesthood. The urim and thummim worn in the fold of the breastpiece next to the ephod were sometimes used by the priest to ascertain God's will. **Today, the Ruach Hakodesh** (Holy Spirit) interprets scripture for us, enabling us to know God's will.

Under the ephod, the priest wore a blue, sleeveless robe. Sown to the bottom hem of the robe were "pomegranates" of blue, purple, and scarlet material, alternating with gold bells. These functioned to keep the "skirt" of the priest weighted down, so that he would not be exposed, and also to allow the tinkling of the bells to be heard, as the priest ministered in the Holy of Holies.

On his head the High Priest wore a turban (miter) made of fine linen, having a plate of gold engraved "Holy to the Lord."

A long, white linen tunic made of checkered work was worn next to his skin, and a sash (girdle) completed the ensemble, holding it all together.

Tunics, decorated caps, and sashes were made for Aaron's sons to serve God as ministering priests. These clothes were to be worn by Aaron's sons whenever they ministered in the holy place "so that they do not incur guilt and die" (28:43).

## Consecration of Priests

In **Chapter 29**, we find instructions for the consecration of priests. The consecration of priests served to separate out those responsible for the ministry of the tabernacle. Consecration involved washing (vs.4), anointing (vs.7), clothing (vs.8-9), and offering sacrifices (vs.10-28). Priests were to act as mediators between God and the people, even though they were imperfect and had to offer sacrifices for their own sin. Verses 10-14 describe the protocol for substitutionary sin atonement. The people for whom the sacrifice was to be made laid their hands on the head of the animal, signifying their identification and transference of sin from man to the animal. The animal was slain,

and some of its blood was sprinkled on the altar. Putting some of the blood on the priests' right ear lobes, right thumbs, right big toes, and garments signified that they were cleansed for service in the tabernacle. Peter spoke similarly about the personal application of the sacrifice of Messiah in **1st Peter 1:2**: Peter sent his letter to God's "chosen" people (including Gentiles), ... "who are chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the father, and set apart by the Spirit for obeying Yeshua, the Messiah, and for sprinkling with His blood."

Sacrifices for the installation of priests were a bull for a sin offering, a ram as a burnt offering, and another ram as an offering of consecration or ordination. Parts of the ram of consecration were waved before the Lord and then offered up on the altar, while other parts were waved before the Lord and then became the priests' portion to eat. This consecration ceremony took seven days to complete with daily offerings in the morning and evening. Verse 42 speaks about the need for "a continual burnt offering" for there to be fellowship between God and man. So the work of the priests was never finished. Consequently there were no chairs within the tabernacle because the work of the priests was never finished. Yet the work of Messiah's sacrifice for us was "once for all..." (**Hebrews 9:12**). After His one time sacrifice, Messiah, Yeshua, sat down at the right hand of God, the Father (**Hebrews 10:12**). His work was finished! And He holds His priesthood forever....ever living to make intercession for those who belong to Him (**Hebrews 7:24-25**).

The first ten verses of **Chapter 30** conclude this week's Torah portion with the instructions for the construction of the altar of incense. It was made of acacia wood covered with gold about one and a half feet square and about three feet high. Gold rings were attached, so that poles covered with gold could be inserted to carry it. The altar of incense was to be placed before the veil separating the holy place from the holy of holies, so that fragrant incense would always be before the Lord. Once a year (Yom Kippur), the high priest used this altar to make atonement with the blood of the sin offering. Messianic Jews believe that the altar of incense is symbolized today by the prayers of God's people, rising as a sweet fragrance to him (Psalm 141:2; Revelation 5:8; 8:3,4).

Since the temple in Jerusalem no longer exists, **are priests consecrated today?** Yes, God still separates for Himself those sinful people who come to Him in faith and belief. Their faith is that God has provided the appropriate sacrifice for their sins through the blood of the Lamb of God, Messiah, Yeshua. They believe that the blood of Messiah is sufficient to cleanse them of sin and enable them to approach God in worship. Then as believers in Messiah, consecrated for God's service, they must begin to serve Him. We are told to assemble with fellow believers once a week and to show our faith by living Godly lives each day.

# SHABBAT SHALOM



**Passover  
Friday, March 30th**