

Torah Portion Tetzaveh
Exodus 27:20 – 30:10

The word *tetzaveh* means “to command” and this portion begins with Yahweh commanding Moses to tell the Children of Israel to bring the pure olive oil so that the eternal flame in the Menorah will remain burning before Him. This portion of scripture also describes the garments worn by the priests; *kohanim* in Hebrew.

Again, Yahweh spares no detail.

These scriptures regarding the priestly garments can sometimes get confusing. I would like to elaborate upon this detail of the High Priest garment.

The High Priest had two sets of garments. One set was called the “**white garments**” and they were only worn on Yom Kippur. (Leviticus 16:1-4 then again in verses 23-24) These were linen trousers, linen tunic, linen sash, linen turban. He **ONLY** wore these on the day of atonement when he entered the Holiest Place.

The everyday garments were called the “golden garments”. This garment consisted of: (Exodus 28:1-43) Breastplate, an ephod or ornamented vest, a robe, a tunic, a turban, sash, and linen underpants. The Ephod was made of (vs. 5 and 6) gold, blue, purple, and scarlet, and the fine linen.” Likewise, the breastplate was made of the same thing (vs.15). The robe was made of all blue(vs. 31), the tunic of fine linen (vs. 39), the turban of linen (vs. 39) and the sash or belt of woven work (vs. 39) The plate of pure gold on the turban which said “Holiness to Yahweh” was held in place by a blue cord. The underpants were made of linen.

Now, according to all Rabbis’ (writings that I have found), Josephus and the New Temple Institute, the High Priest’s golden garments consisted of the weaving of linen and wool together (sha’atnez). This is forbidden in scripture in Leviticus 19:19 and Deut. 22:11, or is it? In the scriptures in Exodus you will notice the word thread is not in the original Hebrew; instead it says gold, blue, purple and scarlet, **AND** the fine linen. The second” and” means that it was not of the same material as the colored thread. They say the colored thread was of wool and linen, because when it comes to textiles it had to be wool or linen. Kairite Jews do not believe this, all other sects do (I think). Josephus lived in the first century and saw the High Priest and declares this to be true. The great Rashi declares this to be true. They also believe that the sash had wool and linen, the blue cord holding on the gold plate had wool and linen and the blue tunic was all wool. My personal opinion – for what it is worth-is that it is true. If so, it would shed a whole new light on Leviticus 19:19 and Deut. 22:11, but that is a different teaching and thus I will not go there in this Torah Portion review. I will save it for a lesson on the tzitzit.

As described above, the High Priest did not wear his golden garments into the Holiest Place on Yom Kippur.

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