

In this week's *Parashah*, Moshe Rabbeinu is commanded to make the *Bigdei Kehunah* / Priestly Garments. R' Moshe ben Nachman *z"l* (*Ramban*; 1194-1270; Spain and *Eretz Yisrael*) writes: The *Kohen* should be honored and glorified through honorable and glorious garments, as the verse says (*Yeshayah* 61:10), "Like a bridegroom who dons priestly glory." The *Kohen's* garments are regal garments, similar to the garments that kings wore at the time the Torah was given, writes *Ramban*. (*Ramban* continues by citing verses from the Torah, *Nevi'im* / Prophets and *Ketuvim* / Writings, showing that royalty wore clothing made of the same materials and in similar styles to the *Bigdei Kehunah*.)

R' Michel Zilber *shlita* (*Rosh Yeshiva* of the *Zvhil yeshiva* in *Yerushalayim*) elaborates: The *Bigdei Kehunah* were not merely a detail of the *Kohen's* preparations to perform the Temple service; they were an integral part of his fitness to serve, as we read (*Shmot* 29:9), "You shall girdle them with a Sash--Aharon and his sons--and you shall wrap the Headdresses on them; [then] the priesthood shall be an eternal duty for them." On this verse, the *Gemara* (*Zevachim* 17b) comments: "When their garments are upon them, their priesthood is upon them. When their garments are not upon them, their priesthood is not upon them." (See the *Gemara* there for the practical significance of this statement. It does not mean that *Kohanim* lose their status when, as today, they have no priestly garments.) – *Continued in box inside* –

Shabbat

"They shall rejoice in Your kingship--those who observe the *Shabbat* and call it a delight. The nation that sanctifies the Seventh [day]--they will all be satisfied and delighted from Your goodness."
(From the *Shabbat Mussaf*)

R' Matisyahu Salomon *z"l* (1937-2024; *Mashgiach Ruchani* of the *Gateshead Talmudical College-Etz Yosef* in England and *Beth Medrash Govoha* in Lakewood, N.J.) explains: Who will rejoice in *Hashem's* kingship? Those who observe the *Shabbat* and call it a delight, *i.e.*, those who keep the laws of *Shabbat* and strive to use *Shabbat's* delights as a springboard to recognize *Hashem's* kindness to His creations. People in this group see *Shabbat's* pleasures as having independent worth and also as a tool for spiritual growth. (If one enjoys the delights of *Shabbat* solely for his own pleasure, however, he is not fulfilling the *Mitzvah* of *Oneg Shabbat* properly, R' Solomon writes.)

Continuing on to the next clause: Who is the nation that sanctifies the Seventh [day]? Those who will be satisfied and delighted from Your goodness. This is a higher level, on which people ask themselves, "Why did *Hashem* create all these pleasures?" Obviously, there had to be a higher purpose than physical enjoyment. That purpose is so that we can serve *Hashem* by studying Torah and performing *Mitzvot* with our bodies strong and our minds at ease. Those in this group "are satisfied" and "delight" in Your, *Hashem's*, goodness--not in any other goodness. They do not eat and incidentally recognize *Hashem's* kindness. For this group, the delights of *Shabbat* exist primarily for the spiritual benefits one can derive.

R' Solomon adds: Commentaries make seemingly conflicting statements about whether *Shabbat's* delights are themselves an end or are merely a means to an end. From the above, we see that both views contain some truth. For those who "will all be satisfied and delighted from Your goodness," *Shabbat's* delights are only a tool to reach an end. But for "those who observe the Sabbath and call it a delight," *Shabbat's* pleasures are merely an end in themselves--though even those people should, at least, reflect on *Hashem's* kindness. (*Matnat Chaim: Shabbat* p.183)

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“And you--bring near to yourself Aharon your brother, and his sons with him, from among *Bnei Yisrael*--Aharon, Nadav and Avihu, Elazar and Itamar, the sons of Aaron--to minister to me.” (28:1)

R' Yitzchak Klein *z"l Hy"d* (rabbi of Kosice, Slovakia; killed in the Holocaust) writes: It is a wonder that Moshe Rabbeinu “was exceedingly humble, more than any person on the face of the earth” (*Bemidbar* 12:3). He knew that he had attained greatness that no human being before or after had attained. He knew that he spoke to *Hashem* “face-to-face” (*Bemidbar* 12:8). He knew that the Torah was given through him--and over the objections of the angels, no less.

