



# Likkutei Sichos

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## Dressing Down

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## 1.

### UNDERSTANDING RASHI

At the beginning of our *parshah*, where it says,<sup>1</sup> “Hashem said to Moshe, ‘Speak to Aharon... he may not come at all times into the Sanctuary.... With this Aharon shall come into the Sanctuary,” the verse goes on to say,<sup>2</sup> “He shall don a sacred linen *kutonesh*....”<sup>3</sup>

Rashi {in his caption} quotes the words “linen *kutonesh*, etc.,” and interprets:

This tells us that he does not serve within {the Holy of Holies} wearing the eight garments in which he serves outside {the Holy of Holies}, which have gold in them. For a prosecutor may not become an advocate.<sup>4</sup> Instead, he serves in four garments like an ordinary *kohen*, all made of linen.

The straightforward understanding of Rashi’s explanation seems to be as follows:<sup>5</sup> Rashi addresses why the command of donning these garments (“He shall don a sacred linen *kutonesh*..., they are sacred garments..., and don them”) is stated as a novelty, a *chiddush*.<sup>6</sup> The obligation of both making the garments and wearing them<sup>7</sup> was mentioned explicitly in *parshas Tetzaveh*:<sup>8</sup> “When they enter the Tent of Meeting or when they approach the Altar to serve in holiness so that they do not bear a sin and die.”

In our *parshah*, what is added by this command to Aharon?

Rashi explains that the verse here does not specify the priestly garments or inform us of the command to wear them when entering to serve in the Sanctuary. Instead, it comes to say — “this tells us” — that Aharon must don **these** garments exclusively. He is not to wear the “eight garments,” which we

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<sup>1</sup> {Vayikra 16:2-3.}

<sup>2</sup> Vayikra 16:4.

<sup>3</sup> {The *kutonesh* was the tunic worn by both the *Kohen Gadol* and ordinary *kohanim*.}

<sup>4</sup> *Rosh Hashanah* 26a.

<sup>5</sup> See *Gur Aryeh*, *Devek Tov*, and *Sifsei Chachamim* on Vayikra 16:4.

<sup>6</sup> {A novel idea — since this command was recorded in *parshas Tetzaveh*, why does the Torah repeat it here?}

<sup>7</sup> *Shemos* 28:2 ff.

<sup>8</sup> *Shemos* 28:43 ff.

learned about **previously** in *parshas Tetzaveh*. While serving, Aharon would always wear these eight garments.

## 2.

### QUESTIONING RASHI

Further clarification, however, is required:

In general, Rashi **adds** the phrase “this tells us” whenever an idea introduced is not explicit from the simple meaning of the verse. Instead, the expression, “this tells us,” implies that the verse is coming to **tell us** a certain additional idea aside from what the verse says explicitly.<sup>9</sup> In our case, this is confusing: Doesn’t the verse state explicitly that Aharon dons only four garments and not eight?

The end of Rashi’s remarks — “Rather, {he serves} in four garments like an ordinary *kohen*, all made of linen” — also requires clarification:

- a) In the verse, we see that Scripture enumerates four garments. Why must Rashi reiterate this?
- b) What additional insight does Rashi provide by saying, “like an ordinary *kohen*,” since from earlier (in *parshas Tetzaveh*), we already know that an ordinary *kohen* dons only “four garments”?<sup>10</sup>
- c) In any case, what difference does it make practically if these garments were “like [those that] an ordinary *kohen*” wore?
- d) “And all four garments are made of linen”—the verse explicitly states that each garment should be made of linen. What does Rashi add by saying, “And all four garments are made of linen”?

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<sup>9</sup> See, for example, Rashi on *Vayikra* 18:3, and several other places.

<sup>10</sup> *Shemos* 28:40-42.

### 3.

#### AN ATTEMPTED ANSWER

Seemingly, we can postulate that with his explanation, Rashi intends to forestall a completely different interpretation of this verse:

From the verse, “a sacred linen *kutonesh*...,” we might have learned the following: Since we already know from *parshas Tetzaveh*<sup>11</sup> that Aharon, the *Kohen Gadol*, had eight garments, which were all intended “for glory and splendor,”<sup>12</sup> how could it be that when entering the Holy of Holies once a year, Aharon would don only four of those garments and not the other four? Wouldn’t this mark a **decrease** in his “glory and splendor”?

