

## Parshat Tetzaveh Glorified Garments

Summary by Channie Koplowitz Stein

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Mrs. Shira Smiles

In describing the garments of the *kohen gadol*, the Torah says they should be worn *lechovod uletiforet/* for glory and for splendor. The Ramban explains that they resembled garments of royalty. The Shaarei Derech asks, aren't luxurious garments a manifestation of physicality? Why would a *kohain* need it? Rabbi Belsky zt"l explains that indeed, these garments reflected prestige, but it was not arrogance. People dress not just for themselves, but also for others and for particular situations. The *kohain's* attire when entering the *beit hamikdash* reflected the honor he accorded Hashem. These special garments put him in the proper frame of mind to perform his holy service.

In contrast, Noam Siach points to the very telling verse in the Megillah that Ahashuerosh displayed the riches of his kingdom [and donned the priestly garments]. Ahashuerosh did not possess an innate sense of royalty and glory. Therefore, he needed to display his wealth and impress others. Yet when Mordechai wore the royal garments, they reflected his true essence. The clothes did not change Ahashuerosh. They merely concealed his inner emptiness. Yet when Mordechai donned his royal clothing, they were a reflection of his inner, royal, honorable essence

When *Bnei Yisroel* saw the *kohain gadol* in all his glory, his appearance would instill in them awe of Hashem and they would be moved to repent, writes Rabbi Sternbach. People in positions of influence, must appreciate the effect they can have on others and must strive to dress in honorable fashion.

The Ruach Eliyahu writes that just as the

sacrifices were agents of atonement, so too were the priestly garments. The *me'il/robe* atoned for sins of *loshon horo* and the *tzitz/headplate* for sins of brazenness. When *Bnei Yisroel* would see the High Priest dressed in these vestments, they would recognize in him the embodiment of *yirat shamayim/fear* of Heaven, and they would be moved to repentance. They observed the breastplate and realized that the twelve stones near the High Priest's heart symbolized his carrying the weight and the problems of all the members of the twelve tribes. They were moved to empathy, to value and respect each other, and regret any wrongs they had already done. These garments not only atoned, but influenced proper behaviour.

When Mordechai went out in the streets, clad in the *techeilet/blue* of the royal robes, the Jews envisioned the blue thread of the *tzitzit* wrapped around the white threads. They were reminded of the sea, the sky, and eventually God's holy throne, and how Hashem surrounds all that goes on in the world, orchestrating it all, writes Rabbi Reiss citing the *Imrei Emes*. Thus, began a great *teshuvah* movement climaxing in re-acceptance of the Torah out of love.

Ahashuerosh understood the power these garments had to influence others. Unfortunately, he hoped to influence others to follow his improper behavior. But the clothes also have an impact on the wearer. That is how Rabbi Wolfson explains Ahashuerosh's directive to Mordechai and Esther at the end of the Megillah, to do with the Jews as they saw fit.

Adam before his sin was dressed completely in *ohr/light* (with an *aleph*). After the sin, he was dressed in *ohr/animal skin* (with an *ayin*). Hashem desires that mankind transform the animal skin back to light, writes the *Moda Labinah*. In the right person's hands, that transformation happens. In the hands of Nimrod and Esau, these special garments were devoid of spirituality. But when Yaakov wore them to receive Yitzchak's blessing, Yitzchak smelled the scent of Gan Eden emanating from them. Yaakov was to be the *tikun/repair* for Adam's sin.

Rabbi Feldman relates that the Roman Empire placed value only on power, self-aggrandizement, and the physical world in complete conflict with the doctrines of *Yisroel* which strives for spiritual perfection. This is the struggle we continue to face today. Are we consumed by outer appearances only, or are we searching for the spiritual, inner essence? Are we interested in fleeting pleasure, or are we working toward a relationship with God?

The Rama, on *Shulchan Aruch* notes that there is a custom to wear *Shabbat* clothes on Purim. Aruch Laner comments that this helps us on Purim highlight that Adam's clothes belong to the Jewish people. When we wear these special clothes, we are representing a certain standard in our service to Hashem that fills us with a greater joy than even *Yom Kippur*. On *Yom Kippur*, we withdraw from the world, but on Purim, we take the physical world, enjoy it while dedicating it to the service of Hashem. We take the *ohr/animal skin* and transform it to *ohr/light*.