How did Moshe do it? He attributed all of his greatness to the merit of the Jewish People, whose agent he was. Likewise, he was told to take the *Kohanim* “from among *Bnei Yisrael*”--to serve *Bnei Yisrael*, and not to lord over them. (*Birkat Avraham*)

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R' Zilber continues: The requirement for special garments when offering a sacrifice dates back to the beginning of history. *Midrash Rabbah* states that Adam wore “priestly garments” when he offered a sacrifice, and he passed those garments down to his descendants. Noah wore these garments, as did his son Shem, also known as Malki Tzedek “priest of *Kel*, the Most High” (*Bereishit* 14:18). “Esav’s beloved garments” that Yaakov wore when he took food--a *Korban Pesach*--to Yitzchak were none other than those garments.

Originally, notes R' Zilber, the priestly service was performed by *Bechorim* / the firstborn. (This is why Esav had Adam’s garments but Yaakov was entitled to take them from him.) In this light, we can understand the connection between priestly garments and royal garments--for the firstborn generally inherit positions of royalty also.

R' Zilber adds: Physical garments on a person’s body allude to something deeper--the Torah and *Mitzvot* that clothe a person’s soul when it leaves this world. Thus, in the short prayer recited when donning a *Tallit*, a man says, “Just as I cover myself with a *Tallit* in this world, so may I merit the rabbinical garb and a beautiful cloak in the World to Come.” This is also the deeper meaning of the morning blessing, “*Malbish arumim*” / “He clothes the naked.” When we sin, as every human being does, some of our spiritual garments are stripped from us. However, in His kindness, G-d returns our garments to us when we awaken in the morning. Similarly, Aharon’s Priestly Garments were meant to “repair” the sin of Adam, for which the latter was stripped of his spiritual garments. (*Bayam Derech: Ma'amarei Olam* #74)

“*V'atah tetzaveh* / And you shall command *Bnei Yisrael* that they shall take for you pure, pressed olive oil for illumination, to kindle (literally, ‘to raise’) the lamp continually.” (27:20)

R' Eliyahu Guttmacher *z"l* (1796-1874; Polish rabbi; early advocate of resettlement of *Eretz Yisrael*) writes that there are three aspects to a person: his *Guf* / body, his *Nefesh* / soul, and his *Mamon* / possessions. Everything associated with a person fits into one of these categories. (Children, for example, can be viewed as an extension of one’s body or one’s soul, or as possessions, R' Guttmacher writes.)

R' Guttmacher continues: The acronym of these three things is “*Magen*” (מגן). Thus, *Hashem* said to Avraham (*Bereishit* 15:1), “Fear not, Avram, I am a *Magen* / shield for you.” *Hashem* could have chosen another word that connotes a “protector,” but He chose “*Magen*” to indicate that He would protect Avraham’s body, soul, and possessions. This is what we allude to, as well, when we say in the first blessing of *Shemoneh Esrei* that *Hashem* us our “*Magen*.”

When Yaakov returned from Lavan’s home, the Torah describes him as arriving “*Shalem*” (שלם): *Shin* for “*She'ero*” (another word for “body”), *Lamed* for *Limudo* (his Torah learning, alluding to his soul), and *Mem* for *Mamono*, his possessions. Likewise, when we pray that *Shabbat* should enter “*B'Shalom*,” we are praying that *Shabbat* should find us whole in body, soul, and property. And, of course, we say in *Kriat Shema* that one should love *Hashem* with his heart (body), soul, and possessions.

The *Mishkan*, also, included these three components, writes R' Guttmacher. The *Menorah* alludes to the soul, as we read (*Mishlei* 20:27), “A man’s soul is the lamp of *Hashem*.” The *Kohanim*, whose bodies were sanctified, allude to the body. And, the wealth of tools, implements, and garments in the *Mishkan* are its possessions. Through the building of the *Mishkan* and the service there, these three components of a person can be sanctified.

R' Guttmacher concludes: *Hashem* told Moshe, “And you shall command *Bnei Yisrael* . . .” “And you”--first sanctify yourself in all three respects. Then, “*Tetzaveh* / Command *Bnei Yisrael*.” The word “*Tetzaveh*” has a second meaning: You shall join together with them. Thus, *Hashem* was telling Moshe that he should first sanctify himself, but then he should join together with *Bnei Yisrael*, and they with him, for further growth.

In this light, adds R' Guttmacher, we can understand why our verse refers to “raising” the lamp. The “lamp” is the soul, and the goal is to raise it continually.

(*Derashot V'chiddushei R' Eliyahu Guttmacher: Margalioi Tovot*)