

Shiur L'Yom Sh'lishi¹

[Tuesday's Study]

READINGS: ***Torah Pekudei:*** **Exodus 39:1-26**
 Haftarah: **I Kings 8:2-5**
 B'rit Chadasha: **I Corinthians 3:10-11=**

*There were twelve stones according to the names of the sons of Israel:
according to their names, engraved like a signet*

[Exodus 39:14(a)]

Today's Meditation is Psalm 90:3-6;
This Week's Amidah Prayer Focus is the *Gevurot*, Part II

Umin-ha-t'chelet v'ha-argaman v'tola'at ha-shani - And out of the sky-blue, dark red and crimson ... *asu vigdei-s'rad l'sharet b'kodesh* - they made drape-like cloths for the menial tasks of the service of holiness.... Exodus 39:1a.

Today's aliyah is about ordinary people being empowered by the Holy One to accomplish extraordinary things. Under the impetus of the Ruach HaQodesh the inspired men and women of B'nei Yisrael will make both the special cloths with which the holy furnishings and implements of the *Mish'kan* would be wrapped for transit; and the garments that Aharon and his sons would wear as they performed their *avodah*. The two matters are, of course, closely related. As it is written, *in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay [i.e. treasure in earthen vessels] some for honor and some for dishonor. Therefore if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work.* II Timothy 2:20-21.

What is the Big Deal About Clothing, You Ask?

Kingdom of Priests or Not, Why Can't We Wear Anything We Want?

Clothing is a 'big deal' to the Holy One; witness the Garden of Eden narrative. Remember, the Garden involved two levels of freewill choices: choices of 'food' [i.e. internal ingestion choices] and choices of 'apparel' [i.e. external presentation choices]. In the glorious days before Adam and Chava elected to follow the counsel of the serpent and ingest the fruit of *etz ha-da'at tov v'ra*, humankind in both its male and female prototypes tended and guarded the Garden in a state Torah describes as *arom* [KJV 'naked'] and *lo yitboshu* [KJV 'unashamed']. Genesis 2:25. As we all know, as soon as Adam ingested the fruit of *etz ha-da'at tov v'ra* both elements of that status changed dramatically. First came the fleshly emotion flush – i.e. the overwhelming sensation of uncomfortable exposure, embarrassment, and shame

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that in Hebrew is called *bush* (pronounced *boosh*). Right on the heels of this flood of negative emotion the serpentine pseudo-intellect kicked in. Adam and Chava suddenly sensed a need to cover up/hide their gender-specific external genitalia with unisex garments – *i.e.* fig leaf ‘aprons’. What Torah tells us Adam and Chava sewed for themselves out of those famous fig leaves was a *girdle* [Hebrew *chagor*] - *i.e.* a garment designed to both cover up and tightly compress, and thereby to disguise, their organs of gender-identification. When the Holy One, appearing in whatever manifestation He was using with Adam in that season, next came to *pay a pakad* visit² to the Management team He had left in charge of His Garden, Adam explained the sewn-fig leaf girdle he was wearing by saying: *I was afraid because I was arom* – KJV ‘naked’ – *so I hid* - Hebrew *chaba*, to conceal; to take evasive action to avoid detection and/or discovery; to flee in order to hide. **Genesis 3:10**. The Holy One did not throw a fit. He did not demand that Adam and Chava disrobe and go back to a state of arom/nakedness. He knew their innocence was lost – and He also knew that He could work this, along with everything else in this world, together for good for those who love Him, who are called according to His purposes. So, instead of petulantly demanding that Adam and Chava return to the prior state in which He created and blessed them, He upped the *ante*, so to speak. A big part of this had to do with clothing. Before sending Adam and Chava out into the ‘thorn and thistle’ world to tend - and, of course, to gradually be brought to *teshuvah* by it - He crafted for them a wardrobe of far more effectual and appropriate garments than the fig-leaf aprons they had crafted for themselves. Torah describes the process as follows: *The Holy One God asah-ed katenot ohr* – *i.e. made long coats of skin - for Adam and his wife, and He clothed them*. The Holy One wants our garments to do far more than merely cover up our private parts; He wants what we wear on our bodies – like what we say and do, how we carry ourselves, and how we *react to* and *interact with* the world in general – to clearly *identify us to the world* as being *His*, touched and defined by *His Handiwork!*

Should We Reconsider Why We Wear What We Wear, And What Message our Clothing Choices Are Sending to the World?