Consequently, we might have learned that the intent of this verse was not to teach us that Aharon only needed to don **these** four garments {on Yom Kippur}, since obviously (as he did so the entire year) Aharon would have had to don all eight garments (as is implied by other Torah commentators).<sup>13</sup> The verse intends to teach us about the **variation** on Yom Kippur. On Yom Kippur, the four garments had to be different: The four garments year-round — (as stated in *parshas Tetzaveh*:)<sup>14</sup> “The *kutonesh* of linen..., a *mitznefes*<sup>15</sup> of linen and an *avneit*...”<sup>16</sup> — were made of<sup>17</sup> “twisted linen.”<sup>18</sup> In contrast, the four garments worn on Yom Kippur were<sup>19</sup> “a **linen** *kutonesh*, **linen** *michnasayim*...,<sup>20</sup> **linen** *avneit*..., and a **linen** *mitznefes*...” They were not made from “twisted linen” but were woven from a single thread.<sup>21</sup> Thus, the verse discusses (the donning of) only these four garments.

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<sup>11</sup> *Shemos* 28:4 ff.

<sup>12</sup> *Shemos* 28:2.

<sup>13</sup> See *Ibn Ezra* on *Vayikra* 16:4; *Rashbam* on *Shemos* 28:35.

<sup>14</sup> *Shemos* 28:39.

<sup>15</sup> {The turban worn by the *Kohen Gadol*. Ordinary kohanim wore a head covering called a מגבעת.}

<sup>16</sup> {The “*avneit*” was the belt worn by both the *Kohen Gadol* and the ordinary kohanim.}

<sup>17</sup> *Shemos* 39:28.

<sup>18</sup> {שש משזר - twisted linen, as explained in *Shemos* 39:28.}

<sup>19</sup> {*Vayikra* 16:4.}

<sup>20</sup> {The “*michnasayim*,” were the pants worn by both the *Kohen Gadol* and ordinary kohanim.}

<sup>21</sup> {בד, which is never defined as twisted linen, thus it means a single thread; see fn. 17 in original.}

With the phrase in his commentary, “this tells us...,” Rashi rejects the above interpretation. The verse does not merely specify a **difference** that relates only to four garments (but does not preclude the *Kohen Gadol* from donning the other four garments). Instead, as Rashi put it, the *Kohen Gadol* “does not serve within {the Holy of Holies} wearing the eight garments.” The verse comes to reject {the use of all} the garments “in which he serves outside {of the Holy of Holies}”; “Instead, {inside the Holy of Holies} he serves in **four** garments like an ordinary *kohen*.”

#### 4.

##### QUESTIONING RASHI

However, this explanation also has difficulties.

This earlier understanding of Rashi still does not adequately resolve why Rashi adds the phrase “this tells us.” After all, ultimately, Rashi does not add anything to what the verse explicitly says. He merely forestalls an erroneous interpretation that does **not** accord with the implicit understanding of the verse.

Aside from the above difficulty, the conclusion of Rashi’s commentary, “(like an ordinary *kohen*) all made of linen,” is not merely superfluous; it emphasizes the opposite! These words leave room for an erroneous conclusion that the *chiddush* of the verse pertains to **these** four garments (that the verse does enumerate) — that “all of them are of linen” — contrary to the way Rashi’s commentary was explained above, that the *chiddush* of the verse is (only) that Aharon does **not** don the **other** four garments.

We can offer the following clarification:

Rashi addresses a question prompted by the verse: Why is this verse (about donning the garments) recorded here? It should have been recorded **before** describing all the *avodos* {Temple services} performed by the *Kohen Gadol* and the sacrifices he offered on Yom Kippur (in the previous verse). Alternatively, it should have been recorded after Scripture enumerates all the *avodos* that must be performed while wearing the garments.<sup>22</sup> We could have simply learned that the Torah says this command immediately following the verse,<sup>23</sup> “With this..., with a bull — a young male of cattle — for a *chatas*,<sup>24</sup> and a ram for an *olah*,”<sup>25</sup> teaching that Aharon should only wear the four garments when sacrificing “a bull — a young male of cattle — for a *chatas*, and a ram for an *olah*,” since these are sacrifices **designated for him** on Yom Kippur.

