

## SIDRA OF THE WEEK : תְּצַוֶּה

1. This week's Sidra continues with the making of the Mishkan and its appurtenances, and starts with a description of the Menorah and the service of its Kindling. In the Sidra is also the procedure of the consecration of Aharon and his sons as the Kohanim who are to minister in the Mishkan. In this connexion, HaShem commands that special garments shall be made for Aharon to reflect the splendour and majesty of the Kohen Ga'dol and details of these garments, and the garments for the sons of Aharon, too, are stipulated by HaShem.
2. For the Kohen Ordinary there are four garments: trousers; a long chequered shirt; a belt and a turban, all made of linen. For the Kohen Ga'dol, there are eight items: trousers; a long chequered shirt; a belt; a long robe; the Ephode; the Choshen Mishpot (or "Breastplate"); a turban (which is wound somewhat wider than the turban of the Kohen Ordinary) and the gold Headband.
3. The first two items are to be made of linen; the belt is to be made of wool and linen; the long robe is to be made entirely of sky-blue wool and is to have along its hem a series of tiny bells and pomegranates; the Ayfode and Choshen Mishpot are to be made of wool of various colours and linen and with thread of gold; the turban is to be made of white linen; and the Headband is to be made of gold and is to be tied in place with ribbons of sky-blue wool.
4. For some parts of the Service on Yom Kippur, the Kohen Ga'dol, who is to officiate in the Mikdash as the representative of the Jewish People, is to wear only the four garments of the Kohen Ordinary (with no gold in them at all) except that these garments were made of the finest white linen, while for other parts of the Yom Kippur Service he is to wear the full set of splendid robes.
5. The Ephode is somewhat like an apron with shoulder-pieces and belt, but it is to be worn not on the front of the Kohen Ga'dol but is to cover his rear, tied in the front. The shoulder-pieces of the Ephode come up from behind and end in two gold settings which are positioned on his shoulders. Into these two settings are to be set the two Shoham-stones engraved with the names of the Twelve Tribes of the Jewish People. Two short gold ropes, made of twisted threads of pure gold, are to be attached to these settings at their one end, with their other ends attached to the top two corners of the Choshen Mishpot (which is to be worn upon his chest). The two lower corners of the Choshen Mishpot are

## SIDRA OF THE WEEK: תצוה

to be tied to the belt of the Ephode in front with two cords of sky-blue wool. This way, the Ayfode and the Choshen Mishpot are to be one.

6. The Choshen Mishpot itself is to consist of a piece of cloth folded over double and on its front are to be attached twelve gold settings in four rows of three each, into which are to be set various precious and semi-precious stones engraved with the names of the Shivtay Yeshurun (that is, the Tribes of Israel) — the descendants of Avrohom, Yitzchok and Yaakov, with the colour of each Tribe's stone matching the colour of that Tribe's flag. Inserted in the fold of the cloth of the Choshen Mishpot and hidden from view is to be a piece of parchment on which is written the Ineffable Name of HaShem.
7. The gold Headband is to be worn upon the forehead of the Kohen Ga'dol. It is to be secured by two ribbons of sky-blue wool which are to pass round the head and are tied at the back of the head, with a third ribbon which passes from the middle of the top of the Headband over the turban and tied together with the ends of the other two ribbons. The Headband is to be engraved with the words "Holy to HaShem."
8. After describing these and the other priestly garments and how they are to be made, the Sidra continues with the procedure of the investiture of the Kohanim. Various Korbonos were brought and the duties of the Kohanim at their investiture are described in some detail.
9. The Golden Altar for the incense is described: it is to be made of wood and covered in gold and is to be one cubit square and two cubits high. There are to be two rings fixed to opposite corners so that it can be carried by means of two poles inserted in the rings. This Altar is to be only for the daily incense-burning and it is to be placed inside the Mishkan, between the Menorah and the Table, towards the entrance.
10. As with the structure of the Mishkan itself, so too each of the priestly garments is highly symbolic of numerous things — but this is a subject in itself, and requires much deep study and understanding.

**For the explanation of the Haftorah of Sidra תצוה please go to HAFTORAHS.**