AVODAH INSTITUTE *for* SOCIAL CHANGE

AVODAH
Sparking Jewish Leaders, Igniting Social Change

Quick note on parashat Tetzaveh

by RABBI LAUREN TUCHMAN • 2/11/2022 | 10 Adar I 5782

Parashat Tetzaveh is our Torah portion this week and the majority of it focuses on the creation of the priestly garments for Aaron and his four sons as they are officially made priests or Kohenim. Just as with last week's parsha, Terumah, the Torah describes in great detail the materials that are to be used for these garments. I'm particularly drawn to the bells that Aaron is asked to wear on his robe. The Torah notes specifically that they are supposed to ring when he enters and leaves the Ohel Moed or Mishkan—the portable sanctuary.

Sacred garments are an integral part of the Jewish practice for many today. These include the tallit or prayer shawl with the tzitzit on each of the four corners (we learn about this in the Book of Numbers chapter 15 which is also part of the Shma prayer), and though it's not a garment per se, tefillin, the black boxes containing scrolls with Torah passages scribed on them are worn on weekdays. Wrapping oneself in a tallit is a holy act for many, as it can foster a sense of being in a different ritual place or state of mind.

And even in our secular lives, how we dress tells the world a lot about who we are and what we value.

May we find ways to add our own sense of beauty and uniqueness in the clothes, sacred or secular, that we wear.

Want more social justice insights through a Jewish lens? Sign up for *The Gathering* our monthly newsletter for Jewish professionals featuring divrei torah, resource recommendations, and more at www.avodah.net/institute-newsletter/