However, from the subsequent verses, it is clear that (a) his *olah* — the “ram for an *olah*” — is offered while wearing other garments, {as the verse states} “and don his garments,” which refers to “the eight garments in which he serves all the days of the year”;<sup>26</sup> and, (b) all *avodos* leading up to his *olah* — the “two he-goats for a *chatas*”<sup>27</sup> from “the assembly of Israel” and the *avodah* of the incense, etc., listed **after** our verse — must also be performed while wearing the four garments.

Therefore, Rashi clarifies: “This tells us that he does not serve **within** {the Holy of Holies} wearing the eight garments in which he serves **outside** {of the Holy of Holies}....” Even though the straightforward understanding of Scripture suggests that this applies to both sacrifices mentioned in the previous verse —

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<sup>22</sup> After verse 22.

<sup>23</sup> {*Vayikra* 16:3.}

<sup>24</sup> {Often translated as “a sin offering,” it was brought for the accidental violation of specific sins, and by the *Kohen Gadol* on Yom Kippur.}

<sup>25</sup> {Commonly translated as “an elevation offering,” it was consumed completely on the altar.}

<sup>26</sup> *Vayikra* 16:24, and Rashi there.

<sup>27</sup> {*Vayikra* 16:5.}

the *chatas* and the *olah* — the verse should not be interpreted this way. Instead, the verse comes to teach that “he does not serve **within** {the Holy of Holies} wearing the eight garments in which he serves **outside** {of the Holy of Holies},” and the ram for the *olah* is sacrificed outside of the Holy of Holies. On the other hand, all subsequent *avodos* — the sprinkling of the blood of the two he-goats and the incense, etc. — are all performed inside (or are necessary for the *avodah* inside) the Holy of Holies. Consequently, the subsequent *avodos* are performed while wearing the four garments.

This is why the garments are specifically recorded after the verse, “with this Aharon shall come into the Sanctuary...,” and not earlier, before **all** the sacrifices, nor later, after **concluding** the sacrifices designated for Yom Kippur.

By placing the verse here, the Torah teaches us that these four garments are worn not because of (the *avodah* performed on) the day of Yom Kippur but because “with this, **Aharon shall come into the Sanctuary**” — the **chiddush** of (Yom Kippur, of) serving **within**. The *avodah* within cannot be performed while wearing the eight garments “in which he serves outside.” (Rashi is not [primarily] referring to the year-round *avodah* but to the garments “in which he serves outside” on the day of Yom Kippur itself.)

## 6.

### UNDERSTANDING RASHI

On this basis, we can also resolve the quandary as to why Rashi does not address a question regarding the straightforward meaning of the verse:

Since “a prosecutor may not become an advocate,” which is the reason the *Kohen Gadol* may not perform his *avodah* while wearing golden garments, why **does** he, then, serve outside the Holy of Holies while wearing golden garments?

Concerning the *Kohen Gadol*’s year-round *avodah* — even when performing an *avodah* that constitutes atonement — we could suggest that the

principle “a prosecutor may not become an advocate,” is said only regarding Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, since the **entire point** of the day is (as its name indicates) — **atonement**. Therefore, the day’s *avodah* must be performed with particular care so as not to leave room for a “prosecutor.”

However, regarding the *avodah* of Yom Kippur itself, this matter requires clarification: The entire Yom Kippur *avodah*, both the *avodah* within and the *avodah* outside, should not have been performed while wearing golden garments!

The clarification for this is alluded to by the fact that the verse, “a linen *kutones*...” follows the verse, “with this Aharon shall come...”:

By prefacing, immediately at the beginning of the narrative of the Yom Kippur *avodah*, with the words, “with this Aharon shall come..., with a bull...,” Scripture teaches us that the core of Yom Kippur is (not the day’s ***avodah***, rather) that “**Aharon shall come into the Sanctuary.**” Entering the Holy of Holies is what brings atonement. However, to enter the Sanctuary on Yom Kippur appropriately, it must be “with this”: Various sacrifices and *avodos* are necessary (both within and outside — such as the ram for the *olah*).

Consequently, it is understood that the cautionary principle “a prosecutor may not become an advocate” refers primarily to (the **place** of the atonement on Yom Kippur ) the *avodah* within the Holy of Holies.



