

So you all are probably wondering what in the world does “tetzaveh” mean? Well in the first pasuk of my torah portion the answer appears. Tetzaveh means “commend” because god commanded Moses to command the children of Israel to obtain pure olive oil to be used to light the everlasting light in the temple.

My parsha is filled with commandments. There are commandments from God to Moses. God, in turn, commands Moses to command Aron and his sons to do lots of thing related to the temple and about job of the Kohanim. The Kohanim were the priests in the holy temple. Aron was the first Kohan Ha’gadol - which is the high priest. I think it is a bit odd and interesting that most of the commandments are about the the clothing of the Kohanim. A question that I have been thinking about is - why is most of my Parsha about the clothing of the Kohanim? Why does God think it is so important that we know about the clothes, and that Aron and his sons wore the right clothing?

My question to you is why do you think it was so important to God that he made so many commandments about what exactly the Kohanim should wear? While you are thinking about that, I will tell you what the Kohanim actually wore.

First I will tell you the four things that all the Kohanim wore on an everyday basis. First, they wore a ketonet, which is a full length tunic. Second, meech-na-sayim, which are pants. Third, a miznefet or migba’at which are two kinds of turbans. And the fourth thing that they would all wear is an avnet which is a long sash wound above the waist like a belt.

In addition to these four garments, the kohen hagadol - the high priest - wore an extra four special garments. An ephod, which is an apron-like garment made of blue, purple and red dyed wool. A choshen which is a breastplate containing 12 different precious stones, each one with one of the names of

the twelve tribes of Israel. A Me'eI which is a cloak of blue wool with gold bells and pomegranates at the bottom. And the tzitz which is a golden band worn on the forehead over the miznefet.

So now, getting back to the original question: Why was it so important to God that the Kohanim wore these special garments? There is a partial explanation in the Parsha that the Kohanim wore the special garment "lichavod ool'tefaret" - for "honor and splendor". As you can see, the Parsha doesn't help me a lot in answering this question. So I had to think about it myself.

When I thought about this question, a lot of different sayings and expressions came to my mind ; For example, on the one hand - there's the expression "clothes make the man." But on the other hand there are a bunch of sayings that say the opposite. Like "Appearances can be deceiving". Or "all that glitters is not gold". Or "Don't judge a book by it's cover". Or "Beauty is only skin deep" Or finally, "he is a wolf in sheep's clothing."

The second group of expressions all basically say the same thing: They all say that you shouldn't judge something or someone by how they look. For example - one time my little brother Adin and I walked into a little bakery. Adin ordered a small plain-looking pastry that we had ordered on an earlier visit to the bakery. We both knew it was really good. This time, however, there was also a much bigger pastry which caught my eye - it was very fancy and covered with decorations. So I bought the big fancy pastry. After Adin finished his small pastry he walked back to the car with a big smile on his face. As for me - the big fancy pastry was disgusting and I had to force myself to finish it. That day I learned that simply because something looks amazing you may be wrong - inside it might actually be the opposite.

Or another example - if you see someone who has the nicest clothes, car and the nicest house you shouldn't always assume that the person is great. Sometimes he can be nice, but other times it might be a person who - under the surface- could be very mean and annoying.

A lesson from this is that you should trust your instincts  
Before you make a judgement about someone, you try to get to know that person better and see what they are like on the inside.

The final expression that I want to talk about is the expression - "*the clothes make the man.*" This is a completely different idea from all the other expressions.

It's kind of like in my life - When I put shorts and a t-shirt on I feel relaxed. I feel free because I don't have to be concerned if my shorts or t-shirt get wet or muddy.

When I wear my cool party clothes I feel adventurous and gutsy.

When I wear my VTT school uniform I feel a great connection with my school and I feel that when I do something good I am representing my school and all the kids.

When I put on my hockey gear and my Thunderbird hockey Uniform I feel part of the hockey community. When I skate for the puck, I have no mercy and try my hardest because I know that my pads will protect me if I fall.

When I put on my suit and tie I feel more respected. If I wore Jeans and a t-shirt to synagogue I would feel like someone who just doesn't care. When I wear nice clothing it shows I care about the event and take things seriously. I feel calm,

responsible and more grown up because I am wearing nicer clothes.

I think the expression "*the clothes make the man*" is the expression that most connects to my Parsha and the Kohanim. I think God wanted the Kohanim to wear special holy clothes because in a way the clothing could help "make the man" - or in this case help "make the Kohan". The clothing would not automatically make the Kohanim holy, but the clothes would remind them that they were serving God and would help them always try to be holy.

So when the Parsha says that the Kohanim wore their special holy clothes "*lichavod ool'teefaret*" - "*for honour and spender*" what I think the Parsha means is that the Kohanim must remember to always behave in a way that brings honour and splendor to God and the Jewish people.

There's just one thing I would like to say before I conclude. Rabbi Yossi has been my Bar Mitzvah teacher since last January, which is over a year. Yossi, thank you so much for helping me learn my Bar Mitzvah. You made it really fun. And I'd like to say a special thank you for one thing you said that might just change how I do in life. Early on in my learning I wasn't making much progress so Yossi told me - it doesn't matter how much time I spend working on my Bar Mitzvah. What really matters is how much I *focus* when I'm learning. This has helped me so much and it's a lesson I will use for the rest of my life.