

# IF THE ANALOGY FITS

*by Rabbi Label Lam*

Why is the commandment of creating oil for the menorah the brief introduction to a Torah portion consumed with the creation of the garments for the Kohanim, the priests in the Temple? What is the connection?

Only the very first drop squeezed from an olive was to be used to fuel the glorious lights of the menorah. Perhaps there's a hint in this simple fact about the subject of clothing. That a solitary drop from the essence of the olive was used to shed a pure and holy light we can learn how to dress ourselves.

To understand what it means to "dress", let's go back to the beginning of the "garment business". Why was the fig leaf insufficient for Adam and Chava? Why was The Almighty compelled to make for them more complete outfits?

The original and ideal garment of the soul is the human body. Initially, Adam and Chava were perfectly suited for those clothes that both hid and revealed sufficiently the Divine light that was sewn into the heart of humanity.

When that light was diminished, the clothing of skin alone could too easily be mistaken for an animal form. Muscles and reproductive organs are not unique to man alone. The sight of "these" to impure eyes is a trigger to the animal instinct and not the noble soul.

Adam and Chava took a defensive approach by immediately covering their private parts to shield the selfish impulse. However, The Almighty saw that it was not proper for the protagonist of creation to slink shamefacedly throughout history merely covering up while simultaneously revealing his folly and foible.

To dignify "Man" again, Hashem upgraded the first human invention and created proper clothing. Now, when a fully dressed person stands before us, we see only two uncovered areas. Only the most uniquely human and G-dly functions are framed by a complete set of clothing; A human face and hands. Proper clothing is meant to again reveal that which is great, pure, and creative within Mankind and to inspire actions that reflect the deeper dimension of his being.

Imagine you've written a great book or you have a wonderful business. You would like to put an appropriate cover on the book or, for your business, you'd like a neat logo or web site. A creative consultant will spend some time investigating the essence your book or business. He will carefully

formulate a picture that will reveal enough and conceal sufficiently, inviting the searcher to look deeper beyond the cover page to discover the essence; the message; the product. That's the goal!

He will not obscure, mislead, distract or even overstate the message. Even if it electrifies initially, once the integrity of the vital contents have been compromised, a chasm of credibility prevents the viewer from reaching and appreciating the real prize.

When the Dubner Maggid was asked why he answered all questions with a metaphor or parable he answered this question in typical fashion with a story. "Truth" was walking down the street stark naked. No one was able to stand comfortably in his presence. Then his friend "Parable" fitted him with a suit so people could tolerate and appreciate his essence.

It's no mistake that the garments of the High Priest are fitted by The Great and Original Designer of all. Who better understands the inner beauty, the true essence of the client? Perhaps we can understand the need to briefly discuss the splendid light of the menorah emanating from a few pure and select drops of olive oil before we can appreciate that garments are not meant to cover beauty but to reveal the heart. And as the saying almost goes, "If the analogy fits..."

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