According to Rashi's commentary, as explained, the *chiddush* of the verse “a linen *kutonesh*” lies in what it negates, teaching us that the *Kohen Gadol* may not serve within while wearing golden garments, for “a prosecutor may not become an advocate.” In this light, however, the following is unclear:

When learning the verses in *parshas Tetzaveh*, we see the extraordinary care that must be exercised to don the garments to ensure that the *avodah* is performed “for glory and splendor.” In fact, “A *kohen* who performs the *avodah* while missing a garment is subject to death.”<sup>28</sup> As such, how could it be possible that due to the principle that “a prosecutor may not become an advocate,” the *Kohen Gadol* would not be garbed “for glory and splendor” (in the most complete way)? He did not even wear the complete complement of garments he normally wore!

[We can add: If we had learned that Yom Kippur entails a **unique** law whereby the *Kohen Gadol* was required to wear another type of garment designated for Yom Kippur, this would not be such a difficulty. Just as throughout the year, the Torah records the law that a *Kohen Gadol* dons eight garments, the Torah would also have recorded a law for him to wear four special garments on Yom Kippur.

However, since, according to Rashi, there is no unique law or *chiddush* regarding the four garments worn by the *Kohen Gadol*, instead, there is merely a prohibition against wearing the golden garments on Yom Kippur, the question arises: It ultimately turns out that it is as though the *Kohen Gadol* is lacking garments, specifically on Yom Kippur!]

Therefore, Rashi must forestall this misunderstanding by saying that the *Kohen Gadol* dons four garments “**like an ordinary kohen.**” The understanding that the *Kohen Gadol* wears only four garments within the Holy

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<sup>28</sup> Rashi on *Shemos* 28:43.

of Holies is not that he dons four of **his own** eight garments. Instead, at that time, the *Kohen Gadol* **serves** as an **ordinary kohen** who (**at the outset**) wears four garments.

## 8.

### ANOTHER PROOF

This also sheds light on Rashi's concluding words, "all made of linen":

Rashi's intention is not only to emphasize that the four garments are unrelated to the rule concerning "a prosecutor" since "all of them are of linen." Instead, this clause also further proves that the *Kohen Gadol's avodah* within the Holy of Holies on Yom Kippur is "**like an ordinary kohen.**"

Concerning Aharon's *avneit*, it says in *parshas Pekudei* that it was made from<sup>29</sup> "twisted linen, and turquoise wool, and purple wool, and scarlet wool, the work of an embroiderer."

(In *parshas Tetzaveh*,<sup>30</sup> where the commandment of making the garments is recorded, the verse only says that *avneit* must be "the work of an embroiderer." However, the verse does not indicate the type of material [or materials] from which the *avneit* is made. In contrast, when discussing the fashioning of the garments in *parshas Pekudei*, it says that the *avneit* of Aharon the *Kohen Gadol* was made out of the above-mentioned materials.)

If Aharon's *avneit* was **not** made only of "linen," why does the verse say, "He should gird himself with a linen *avneit*"? This implies that the garments discussed in the verse are not the *Kohen Gadol's* garments, but rather, the "four garments **like an ordinary kohen.**"

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<sup>29</sup> *Shemos* 39:29.

<sup>30</sup> *Shemos* 28:39.

Rashi takes the position (according to the straightforward understanding of Scripture) that the reason the verse specifies Aharon's *avneit* (in *parshas Pekudei*) and doesn't mention the *avneitim* of his sons (although the verse there<sup>31</sup> itself mentions the other three garments of Aharon's sons) is that the verse talks **specifically** about Aharon's *avneit*. In contrast, the *avneitim* of Aharon's children were made differently (they were made only of linen).

## 9.

### IN HALACHAH

We can posit that this is among the wondrous ideas relating to *halachah* in Rashi's commentary: Rashi and Rambam disagree regarding the classification of the *Kohen Gadol*'s garments on Yom Kippur:

Rambam says,<sup>32</sup> "There are three types of garments worn by the *kohanim*: the garments of an ordinary *kohen*, the golden garments, and the white garments." Rambam maintains that the white garments worn on Yom Kippur were of a different type. He does not maintain that there is a prohibition against wearing golden garments within the Holy of Holies, and consequently, (only) four of his eight garments **remain**; instead, he maintains that there is a **third type** of garment.

