

The major topic in the *parasha* this week is the instructions regarding making the *begday kehuna* – the clothes for the *kohanim*. It was a big day for the Jewish people when Moshe was instructed about the clothing his brother and nephews would wear during the service in the Mishkan. As Moshe is commanded early in the *parasha*:

וַעֲשִׂיתָ בְּגָדֵי קֹדֶשׁ לְאַהֲרֹן אֶחָיֶךָ לְכָבוֹד וּלְתִפְאַרֶת

You shall make holy garments for your brother Aharon, for honor and glory.

The commentators ask, for whom did these garments serve as a source of honor?

The Iben Ezra says that these clothes were לְכָבוֹד for Aharon, as they were a way for Aharon to be honored and distinguished amongst the people. Since these were clothes that only Aharon and his children wore, to the exclusion of everyone else, they brought him a measure of honor and glory. As the Iben Ezra writes:

לְכָבוֹד וּלְתִפְאַרֶת : שִׁיתְפָּארוּ בָהֶם , כִּי אֵין אַחַד מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל שִׁילְבַּשׁ כְּאַלֶּה :

The Kohanim will be honored and glorified through these clothes because no one else from the Jewish people wore anything comparable to these clothes.

The Ramban says that these clothes were actually similar to the clothes a king would wear during that period in history.

שִׁיחִידָה נִכְבַּד וּמְפֹאָר בְּמַלְבוּשִׁים נִכְבָּדִים וּמְפֹאָרִים. . . כִּי אֱלֹהֵי הַבְּגָדִים לְבוּשֵׁי מַלְכוּת הֵן , כַּדְמוּתֵן יִלְבְּשׁוּ הַמַּלְכִּים בּוֹמֵן הַתּוֹרָה

For he was honored and glorified with these suitable and beautiful clothes . . . since these clothes were royal garments like the clothes that kings wore during the time of the Torah.

The Seforno writes that these clothes were a source of honor and glory to G-d.

לְכָבוֹד : לְכָבוֹד הָאֵל יִתְבָּרַךְ בְּהֵיוֹתָם בְּגָדֵי קֹדֶשׁ לְעִבּוּדָתוֹ :

These clothes were to bring honor to G-d, may He be blessed, as they were holy clothes to be used for His service.

According to these commentators, the purpose of Aharon wearing clothes that were “for honor” were in order to bring both honor to himself and honor to G-d while involved in the service in the Mishkan.

We likewise have a similar responsibility and obligation to dress appropriately when involved in service to G-d. Namely, when one goes to shul to *daven*, one should wear clothes that are לְכָבוֹד וּלְתִפְאַרֶת both for the wearer and for G-d.

The Sefer HaChinuch explains further that the **thoughts** of the wearer of the priestly garments would be affected by the **act** of wearing beautiful clothes.

משרשי המצוה, היסוד הקבוע לנו כי האדם נפעל לפי פעולותיו ואחריהם מחשבותיו וכוונותיו, והשליח המכפר צריך להתפיס כל מחשבתו וכוונתו אל העבודה, על כן ראוי להתלבש בגדים מיוחדים אליה, שכשיסתכל בכל מקום שבגופו מיד יהיה נזכר ומתעורר בלבו לפני מי הוא עובד, וזה כעין תפילין שנצטוו הכל להניח בקצת הגוף שיהיה לזכרון מחשבת הכשר. ואף על פישגם הכהן היה מניח תפילין, לגודל ענינו היה צריך גם זה.

Included among the reasons of this mitzvah, is the foundation that is established for us that a person is impacted according to his actions, and his thoughts and intentions will follow these actions. Now the agent who is achieving atonement (for others) must focus all of his thoughts and intentions towards the service. Thus, it is fitting for him to clothe himself in garments that are dedicated to this service, so that when he looks at any place on his body, he will immediately remember and awaken in his heart an awareness before Whom he serves.

Just like the *kohen*, when we wear appropriate clothes for *tefilla*, we accomplish the same goal. The act of wearing special and proper clothes for *tefilla* will help us think the correct thoughts for our own service to G-d, our *tefillot*, to be accepted before G-d.