## Chulda: A Message of Hope Part II

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Rebbetzin Leah Kohn

The two *batei mikdash* were destroyed but the *mishkan* was hidden away. Although its physical structure may be gone, its secret strength is still with us today. Similarly, the *menorah* of the first *beit hamikdash* was concealed, yet its light remains. The *sefarim* tells us that the light of the Chanuka candles brings the light of the *mishkan* into our exile. This is what Chulda told Yoshiyahu. You tried to prevent the destruction but the nation is not ready for redemption now. They must go into exile to correct what needs rectification. It will be long and painful but the *aron*, the place where Hashem rests, where He spoke to us from between the two *keruvim*, will remain with us forever. Yoshiyahu didn't fail. The process of teshuva that he began became the kernel for the process of repentance that will take place when *Mashiach* comes. He planted the seed and it continues to grow through the generations.

The *churban* began an era where Hashem would be hidden. We have to struggle to reveal His presence. That is the difference between the period of the written law and the period of the oral law. The written law is black and white. We know exactly what is written.

The oral law is hidden. We have to labor to reveal it. Before the destruction, Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai asked the Roman emperor to give him Yavne and its scholars. There was a flourishing of the study of the oral law after the destruction and this saved us. Although the *churban* caused Hashem to be hidden, He will always remain in our midst. How revealed He will be depends on us. The *aron* signifies the power of Torah. The *menorah* symbolizes light and clarity. Our job is to invest in revealing Hashem through *Torah*.

Yoshiyahu sent messengers to Chulda because women are merciful. *Rachamim* means Hashem doesn't punish right away although we may deserve it. He gives us time to correct our deeds. And if there is hope for correction then the element of justice allows for it because it will bring to a point where we will achieve atonement. The word *rachamim* comes from the root word *rechem* - a womb. Something is developing that in the future will be perfect. This is the concept of mercy. Jewish women always have a vision of the future. In Egypt when the men were devastated by their reality the women brought

children into the world. They took along tambourines to celebrate the redemption. They saw the difficulties of the time as a process of eventually reaching ultimate good. Yoshiyahu wanted a prayer for the future and this is why he sent messengers to Chulda.

Chulda teaches us for all generations that the world will come to a purpose through our investment. As impossible as it looks we must believe there is hope. Hashem, although hidden, is with us in exile. He gave us the means to reveal him through *Torah*. We have to go through a process. We have to correct like a fetus in the womb that which happens to us individually and nationally. There are levels of development, layers that are being laid for the future *beit hamikdash*. Yoshiyahu said "*Hashem hatzadik*," Hashem knows what He is doing. For the whole world to be redeemed a lot has to happen. But it's in the hands of each one of us to redeem ourselves and to help others to be redeemed. The individual redemption is not dependent on the global redemption. Each time we do the will of Hashem we add bricks to the future *beit hamikdash*.

## Ruach Hakodesh and the Human Soul Part II

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Rebbetzin Tziporah Heller

The *neshama* is divided into five segments -*nefesh, ruach, neshama, chaya, and yechida*. The *neshama* extends into the body although it still has some consciousness of what is going on in the higher world. There are some things you cannot see but your *mazal* sees it, meaning the highest aspect of yourself. Your soul might know something but it's not conveyed in words or pictures to your mind. You might have these moments of being spiritually alive and you wonder what brought that about. It is your *nefesh* experiencing connection.

Time is divisible in two segments -day and night. Day is for doing and night is for rest. Repose affects you both physically and spiritually. When you are asleep your physical body is at rest and your mind and emotions are quiet. Only your creative imagery is still active. This is where dreams come from. While asleep, the *ruach* is separate from the body. Only the most basic *nefesh* self, the

aspect of the soul that keeps you alive is still there. Your higher self is wandering out in the spiritual world. Hashem could let your soul encounter any of the spiritual forces He uses to rule the world. As such, dreams could be true in the highest sense or completely false. If it's coming from a low source, it might just be telling you either what your body or emotions or the food you ate has to say about the day. If it's coming from a higher place it still might be coming from a positive or negative force and it can be very confusing. Sometimes a person might know through these dreams coming from a higher place what the future will bring. Hashem might want a person's soul to know something so he will let the person know it through one of his servants. It will go down till the *nefesh* and affect the person's imagery either in a way that's clear or puzzling.

Most dreams come from images that are part of one's physical consciousness or from above. The *neshama* experiences something.

If it is from a higher source what it will see will be true and if it's coming from other forces it will be false. This is what is meant when it says in *Masechat Berachos* that sometimes a dream will come through an angel and sometimes through a demon. The sages say there is no dream without random aspects. Even if the source is higher it has to filter down through the imagery one lives with. In *Orchos Tzadikim* it says if during the day your thought patterns are honest your dreams at night will come from a place of truth. This is why even ordinary people will sometimes see things that later turn out true. A person is complex consisting of a lower and higher soul. The lower soul governs instinctive and physical activity such as thought and feeling. The higher soul only wants connection with Hashem. There are times when we can experience this connection more through what we choose to do and sometimes through the course of dreams.