

*Shiur L'Yom Revi'i*¹

[Wednesday's Study]

READINGS: ***Torah Pekudei:*** **Exodus 39:27– 31**
 Haftarah: **I Kings 8:6-9**
 B'rit Chadasha: **I Corinthians 3:12-15**

*Betzal'el the son of Uri, son of Hur, of the tribe of Y'hudah,
made all that the Holy One commanded Moshe.*

[Exodus 38:22]

Today's Meditation is Psalm 90:1-2;
This Week's Amidah Prayer Focus is the *Gevurot*, Part II

Vaya'asu et-ha-kotnot shesh – And they made the tunics of fine linen Exodus 39:27a.

Sinai is buzzing. There is activity in every quarter of the camp. The sounds of hammering and sawing fill the air. The fires of smelting and forging rage and billow. Looms spin. Mortars and pestles clatter, and the sweet scents of fragrant oil and pungent incense arise. The desert floor is awash with brilliant colors and exotic textures. Workmen grunt in rhythm. Children with angelic voices sing. The tablets of testimony pulse with Divine energy. Moshe looks on and smiles. The great '*On Earth as it is in Heaven*'/*Tentmaker's Dream*' Project is well underway – and it promises to provide the fallen world with something almost as glorious as Eden! As the Psalmist says:

*Blessed is the nation whose God is the Holy One –
the people He has chosen as His own inheritance.*

[Psalm 33:12]

The Mish'kan - i.e. *Tabernacle* – is coming together, piece by piece. And the *tikkun*-making, *shalom asah*-ing people group that Torah calls *B'nei Yisrael* is showing glimpses of its world-changing potential. The soon to be embedded 'special forces' team of the Holy One is arising. The nation of *sh'ma* people the Holy One promised Avraham to bring forth out of slavery to offer a blessing to every family on earth is *alive and well*. The Hebrews are leading a great mixed multitude from every tribe, tongue, nation, and ethnicity in reporting for duty, being briefed on their mission, and whole-heartedly embracing the challenge. Their first communal project assigned to this great witness throng – the building of a portable Parlor of the Presence of their Heavenly King – is in process, *on task*, and *on time*. The way that project – and this people – are simultaneously coming together is *a beautiful thing to behold*.

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Today the focus of everyone's attention seems to be on the weavers and seamstresses. Inspiring *big'dei l'kaved ul'tiferet* – i.e. garments of majesty/substance and beauty/pleasantness - are being made ready for Aharon and his sons to wear. Humble craftsmen from every clan and tribe are pouring their hearts and souls into the project. Humble runners are rushing to and fro, bringing the craftsmen and weavers whatever materials they need. Betzalel seems to be everywhere at once, supervising every craft. Aharon's son Itamar is keeping a meticulous inventory of every stitch of linen, every shekel of precious metal, and every shard of precious stone assigned to the project. As the Psalmist exclaims:

*Behold how good and how pleasant it is
for brothers to dwell together in unity.*

[Psalm 133:1]

Out of the ashes of a golden calf induced holocaust, beauty is arising. The Healing Words of the Holy One are springing to life before our eyes. The Courts of Heaven are coming to earth. The Awesome Majesty of the Creator of the Universe is bringing the inspiration and empowerment of His own sweet *shalom* to fallen men. The narcissistic imaginations of human pseudo-intelligence and the dark, destructive energy of misdirected human emotion are melting away in the Presence of the God of Avraham, of Yitzchak, and of Ya'akov.

Tunic, Trousers, Sash, Turban and Crown

As we rejoin Torah's narrative of these events in progress, Betzalel is showing Moshe all the beautiful garments B'nei Yisrael has made for Aharon and his sons to wear. I hope the look, feel, and fragrance of *fine linen* pleases these men; but if not, it really doesn't matter. This story is not about them anyway; it is about the Heavenly realities they are assigned to 'shadow-frame' for us here on earth.

For Aharon, our *kohen gadol*, the Holy One is having us craft a stunning *linen efod* of blue, purple, and scarlet interlaced with finely beaten gold thread. It is designed to reflect and transmit the holiness of Aharon's counterpart in the courts of Heaven. We are also making Aharon an ornate *breastplate* on the front of which twelve precious jewels. This breastplate will bear the names of Ya'akov's sons, engraved in gemstone. Other persons in the camp are busy making Aharon a beautiful *outer robe*, from the hem of which will dangle pomegranates and bells.

For Aharon and all the *kohanim* of the Mish'kan the Holy One had B'nei Yisrael make five separate accouterments out of *shesh* – i.e. *linen*:

1. a sleeved *tunic* that would cover them from neck to ankle;
2. a *turban* to wrap around their head,
3. a *hat-like head covering* to go over the turban;
4. a set of *short pant-like undergarments*, and

5. a *sash* with blue, purple, and scarlet *thread woven into it*.