Rashi {in contrast} draws an inference that within the Holy of Holies, the *Kohen Gadol* must serve in four garments **like an ordinary *kohen*** (as we have explained above at length).

We see a similar distinction between Rashi and Rambam regarding another dimension of the obligation to wear white garments:

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<sup>31</sup> *Shemos* 39:27-28.

<sup>32</sup> *Mishneh Torah*, "*Hilchos Klei HaMikdash*," ch. 8, par. 1.

Rambam says,<sup>33</sup> “The unique *avodos* of this day are performed while wearing his white garments.” The wearing of white garments is a law about the *avodos* of the day. This presents a difficulty. The ram offered as an *olah*, and the ram offered for the nation were special *avodos* for Yom Kippur; nevertheless, they are not offered while wearing white garments.

Rashi, on the other hand, links the obligation of white garments to “**within**.” In other words, the obligation does not depend on the *avodos* of the **day** but rather on the **location** where the *avodah* takes place: Any *avodah* performed *within* the Holy of Holies (or, at any rate, for the sake of *avodos* performed within the Holy of Holies) must be carried out while wearing white garments. This dependency on location is because, as discussed above, Rashi maintains (according to the straightforward meaning of Scripture) that the Yom Kippur’s main atonement is achieved through the *Kohen Gadol* entering the Holy of Holies. His entry there is conditional on and facilitated by the various *avodos* of the day.

## 10.

### DELVING DEEPER

Perhaps we can posit that the two matters discussed earlier are interdependent. Namely, (a) whether the wearing of white garments was negatory {intended to negate wearing any gold garments} or a positive obligation; and (b) whether the white garments were connected with the *avodos* of the day or with entering into the Holy of Holies:

If we understand the law of wearing white garments as a unique and positive obligation, it is reasonable to say that this law pertained to the *avodos* of the day. This is because, just as, in general, the garments of the *kohanim* were connected with their *avodah*,<sup>34</sup> similarly, the special law of white garments was a component of the day’s unique *avodah*.

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<sup>33</sup> *Mishneh Torah*, “*Hilchos Avodas Yom HaKippurim*,” ch. 2, par. 1.

<sup>34</sup> See *Mishneh Torah*, “*Hilchos Klei HaMikdash*,” ch. 10, par. 4.

However, supposing that the white garments were intended to preclude the wearing of the golden garments, it is reasonable to say that the prohibition was (not connected with the *avodah* itself but rather) connected with the location where the *avodah* was performed. In other words, the *avodah's* location disallowed anything to do with gold.

## 11.

### THE LESSON

Rashi's explanation provides us with a lesson in our *avodas Hashem*:

When a Jew wants to purify himself and another Jew and bring everyone “before Hashem” to be cleansed,<sup>35</sup> to come closer to Hashem, to His Torah and His mitzvos, a Jew must understand, first and foremost, that to accomplish this goal, he must enter “within.” He must dig down and “enter into” the inwardness of his soul. Only with this strength {emanating from the inwardness of his soul} can he attain atonement and cleansing for himself and his fellow.

The key to gaining entrance “within” is for the *Kohen Gadol* to remove his “glory and splendor” — the golden garments. As long as he feels glory and splendor, he cannot enter “inside.” He cannot penetrate the “inwardness” of the Divine intent.

Only after he sees himself as an **ordinary kohen** — without golden garments, just white ones, and “all of them of linen” — does he become illuminated by the quality of simplicity.<sup>36</sup> This specifically qualifies him to enter “within.” And by entering within, he can achieve atonement and cleansing, not only for himself but also for a fellow Jew. In fact, he can “provide atonement for himself, for his household, and for the entire congregation of Israel.”<sup>37</sup>

— From a talk delivered on the Shabbos *parshas Acharei* 5736 (1976)

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<sup>35</sup> *Vayikra* 16:30.

<sup>36</sup> See *Likkutei Torah*, “*Acharei*,” 28b ff.; at length, *Ateres Rosh*, “*Shaar Yom HaKippurim*,” ch. 5 (30a).

<sup>37</sup> *Vayikra* 16:17.