Apparel choices – *i.e.* what we do and do not choose to put on ourselves in the way of clothing, jewelry, headgear, accessories, hairstyle, cosmetic enhancement or minimalization, fabric, layers, color combinations, and on-body tools/equipment/adornment - tend to involve five elements:

² *Pakad* is the verb root underlying the name of the present parsha, *Pekudei*. To *pakad* means to arrange and conduct an *in-Person/Face-to-face visitation with a person or collective for the purpose of mustering, inspecting, assessing condition, maturity, and state of readiness for service, and engaging with appropriate input such as reward, discipline, equipping, and/or reassignment/redeployment of that person or collective*. Such a visit accomplishes both relational – *i.e. designed to foster relationship* – and functional – *i.e. designed to facilitate good, efficient, productive ecosystem/sphere-of-influence management purposes*.

1. What we are trying to cover up;
2. What are we trying to highlight/reveal/draw attention to;
3. What we are planning on doing while clothed as we are;
4. What kind of persona or image we are trying to project in the process; and
5. What kind of *message we are seeking to send to* and/or *reaction we are seeking to elicit from* the people we meet.

Once a person understands at least these five basic elements of the psychology behind *apparel choices*, one can begin make intelligent – and hopefully Kingdom-advancing and Covenantally-responsible – decisions as to what he or she should and should not put on. We represent a Glorious, Holy King and a Majestic but Unpretentious Kingdom; we should represent that King and Kingdom honestly and honorably. We should not try to draw undue attention to ourselves, nor should we try to attract attention from or elicit a hormonal-reaction, or any level of sensual-attraction, much less a response of ridicule or revulsion, from others. We are not our own – we belong to our King. We should never, under any circumstances, try to ‘fit in’ with pagan cultures by manner of dress or adornment; nor should we ever copy/emulate any of the fashions and accessory choices of the world. To the extent of the financial means the Holy One makes available to us, consistent with the demands of the *melachah* [*i.e. creative work functions*] in which we engage between Sabbaths, we should wear *big'dei l'kaved ul'tiferet* – *i.e.* garments of substance/glory and of beauty/pleasantness.

***The Medium Is Also Part of the Message –
Never Skimp on the Packaging!***

The *Mish'kan* the Holy One commissioned B'nei Yisrael to build was designed to be – indeed, *had* to be – a moveable structure. The Throne Room/Command and Control Center of the Kingdom of Heaven cannot be confined to one place. The Parlor at which the Creator of the Universe receives visitors must be able to go wherever the people are. The Stage upon which the Great Passion Play of Redemption is to be acted out for the world is Jerusalem – not Sinai. So, while the *Mish'kan* and all its furnishings were erected at a mountain in a remote wilderness, the Plan was always for B'nei Yisrael to introduce them – and the Beauty Realm they mirror - to all the world. The furnishings were far too precious, however, to be exposed to the open air and the rigorous hazards of desert travel. Exposure of these furnishings and implements to the glaring sunshine, the intense heat, the intermittent high winds, and the inevitable storms of blowing sand would take the luster right off of the precious metal coverings. Moreover, the shimmering gold of the ark and *kaporet*, the *menorah*, the table of showbread, and the *altar of incense*, as well as the shimmering bronze of the laver, would invite highwaymen and warlords to come to the Camp for all the wrong reasons. To display such Beauty in such a manner would be like offering that which is holy to dogs, or casting pearls

before swine. Cf. **Matthew 7:6**. With the exception of the brazen altar, the fire of which was to be kept burning at all times, therefore, all the furnishings and implements of the Mish'kan would have to be kept covered during transport. With what were these precious things to be covered? That was left up to B'tzalel and the craftsmen. There was no '*Torah of the Covering Cloths*' spoken on the mountain. Moshe provided no specifications. So, Betzalel and Aholiav used the same materials and dyes for the covering cloths as they had been instructed to use for the Mish'kan's curtains and drapes – *i.e.* large, custom-fitted sheets of fine bleached linen thread, dyed blue, purple, and scarlet, interwoven in stunning *keruvim*-themed patterns.

Whenever the Cloud lifted from Sinai – or from wherever the Camp of B'nei Yisrael happened to be at the time – out would come these *keruv*-cloths, and the packing would begin.

Betzalel knew a secret, you see. He knew that *the medium* is also part of *the message*. Divine Truth simply must be packaged with care, wrapped in Beauty, and delivered with Honor. Our King's Message cannot be communicated in anger, arrogance, sarcasm, self-righteousness or cynicism. Good news must always be delivered with *simchah* and *shalom*, not wrath and rage. Our tone of voice, our body language, our facial expressions, every element of our physical presentation is important. Each of these can be a critical factor that we, as Kingdom Ambassadors, must coordinate with and subordinate to our King's Grand Plan for the Redemption of mankind as a species and for the Restoration of Creation to its intended state of beauty, fruitfulness, and *shalom*.