The sixth accouterment Betzalel made for each priest to wear, after he was completely dressed in the above-described linen regalia, was a headband of pure gold to go around the priest's headgear. Inscribed on this gold headband, in Hebrew, were the words *Kadosh l'Adonai*, which can be translated roughly into English as "*holy unto (or consecrated to) the Holy One*".

The Garments of Eden

Since the earliest days in the Garden of Eden there have been two things about mankind that the Holy One has focused on continuously. The first thing of which the Holy One has always taken great interest is *what food man should and should not eat*. See e.g. **Genesis 2:15-17, Genesis 9:3-4, Leviticus 11:1-23, Matthew 6:11, and Acts 15:20, 29**. The second thing concerning which the Holy One has always had a lot to say is what man should and should not wear.

In the Garden the Holy One replaced the fig leaves Adam and Chava had fashioned for themselves with another kind of garment altogether – what the Hebrew text of Torah calls *ketonet ohr* – a *coat-like garment of tanned animal hide*. **Genesis 3:21**.

Y'shua would specifically address these two important subjects which are always dear to the heart of the Holy One in the Sermon on the Mount, saying:

***I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink;
nor about your body, what you will put on.***

Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?

***“Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns;
yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?***

So why do you worry about clothing?

***Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin;
and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.***

***Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is,
and tomorrow is thrown into the oven,***

will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?

“Therefore do not worry, saying,

‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear?’

For after all these things the Gentiles seek.

For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.

***But seek first the kingdom of God and Its/His righteousness,
and all these things will be added to you.***

[Matthew 6:25]

Realizing that we are called to be a kingdom of priests, perhaps it behooves us to familiarize ourselves with the garments the Holy One very much wants to ‘add’ to us. But first we really must consider the question of whether the things we are

seeking first in real time really are the Kingdom of God on the one hand and Its/His Righteousness on the other.

Viewing the Priestly Garments as the Uniform of The Kingdom

Every king has emissaries and ambassadors. These are not just honorific positions. They are functional. The king appoints people he can trust to represent him and his kingdom, and speak and act as he would act if personally present.

Every emissary and ambassador of a king wears the uniform – or set of garments – which has been issued to him by the king. The uniform not only reminds the emissary of his obligations to the king; it also expresses to all those who come in contact with the emissary the character and the priorities of the king who is being served. During the reign of Sh'lomo [Solomon], son of David, he was visited at Jerusalem by the Queen of Sheba and her entourage. The Biblical account of this incident tells us:

*When the queen of Sheba saw the wisdom of Solomon,
as well as the house he had built, the food on his table,
the seating of his servants, the service of his waiters and their apparel,
his cupbearers and their apparel,
and his staircase by which he went up to the house of YHVH,
there was no more spirit in her.*

[II Chronicles 9:3-5]

Notice that an important component of the glory of Sh'lomo that overwhelmed the Queen was the *glorious apparel* worn by even the waiters and cupbearers in Sh'lomo's palace. What on earth could have been so impressive about the apparel of waiters and cupbearers of Sh'lomo? It is not specifically stated - but what is clear is that the garments Sh'lomo's attendants and emissaries wore were completely *consistent with and complementary to the other features of his glory* – i.e. his *wisdom, the majesty of the house he had built, the food with which he served his guests and dignitaries, and the royal staircase by which he had private access at any time to the earthly dwelling place of the Holy One.*

So is it possible that our garments – *i.e.* the coverings and accessories with which we present ourselves to the world - matter? Is what we wear as we walk through life claiming to be sons, daughters, and trusted servants and emissaries of a Great King important? Yes it is. Our kingdom uniform is to include three essential components: a *mantle of praise* [Hebrew *ma'ateh tehillah*], a *garment of salvation* [Hebrew *big'dei yeshah*], and a *robe of righteousness* [Hebrew *miyal tzedakah*]. See Isaiah 61:3, 10.

Ma'ateh Tehillah – i.e. a Mantle of Praise

If we are to represent our King accurately and flow in rhythm with His heart and personality we must become a people of *confident rejoicing* even in trials, of *heartfelt thanksgiving* even in times of lack, of *sincere blessing* even in times of persecution and oppression, and of *ecstatic praise* even in times when all Hell seems to be breaking loose around us.

Complaints, accusations, critical judgments, sarcasm, cynicism, fatalism, fear mongering, blame-casting, and all other expressions of negative thought and emotion convey the exact opposite message from what our King's Kingdom are about. Such things testify that we have been listening to the voice of the Serpent again instead of *sh'ma-ing* the Voice of the Bridegroom and trusting – and patiently waiting for - Him to bring about good in every situation.

