

21. In the Tent of Meeting, outside the dividing-curtain which is over the Testimony, Aaron and his

and also for all time and above all, where it is a question of sacrificing material wealth for spiritual ends, the profit of which does not seem to be immediately apparent. See V. 21, and repeated also in V. 21, *באת בני ישראל*, the care for looking after the spiritual education is to be the responsibility of the general community, not the special prerogative of the priestly caste. The "oil" of the nation is to be offered for the light of the priests; the *מנורה* represents the tree of the national spirit, not that of the priests. It is highly characteristic that it is only the daily provision of the means for obtaining light, and the conditioning of the lamps and wicks to produce a clear bright light — that is the real lighting might, if the necessity arose, be performed by a "non-priest" a "layman" (*Yoma* 25b; *Maim.* *לה' ביאת* IX, 7) as *הדליק לא עבדו היא* ויקחו איך.

Even when you use it, it is to remain theirs. You are only for it, and its use is made in their name. (See on Ch. XXV, 2). *שמן זית*, *שמן זית* ripened on the tree, become oil on the tree, pressed, extracted from the fruit by pressure alone, but not by *כונה* or grinding in a mill (*Menachoth Mishna*, 86a). — *למאור*, the very best, finest, purest oil which was obtained in this way was only required for lighting, for *מנחות* all these refinements were not necessary (*ibid.*).

this expression for kindling lights occurs only with reference to the service of the *מנורה*. It is the precise description of the demand to keep the kindling flame against the wick until the latter "burns by itself", *שוחט שוקנת עולה מאיה*. The work of a teacher is to *make himself superfluous!* Not to keep the "laity" in lasting dependence on the teachers or priests. At the same time it is an admonition to enduring patience for teacher and pupil.

ג, according to *ת"כ* on *Levit.* XXIV, 2, the end of Ch. XXV and *חוטמת* *Menachoth* 86b.

V. 21. *באת מועד*. The most usual name for the Sanctuary, from *יד*, related to *מועד*, to fix a meeting. See on Ch. XXV, 21, the time, or, as here, the place, for such a meeting. It is called *מועד* either since it is by the Sanctuary that the special presence of God in Israel, brought about by their acceptance of the Torah with complete self-surrender, is manifested; or, inasmuch as God has appointed it as the place for His revelation to Moses (see *ibid.*), as well as the place where Israel is constantly

20. *ואתה תצוה* and *את בני ישראל* command the Children of Israel that they take for these pure olive oil, pressed, for lighting, to make a light shine out continuously.

exactly like the pillars of the forecourt, on copper feet, to tell us: - Here (in the Sanctuary) is nothing new on some different standpoint to be taught, but only the realisation of that which already at the entrance to the forecourt had to be visualised as the goal to be worked for.

תצוה

V. 20. We have already remarked above on Ch. XXV, 6, that there "oil for lighting", is reckoned amongst the articles which were to be donated for the *establishing* of the *Mishkon*. The fact that the oil and the *קטרת* (which is also mentioned there) both of which really belong to the *עבודה* of the *Mishkon* rather than to the *Mishkon* itself, are mentioned in that list, expresses the idea that these two — the one representing illumination and clarity of the mind, and the other complete sublimation of all actions to make them something that is pleasing to God — together express the whole aim of that ennoblement of Man for which the *קדוש* is to work, and so they do belong essentially to that which the *קדוש* itself represents. (In the *עבודה* too, we find *נרות* and *קטרת* intimately connected with each other, see Ch. XXX, 7 & 8). Here it can not speak of *קטרת*, as the making of the *קטרת* has not yet been ordered. By bringing "the Service of the Lights" here, immediately following the orders for building the Sanctuary, and even preceding the instructions for the priestly garments, two things are indicated. On the one hand the *נרות*, "the Care of the Lights" is the duty which in point of time is to take precedence over all other duties, as the clearness of mental vision which is to be derived from the Torah, is the "mother" of keeping the dictates of the Torah, *לדי מלמד שובא לדי מעשה*, and on the other hand, that the essential mission of the Torah is nurturing the enlightenment that is to be derived from the Torah. *שמתי כהן ישמרו דעת חוריה*. These points are necessary for the understanding of the meaning of the priestly garments, the instructions for the making of which immediately follow in the succeeding verses.

"Thou" as the transmitter of the Torah, the study of which, as a very first duty for all time, is to be represented by this care of the Lights, *תצוה* "command", put it before them as a special duty. The Sages in the Gemora remark that *תצוה* is used where special emphasis is to be laid on the seriousness and importance of a duty which is incumbent

וַעֲבֹדוּ מִצְוַת עֲרֵבְתָם לְפָנַי יְהוָה
 חֲקֹה עוֹלָם לְדוֹרָם מֵאֵל בְּנֵי
 יִשְׂרָאֵל: D

sons shall tend it from evening to morning before God, an everlasting law for their generations : from the Children of Israel.

to give afresh practical proof of their connection with God, where they have ever afresh "to come to a meeting with God". Next in importance to the existence of the "Place of the Evidence of the Torah" — the *יְהוָה*, the "Place of the Word", the source of the Light — the constant service of the "Lights" on the "Tree of National Development" (the Menorah, I.I.) is necessary for the meaning of the "Tent" as *אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד*, as the Tent of "finding oneself together with God".

מחוץ. *XXIV, 3*. Repeated similarly in *Levit. XXIV, 3*. *מחוץ* *פְּתַח* *אֹהֶל עֵד הַקְּדוֹת*. The human mind, turning towards the Torah and receiving enlightenment from the Torah, has constantly to be kept conscious that it stands *מחוץ*, outside the Torah. The Torah is something that has been given to it, produced by it. It has to draw and increase its knowledge and enlightenment out of the Torah, but never to take its own light into the realm of the Torah to alter or reform it. It has always to keep itself conscious of the *מִיִּכְתָּב*, of the cherubim who come down to divide off and protect the Torah, and, should the need arise, to preserve it against any tendency of the human mind, which misjudging its true position, could turn against the inviolability of the Torah, and, instead of sitting as a disciple at the feet of the Torah, dare to assume an arrogant mastery over it.

יְעָרְבֵהוּ *אֶתְּוֹ אֶתְּוֹ וּבְנֵי*. *יְעָרְבֵהוּ* is probably to be understood what is known as the *הַטְּבָה*, keeping the lamps in order, cleaning, putting in oil and wick etc. The *הַטְּבָה* is not restricted exclusively to the oil although it was usually done by them. (See on V.20).

מִצְוַת עֲרֵב. All the seven lamps were given just sufficient oil to burn from nightfall till morning. For the people in general, the day was there primarily for work, for activity, and only the relaxation of the night was to be available for study, for the work of the intellect. Hence only *מִצְוַת עֲרֵב*. Nevertheless the *מִצְוַת עֲרֵב* went on burning from one evening till the next in spite of not receiving more oil than the other six. This happens continuously right down to the time of *שְׁמֵון הַקְּדוֹת* (over 1,100 years. I.I.). If, after that time it was found to have gone out by the morning, it was kindled again from the fire on the Altar (see above, end of Ch. XXV and on *Levit. VI, 6 & XXIV, 3*).