In the Kingdom the Right Clothes Really Do Make the Man

We were first introduced to the priestly garments that the Holy One had designed for Aharon and his sons to wear eleven chapters of Torah ago in ***Tetzaveh***. The Holy One utilized a whole chapter of Torah at that time [*i.e.* Exodus chapter 28] to instruct Moshe about the garments He wanted His priests to wear every time they stepped foot in the *Mish'kan*. He gave very specific and detailed instructions about the fabric that was to be used, the colors that were to be displayed, and the stunning package of accessories that were to be added. And He said that the reason for all this was that Aharon's garments would be ***l'kavod u'ltiferet*** [*i.e. of substance/for glory and for beauty/pleasantness*]."

The Holy One specifically instructed Moshe that Aharon, as the one assigned to act in the earthly realms of the *Mish'kan* as *kohen gadol*, was to wear eight garments "when ministering. The eight special priestly garments that Aharon was to wear

every time he served in the holy place³ consisted of:

1. A specially designed jeweled breastplate;
2. A unique efod/apron;
3. a divinely designed sky-blue robe;
4. a prescribed form of tunic;
5. a special turban;
6. a special sash;
7. special shorts made of linen; and
8. a uniquely designed ‘crown’ made of gold.

The Holy One then described each of these special garments to Moshe in intricate detail. These garments had to be made *with wisdom and understanding*. They had to be produced exactly as the Holy One designed them. Not only were they to serve as an aid to the performance of Divine Service – their construction, donning, wearing and care was decreed to be a form of divine service in itself.

Aharon, dear brother ... well, let us just say you *never looked so good*. In this instance it is absolutely true that *clothes are going to make the man*.

Garments That Shout the Realities of Imputed Righteousness

The High Priest’s first task was to *dress like – in order to represent - Messiah*. No matter how sinful the person wearing the Messianic garb might be, when he put on the garments selected by the Holy One *righteousness was imputed to him because of the garments*. Whose righteousness was imputed to him? The righteousness of the one who wears the garments in the Heavenly Courts, of course. The righteousness that was imputed to the high priest on earth was the righteousness of Messiah Himself - the one who has always been and will always be the high priest in the Heavenly Courts of our King. See Psalm 110:4⁴ and Hebrews 5:6, 5:10, and 6:20.

The garments that the Holy One made for Adam and Chava, the coat of many colors Ya’akov made for Yosef, and the garments the Holy One directed B’nei Yisrael to make for Aharon, you see, were all merely prophetic remembrances. The Holy One agreed, for the sake of the Covenant He cut with man, to look upon those garments and see *Messiah’s perfect priesthood, His perfect ‘ministry’ and His perfect ‘offering’*. Much like the bow in the cloud mentioned in Genesis 9:11-17 and like the blood on the doorposts mentioned in Exodus 12:21-23 these garments were *signs of a covenant*. The Holy One promised that when He saw such things – when His appointed representatives of His people clothed themselves

³ He also had a much simpler, more humble, white linen garment that he was to wear each year when he entered the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement [*Yom Kippur*].

⁴ In Psalm 110:4 the Messiah-King is told: *The Holy One has sworn v’lo yinchem, ‘You are a kohen l’olam al-dabar Melki-Tzedek*. This is quoted/referenced in Hebrews 5:6, 5:10 and 6:20.

in them in accordance with His instructions – He would impute righteousness to them and forgive their sin and would therefore not visit them with judgment.

As the representative and first fruit offering of resurrected, ascended, and glorified humanity, Messiah the *Kohen Gadol* of Heaven wears on our behalf *garments for beauty and for honor*. To the extent we are ‘*in Messiah*’ we are clothed in those garments as well. As a result, His righteousness is imputed to us. Abiding *in Messiah*, and therefore wrapped up in his *garments for beauty and for honor*, we are enabled to constantly experience and draw strength from intimate relationship with the Divine Bridegroom of Heaven. United with Messiah and clothed in His garments of righteousness *all our prayers are acceptable and all our offerings and sacrifices are a sweet savor to the Holy One*.

Hence the garments that are to be worn by the *kohanim* in the earthly scale model of the *Mish'kan* – the part anchored in the physical realm – must be of both Divine design *and* Divinely empowered construction. These garments were therefore not sewn like other clothes. Each item was instead woven as a single, seamless piece⁵.