Our King is not up in Heaven sweating and wringing His Hands. He is not in the least bit worried that His Kingdom is about to fall, or even that one of His strategies will fail. Nor is He even the slightest bit stressed, oppressed, distressed, depressed or angry. Nor is He melancholy, moody or snooty. Our King has absolute confidence that everything is going to turn out just fine – indeed, better than just fine.

Our King is at least two steps ahead of every enemy – and knows it. Our King has a guaranteed cure for every malady – and is not afraid to use it. Our King has a solution for every problem we face, a brilliant answer to every question we or anyone else might ever think to ask, and a glorious strategy of deliverance for every oppression, addiction, codependency, or other form of bondage we or any human being, culture, or nation can create. Our King has a restoration and restitution blueprint – *i.e. a tikkun* strategy - for every broken heart, life, family, and bloodline. He sees beauty in every pile of ashes. He knows how to bring forth light from every level of darkness, order from every level of chaos, and purpose and meaning from every level of vanity. He knows how to restore everything the locusts of this world have stolen, and to multiply the redeemed portion until the end of the matter is far better than the beginning. He knows how to turn every human being's mourning into dancing.

Big'dei Yesha - a Garment of 'Salvation'

The Great King wants our appearance to reveal to the world of the infinite wonder, the intricate fullness, the exquisite joy, the absolute delight, and the intimate pleasure of His *yeshua* – *i.e. salvation/deliverance/rescue/help*. The mantle of praise, thanksgiving, blessing, and rejoicing is therefore not optional for people who serve our King; such a mantle is an absolutely essential part of the uniform.

For us to project any sense, image, expression, fear, or emotion of oppression, addiction, codependence, or bondage is to be treasonously out of uniform.

Have we been delivered from the realm of darkness and all its bondage? How can we – why would we - fear it? Have we become a part of His Kingdom? How then can we – why then would we - dally with, much less wear the stains and evidences of indulging in, the inferior pleasures and toxic distractions of the world from which we have been gloriously redeemed?

Miyal Tzedakah - a Robe of Righteousness

We also must look different from the world if we are to call them unto our King and into His Kingdom. Our outer garments – what the world around us first sees - should literally shout ‘*tzedakah*’ – *i.e.* righteousness! Hunger for it! Study it’s essential elements and its parameters! Consider its beneficial effect on the Ecosystem! Seek after it! Pursue it with passion! But understand that there is a little problem with this robe. The problem is that any and all righteousness we try to conjure up by acting alone volition, by our own strength, as agents independent of our King – is going to end up looking and smelling like filthy rags. The absolute best righteousness a fallen human being – even a redeemed one – can bring forth by himself or herself is nothing but *a big, bloody, stinking mess*.

We thus need to realize from the beginning of the hunger, the seeking and the pursuing that we are going to need some big-time help putting on this robe called righteousness. We must not design this robe according to our ideas of what righteousness looks like. We must allow Him to make it for us – and fit us for it - according to His Wisdom and His Words. And we must not try to put this robe on by ourselves, either. We must allow Him to put it on us.

Indeed, since a robe of true righteousness is far too heavy for any human being to wear without buckling at the knees or falling under the weight of its glory, we also need Him to carry it for us. He alone can wear such a robe.

Our task is not to try to design, fashion, put on, or even to carry the robe of *tzedakah* – righteousness - by ourselves. Our task is humbly, reverently lean in so close to Him, and die to self so fully that we become so united with Him, that He does – and gets all the credit for - the heavy lifting and carrying of this robe.

The Modeling Men of the Kingdom’s Runway

Aharon’s sons were supposed to model for us the kind of garments of glory and beauty our King wants us all to wear. When you see the characteristics of their garments, therefore, do not think of them in theological terms - think of them as the model according to which you are called to present yourself to every sphere of

influence you have been given in this world – *i.e.* your home, your extended family, your circle of friends, your workplace, your marketplace, your community, your peer-group, your *polis*, and your cyber-domain.

Wear the uniform of the Kingdom well. Let the people who see you, like the Queen of Sheba, marvel at even the apparel of our Great King's waiters and cupbearers.

The Six Garments That Make Up The Uniform of the King's Royal Ambassadors

As stated above in this shiur, there are six essential components of the Kingdom uniform that Aharon and his sons were called forth to model for us. The Hebrew text of Torah calls the main outer garment *ha-k'tonet shesh ma'aseh* – *i.e.* *the robe of woven linen*. **Exodus 39:27**. When the Bible speaks of fine linen it is not merely referring to the familiar fabric produced from the fibers of the flax plant. In the Bible fine linen is, as the Book of Revelation states, symbolic of *the righteous acts of the saints*. **Revelation 19:8**.

