

[Continued from the front page]

The priests' clothes were made by the nation of Israel and owned by them. If a priest served in the Temple wearing his own clothes, he held no priestly status at all. Rav Samson Raphael Hirsch explains that **dressing in their official robes transformed the priests from individuals with their own idiosyncracies into religious spokesmen of the Jewish people**: "Only in this attire does he come forward as the servant of the nation".

Perhaps these two interpretations express the twin challenges of the Israeli rabbinate. Our **rabbinic leaders cannot be people who are closeted away with their books and their personal religiosity that they cannot relate to the common people**. On the other hand, rabbis who dress in the nation's clothes easily slip from religious, moral guides into nationalist spokesmen justifying every misdeed done by our people.

Our Priests wore clothes designed by God, and made by the nation. They were to be outstanding moral and religious leaders sensitively teaching the will of God to the people of Israel and the rest of the world.

The writer is:  
British United Synagogue's rabbi in Israel, Ohr Torah Stone, Beit Midrash for Human Rights Jerusalem

### Angel For Shabbat

A collection of Divrei Torah by Rabbi Marc D. Angel, on the weekly Torah portions and on the Jewish holidays.  
220 pages/soft cover  
40 Shekels incl. Postage  
To order: [neemaney@toravoda.org.il](mailto:neemaney@toravoda.org.il)



If you want to receive our newsletter please send an email to  
[neemaney@toravoda.org.il](mailto:neemaney@toravoda.org.il)

See our website:  
**[Toravoda.org.il](http://Toravoda.org.il)**

Following on from last year's successful conference:

Save the date for this year's Modern Orthodox conference:

**Modern Orthodox: Educating the Next Generation**

When: Chol haMoed Pesach - 21st April, 17th Nissan

# ET LIDROSH

עת לדרוש

בס"ד, גליון 42

## Parshat Tetzave The Priest's Clothes Rabbi Gideon D. Sylvester

*You shall make garments of holiness for Aaron your brother for glory and for splendor. (Shemot 28: 2)*

A friend of mine is the rabbi of his local synagogue. "I am going to make you an offer you can't refuse" a congregant once told him, "I am going to buy you an exquisite *atarah* – a silver chain just like mine to place around the collar of your Tallit. When you wear it, you will stand out a mile; and everyone will see that you are an important rabbi". When my friend heard this, he balked. He understood that whoever dresses the rabbi, owns the rabbi and he did not want to be owned by anyone.

**How we dress influences the way that we behave.** The Sefer Hachinuch (Positive commandment 99) stresses that when wearing his special uniform the priest was influenced and conditioned to act in a very specific way. Our question is how these clothes effect the relationship between the Jewish people and its religious leadership.

Religious figures are sometimes very shy individuals. Those who excel at Talmudic study sometimes struggle to relate to those who do not share their religious fervor. If this is true of the modern rabbinate, the Netziv suggested that it was even more characteristic of a High Priest who lived in the Beit Hamikdash immersed in spirituality. The Netziv suggests that the High Priest's special outfit was a constant reminder to the rest of the nation that however detached their religious leader was from the rest of the nation, he was an important leader to be respected.

To Sponsor a copy of Et Lidrosh email: [neemaney@toravoda.org.il](mailto:neemaney@toravoda.org.il)





## Different Approaches

“And you shall command the children of Israel...and bring near unto you Aaron your brother and his sons with him...and you shall speak unto all who are wise-hearted...” —Shemoth 27:20; 28:1; 28:3

In the opening verses of this week’s Torah portion, God instructs Moses to address three different groups. These instructions are given through three different phrases, suggesting **different approaches of communication**.

Moses is told to “command” the children of Israel. A leader needs to be able to demonstrate leadership by making decisions, giving orders, and demanding compliance.

At the same time, a leader also must know how to “bring near” those who work under his authority. A commanding approach is necessary in some situations, but one must not become an autocrat. Moses must seek to bring people near—to win them over with kind and conciliatory words.

When relating to those who are wise-hearted, Moses is told to “speak” to them, that is, to engage them respectfully, as though speaking to equals. The wise-hearted are those who are self-motivated, who understand the nature of the task before them. They don’t need to be commanded, or even persuaded; they need to be spoken to in order to clarify the plan of action that they and the leader will jointly pursue.

Different styles of leadership are needed in different situations and when relating to different types of individuals. Ultimately, a leader needs to understand that his/her responsibility is to win cooperation, to move people forward in a manner that is productive for the community and that is empowering for the individuals involved. Sometimes one must be decisive and demand compliance. More frequently, one must engage people with kindness and bring them near.

Most often—especially when dealing with thinking, educated people—the approach needs to be one of mutual respect. **A leader is most effective if the people have confidence** that he/she is not an arbitrary autocrat nor a self-serving sweet-talker—but rather, is **a clear-sighted and respectful person who understands the need to work with people in a harmonious, constructive manner**.

For a weekly Angel for Shabbat: [Jewishideas.org](http://Jewishideas.org)

## Clothes Make the Man



Nearly the entire parsha deals with the priestly garments. Their importance is so significant that a priests’ work is rendered invalid if performed without them.

Rabbi C. Morrison writes (Rav Kook in Eyn Aya 2) that clothes have a dual purpose. Their first function is their utilitarian value. Clothing protects us from the elements, cold in winter and heat in summer. In this respect, our apparel corresponds to the fur and feathers of animals and birds. Animals, however, never need to change clothes, or worry about acquiring new garments when they wear out.

The second function of clothing is unique to humans. Our attire affects our state of mind - how we feel about ourselves, and the image we wish to project. Casual clothes make us feel comfortable. Formal wear makes us feel dignified, and we behave accordingly. We feel unhappy when wearing unattractive or ill-fitting clothes, and feel good wearing complementary clothes. This aspect also reflects how others judge us. Opinions are formed of people in the first minutes of a meeting. Part of this judgment is based on attire.

This second aspect has great ethical value. It stresses our distinction from animals, and animalistic behavior. It allows us to feel a heightened sense of holiness and dignity. Covering our heads, modest dress, tefilin, tzitzit and shaatnez bestow a sense of modesty and closeness to God.

Originally clothes were a Godly gift to mankind as they left Gan Eden. Adam’s sin resulted in a discrepancy between man’s internal world and his external appearance. Adam and Chava responded to their nakedness with fig leaves to cover up their nakedness. This did not correct the discrepancy as it was simply a functional solution. Hashem’s present was “garments of Or”. This is interpreted as clothes to ‘light’ up the way to solve the discrepancy or as “skin” from sacrifices they offered up. Today **clothes are a function we use to resolve the discrepancy between our internal world and external appearance**.

Why do we dress the way we do? Certain positions require certain clothes. A judge requires a wig and a soldier his uniform. We would regard it strange if we saw a policeman on duty wearing a wig or a judge dressed as a policeman. We all dress up daily – how many of us pay attention to what clothes we will put on – it is part of our morning chores. When we get dressed in the morning is it to cover something up or, maybe, to be somebody else. If you were to dress up as a judge tomorrow would that make you a judge? No! Of course not! **Do clothes make the man or should we not judge a book by its cover?**