Of course, as we have discussed in these studies, everything about the Aharonic Priesthood’s service in the earthly courts of the Holy One – including the garments Aharon and his sons wore – was designed to portray on earth a reality present in the Heavenly Courts. The garments the Holy One instructed Moshe to produce on earth were a ‘shadow’ of the garments the Great High Priest of the Courts of Heaven wears. The earthly as *zahav* [gold], *techelet* [sky blue (thread)], *argaman* [dark red (thread)] *tola'at shani* [crimson (thread)], and *shesh* [linen] served prophetic purposes far more important than merely covering the earthly priest’s nakedness or keeping him warm. These very special garments are for *kavod* [glory] and for *tiferet* [beauty]. What does this mean?

“L’Kavod ul’tiferet” - Insight From the Sages of Israel

Nachmanides, also known as *the Ramban*⁶, explains concerning the High Priest who served in the *Mish'kan* and Temple on earth: “*He should be dignified and glorious in dignified glorious garments as the text says: ‘Like a bridegroom adorned with glory.’ Isaiah 61:10.* For these constitute *royal raiment*. Nachmanides taught that the priestly garments were not just made by Betzalel, Oholiav and the weavers and craftsmen to specifications, but were actually made with full intentionality – *i.e. awareness of the sacred purposes for which they were designed*

⁵ Except for the sleeves - which were woven separately and sewn onto the main body of the robe.

⁶ Nachmanides was a Sephardic Jew born in 1194 CE. He grew up and studied in Girona, Spain. He made his living through the practice of medicine, but his passion was the study of and teaching of the Torah. A Kabbalist who leaned toward the mystical interpretation of the text [unlike the literalist Maimonides, who is called the RAMBAM], he wrote many hallowed texts.

– and with *kavanah* – *i.e. full attention to of and reverence for the multiple layers of truth expressed in them*. Each priestly garment and accessory was designed by the Holy One to represent His **covering of** [*i.e. His advance provision of temporary atonement for*] a particular type of breach of the Covenant that He foreknew that that the Covenant nation would commit. Tractate Zevachim 88:B of the Babylonian Talmud posits that the High Priest's tunic was designed to serve as a temporary covering for the *shedding of innocent blood*; that his linen trousers were designed to cover and temporarily atone for *transgressions resulting from over-indulgence of sexual appetites* [*i.e. adultery, fornication, homosexual relations, bestiality, and incest*]; that his turban was designed to provide the necessary covering for *personal pride and haughtiness of attitude*; that his sash was designed by the Holy One to cover and temporarily atone for "sins of the heart" - *i.e. coldness/hardness, and complaint, as well as improper thoughts*; that the breastplate was designed to cover *errors in judgment*; that his efod was designed to cover *the making and worship of idols*; and that his long sky-blue robe was designed to cover sins of negative, critical, accusatory speech.

As you might imagine, neither Aharon nor any other priest was allowed to serve in either the *Mish'kan* or the Temple unless he was wearing the sacred garments. As the Talmud states, "*While they are clothed in the priestly garments, they are clothed in the priesthood; but when they are not wearing the garments, the priesthood is not upon them.*" **Babylonian Talmud, Zevachim 17:B.**

Why was so much significance attached to these garments? Why were they considered to have the capacity to elevate ordinary men – like Aharon and his descendants - to the level of sanctity required for the *avodah* of the *Mish'kan*? The prophetic book of Yechezkiel [a/k/a 'Ezekiel'] makes it clear that these garments possessed a certain contagion of holiness, which was powerful enough to sanctify all those who merely come in contact with them. See Ezekiel 44:19, where it was decreed that the priests who ministered in the holy place were to take off the garments they had worn in performing such services "... *so as not to hallow the people with their garments*".

As the representative and first fruit offering of resurrected, ascended, and glorified humanity, Messiah the *Kohen Gadol* of Heaven even today wears corresponding *garments for beauty and for honor*. And to the extent we are 'in Messiah' we are clothed in those garments as well. As a result, His righteousness is imputed to us.

The Garments We Wear Today –

As We Serve as the Temple of the Holy One's Spirit in Real Time

Abiding in *Messiah*, and therefore wrapped up in his *garments for beauty and for honor*, we should be continuously being transformed by *the contagion of His*

holiness. We should be experiencing and constantly drawing strength from our intimate connection to the Divine Bridegroom of Heaven. And we should be serving as conductors through which the contagion of His Holiness is released into our homes, our families, our circle of friends, our marketplace encounters, and every sphere of influence we touch.