Under the linen robe we are supposed to wear for all to see are to be *undergarments* of the same pure cloth. **Exodus 39:28(c)**. In even the hidden and very personal things of life we are to wear the fine linen of righteous thoughts, motives, priorities, words, and behavior.

Around our midsection is to be a beautiful *sash of fine woven linen* interlaced artistically with blue, purple, and scarlet thread, made by a weaver. **Exodus 39:29**. Think of this as the 'belt of truth' referenced by Shaul of Tarsus in Ephesians 6. The idea is that our righteous acts [*i.e.* our fine linen] are to be woven into every arena of life.

Finally comes the headgear of the Kingdom. As a unit, these four components of headgear constitute the 'helmet of salvation' referenced by Shaul of Tarsus in Ephesians 6.

The Four Components of the Kingdom Headgear

Like the sons of Aharon, our headgear – our helmet of salvation - is to consist of *four separate components*. First, the top of our head was to be wrapped in a *linen turban*. This signifies that our thought-life is the first place in which righteousness must manifest. We must wrap ourselves in His Thoughts, His Priorities, and His Wisdom – until self-will and personal opinion, and imperfect reasoning of our humanity.

Around the linen cap is to be placed a *headband of pure gold*, on which the

Hebrew phrase ‘*Kodesh L’Adonai*’ was inscribed. This phrase is usually translated into English as ‘*Holy unto (or consecrated to) the Holy One*’. **Exodus 39:28 – 30.** Gold is refined with fire. Our thoughts, attitudes, speech, and actions must all be similarly refined. And our minds, our emotions, our wills, our tongues and vocal cords, and our hands, feet, and facial expressions should always declare that we no longer live for ourselves, our pleasure, our agendas, our glory, or even our ministries – but solely for our King.

Finally, attached to the headgear is to be a *single strand of sky-blue linen thread*. We are to have one purpose, one focus, one passion, and one love. Like the single blue thread in the *tzit-tzit* which we are supposed to wear on the corners of our garments, this single blue thread is to keep us always mindful of all the instructions, directives, and testimonies of the Holy One, to do them, so that we and others will not follow the harlotry to which every fallen human being’s heart and eyes are inclined. See **Numbers 15:38-39**.

Questions Concerning Today’s Study

1. How many sons of Aharon were alive at this time so as to have priestly garments made for them? List the names of each of these men.
2. In the course of the Haftarah verses assigned for today the ark of the covenant will be moved to a new resting place.

[A] Where had the ark been residing prior to the day described in this haftarah aliyah?

[B] Get out your Bible atlas, or check another source for a map of ancient Jerusalem [in David and Shlomo’s time]. How far did Shlomo have to move the ark?

[C] Did Shlomo follow the example set by Moshe and order a *pekudei* [accounting] of the gold, silver, and other materials used in the construction of the *Mik’dash*?

[D] There was no gold, silver, or other materials ‘left over’ in connection with the construction of the *mish’kan*. Why then were the silver, gold, and vessels donated by David ‘left over’ and put in the ‘treasuries’ of the House of the Holy One? How did this happen – and what prophetic significance do you think it has?

3. In the readings assigned today from the apostolic scriptures [i.e. I Corinthians 3:12-15] we will read Shaul of Tarsus’ admonition to the contentious mixed multitude of *talmidim* in Corinth about being careful that whatever they build be firmly established upon and true to the foundation laid for them.

*Now if anyone builds on this foundation
with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw,
each one's work will become clear;
for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire;*

*and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is.
If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward.
If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss;
but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.*

[I Corinthians 3:12-15]

[A] What did Shaul mean when he spoke of 'building' upon the foundation? To what *foundation* was he referring, and what *kind of work* was he talking about being done on or in relation to that foundation?

[B] Shaul made a reference in this admonition to *a revelatory fire* that would test each man's work. What fire was he talking about?

[C] What did Shaul say would happen to a man whose work was burned by the revelatory fire about which he was warning the *talmidim* in Corinth?

May we all see the marvels of His House established in our lifetime.

The Rabbi's son

Meditation for Today's Study

Psalm 90:1-6

[A Prayer by Moshe, the man of God]

*O Holy One - you have been our dwelling place for all generations.
Before the mountains were brought forth,
Or ever you had formed the eretz and the world,
Even from everlasting to everlasting, you are God.*

*You turn man to destruction, saying, "**Shuv, B'nei Adam!**"
For a thousand years in your sight are but as yesterday when it is past,
As a watch in the night, You sweep them away as they sleep.
In the morning they sprout like new grass.
In the morning it sprouts and springs up.
By evening, it is withered and dry.*