United with Messiah and clothed in His garments of righteousness *our prayers are acceptable to Heaven* and *all our offerings and sacrifices fill the earth with a sweet savor.* And united with Messiah we should be dying daily to this world and its distractions and pleasures, and becoming more and more aware of, enamored with, and identified with *His Wisdom, His Thoughts, His Words of Life, His Ways* and *His Glory.*

You check your own garments, Beloved, and I will check mine.

Who and what do the physical garments we wear as we walk through our sphered of influence glorify? Whose beauty are the clothes we wear designed and worn to reflect? Of Whose identity and priorities do the garments we put on each day testify?

In the Kingdom of Heaven the right clothes really do make the man.

Questions For Today's Study

1. In today's aliyah Moshe turns his attention to the order and manner in which they constructed the garments to be worn by the priests.

[A] Make two columns on your paper. On the left side, list the various priestly garments in the order they were given by the Holy One [Exodus 28].

[B] On the right side, list the various priestly garments in the order they were constructed.

[C] Are there any differences? If so, what and why?

2. There is one phrase repeated at the end of each series of verses in chapter 39.

[A] What is that phrase?

[B] Make a list of the verses where that phrase appears.

[C] Why do you think that phrase is repeated so often?

3. Focus on the stones or gems that the high priest's garments contained.

[A] On what garments were stones or gems placed?

[B] What kind(s) of stones were used in each such garment?

[C] Look up the names of these stones/gems in as many books on

symbolism and dream interpretation as you can find and write a brief summary of what you think each kind of stone symbolizes.

[D] What was inscribed, if anything, on each such stone/gem?

4. The Haftarah reading for today continues the narrative of what happened when Shlomo assembled the elders [*zakenim*] and princes [*nasim*] of the tribes of Israel to Har Tzion [Mount Zion] in the year the Temple was completed.

*All the men of Yisra'el assembled themselves to king Shlomo at the feast,
in the month Etanim, which is the seventh month.*

*All the Zakenim of Yisra'el came, and the Kohanim took up the ark.
They brought up the ark of the Holy One,
and the tent of meeting, and all the holy vessels that were in the Tent;
even these did the Kohanim and the Levites bring up.*

*King Shlomo and all the congregation of Yisra'el,
who were assembled to him,
were with him before the ark, sacrificing sheep and oxen,
that could not be counted nor numbered for multitude.*

[I Kings 8:2 -5]

[A] What time of year did Shlomo's assembly occur?

[B] In connection with what Biblical Festival was the transportation of the **aron** [ark] accomplished?

[C] Was Shlomo's presentation of animal sacrifices all along the route the ark traveled Torah submissive? Why or why not? [Before answering, read Deuteronomy 12]

5. In today's Brit Chadasha reading Shaul of Tarsus is continuing his reprimand of Messiah's followers in the Greek city of Corinth whose eyes were, like many today, on the *ministers* of the Holy One rather than on the Holy One Himself. Shaul had spent quite a bit of time in Corinth in the company of two Messianic Jews [Aquila and Priscilla]. After Shaul left however the fledgling group of young believers quickly split into competing factions. Each faction attached itself to a particular teacher. Shaul scolds them for this, reminding them:

*According to the grace of the Holy One which was given to me,
as a wise master builder I laid a foundation, now another builds on it.*

But let each man be careful how he builds on it.

*For no one can lay any other foundation
than that which has been laid, which is Y'shua the Messiah.*

[I Corinthians 3:10-11]

[A] In Strong's and Gesenius, look up the Hebrew word **yesod**, translated into English as 'foundation' [Strong's Hebrew word #3245, spelled *yod*, *samech*, *dalet*, pronounced *yaw-sode*']. Describe the word picture you see developing around this word as you read about it in Strong's, Gesenius, and in Richard's [or Vine's]

Expository Dictionary of Bible Words.

[B] When and in what way did Shaul lay a ‘foundation’ [Hebrew, **yasod**] for the people of Corinth? [Read Acts 18:1-18 before answering].

[C] Shaul indicates that there can be no other **yesod** [foundation] laid by men than Yeshua the Messiah. Explain how Yeshua functions as a *foundation* for your life?

*May everything you do be **ka'asher tzivah Adonai et-Moshe**
[i.e. as the Holy One had instructed/enjoined Moshe].*

The Rabbi's son

Meditation for Today's Study

Psalm 90:3-6

*You return man to **daka** [dust particles/fragments of earth], saying,*

"Shuvu! [i.e. Turn/return] 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.