Priestly Clothing in Bible Times

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The Bible and other early religious literature are replete with references to priestly clothing and its symbolism. Priestly garb from the time of Moses is described in sufficient detail to enable artists to depict it in various Bible encyclopedias and commentaries. This paper will examine the origin and meaning of priestly clothing in Bible times.

The Garments of Skin

According to Jewish tradition, the earliest priestly clothes were the garments of skin provided to Adam and Eve after the fall. “Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them” (Genesis 3:21).

The first book of Adam and Eve, also called the Conflict of Adam and Eve, reports a tradition whereby the clothing of the first couple was made by miraculous means. As Adam was praying, “the Word of God” came and told him to go to the seashore, where he would find the skins of sheep killed by lions. “Take them and make raiment for yourselves, and clothe yourselves withal.”

Adam and Eve returned to the Cave of Treasures, in which they were living, and prayed that God would show them how to “make garments of those skins; for they had no skill for it.” God sent an angel to make the garments for them. He placed palm-thorns through the skins, then stood and prayed God that the thorns in those skins would “be
Figure 52. The detailed instructions in Exodus 28 regarding the clothing for the high priest, priests, and Levites have guided many attempts by artists to reconstruct their appearance. Not surprisingly, they reflect the culture of the artist more than that of the time of Moses. The earliest depiction of the high priest (A) is at Dura Europos (c. A.D. 245), where the non-Jewish artist has dressed Aaron in typical royal Persian robes and trousers. In this miniature (B) from a thirteenth-century Hebrew manuscript, the high priest wears a crown and breastplate, with an inscription "breastplate of judgment" on it instead of the expected twelve jewels. In this eighteenth-century German engraving (C), the artist has given the high priest a decidedly Baroque appearance.
hidden, so as to be, as it were, sewn with one thread. And so it was, by God’s order; they became garments for Adam and Eve, and he clothed them withal.”

*Skin or Light?*

The exact nature of the material from which the garments of Adam and Eve were made has long been in dispute. Some Jewish traditions have them made of the skin stripped from the serpent. According to a midrash in *Minhat Yehukh* on Genesis 3:21, they were “garments of light,” made of the hide of the female Leviathan, a gigantic sea monster.

The idea that the garments were made of the skin of a reptile—specifically the serpent who had tempted Adam and Eve—is found in pseudepigraphal literature. The Slavonic version of 3 Baruch tells of “when the first-created Adam sinned, having listened to Satanael, when he covered himself with the serpent.” The Greek version reads, “And during the transgression of the first Adam, she (the moon) gave light to Samael when he took the serpent as a garment.”

The Midrash Rabbah informs us that Rabbi Meir’s copy of the Torah or Law of Moses indicated that Adam and Eve received garments of light, not of skin. The two Hebrew words for “light” (‘ôr) and “skin” (‘ôr) differ in but the initial letters, and are pronounced alike in modern Hebrew. This explains why some traditions have the garments of the first couple made of light, others of skin. An attempt to reconcile the two views is found in the Jewish tradition that the skin of the leviathan shone with a light brighter than the noonday sun. *Targum Onkelos*, Genesis 3:21, says that God “made garments of glory on the skin of their flesh.”

Usually, however, tradition indicates that Adam and
Eve’s garments of light had been given them before the fall. When they sinned, God stripped them of the garment of light. Abkir commented, “God made the high-priestly garments for Adam which were like those of the angels; but when he sinned, God took them away from him.”

Some traditions indicate that Adam and Eve had been clothed with a horny (reptilian?) skin that fell off, leaving them naked, whereupon the cloud of glory that surrounded them departed. The garment of light, according to some accounts, was replaced by its earthly symbol, a garment of skin, after the fall. By this reckoning, the garment of skin given to the first human couple was their own skin, not that of animals. This makes even more sense when one considers that the Hebrew root for “nakedness” (‘rh) may be related to the word for “skin” (‘ôr). The Book of the Rolls explains it this way: “After the clothing of fig-leaves they put on clothing of skins, and that is the skin of which our bodies are made, being of the family of man, and it is a clothing of pain.”

Pseudepigraphal stories also reflect the idea of Adam and Eve being clothed in light prior to the fall. In the Apocalypse of Adam, the first man tells his son Seth:

When God created me out of earth along with Eve your mother, I used to go about with her in a glory which she had seen in the aeon from which we had come. She taught me a word of knowledge of the eternal God. And we were like the great eternal angels, for we were loftier than the God who created us and the powers that were with him, whom we did not know.

The Conflict of Adam and Eve also expresses this idea. En route to retrieve the skins used in the garments made by the angel, the first couple were stopped by Satan and then rescued by the Word of God, who told them that it had been
the devil "who was hidden in the serpent, and who deceived you, and stripped you of the garment of light and glory in which you were."18 Later, Adam says, "O God, when we transgressed Thy commandment at the sixth hour of Friday, we were stripped of the bright nature we had."19 On another occasion, Satan, posing as an angel, tells Adam that God told him to take the first couple "and clothe them in a garment of light, and restore them to their former state of grace."20

The Book of the Rolls informs us that when Adam was created, "his body was bright and brilliant like the well-known stars in the crystal."21 When Adam and Eve were placed on earth, "God clothed them with glory and splendour. They outvied one another in the glory with which they were clothed."22 At the time of the fall, "they were bereft of their glory, and their splendour was taken from them, and they were stripped of the light with which they had been clothed . . . They were naked of the grace which they had worn . . . they made to themselves aprons of fig-leaves, and covered themselves therewith."23

If one follows the reasoning of these stories, the serpent was the cause of Adam and Eve's becoming naked,24 and their "nakedness" was the loss of their premortal glory.25 For example, in one account, Eve says: "And at that very moment my eyes were opened and I knew that I was naked of the righteousness with which I had been clothed. And I wept saying, "Why have you done this to me, that I have been estranged from my glory with which I was clothed?"26

From this account, the "nakedness" of Adam and Eve was spiritual in nature, that is, they lost their special covering of light (also termed "glory" and "righteousness"), which was subsequently replaced by the garments of skin.
This concept is found in the Coptic Gospel of Philip, where we read that "it is those who wear the [flesh] who are naked." 27

The Koran also ties the nakedness of Adam and Eve to the loss of their primordial clothing:

Children of Adam, We have created for you raiment which covers your nakedness and is a source of elegance; but the raiment of righteousness is the best. . . . Let not Satan seduce you, even as he turned your parents out of the garden, stripping them of their raiment that he might show them their nakedness. 28

This idea is also reflected in the story of Zosimus. Arriving in a distant land to which he had been miraculously conveyed, Zosimus encounters a Rechabite and asks him, "Why are you naked?" 29 The man replies, "You are he [who is] naked, and you do not discern that your garment is corrupt, but my own garment is not corrupted." 30

But we are naked not as you suppose, for we are covered with a covering of glory; and we do not show each other the private parts of our bodies. But we are covered with a stole of glory [similar to that] which clothed Adam and Eve before they sinned. 31

Origen, a second-century Christian scholar, expressed a view similar to those of early Jewish rabbis, explaining that the skin garments given to Adam and Eve contained a secret doctrine of the soul's losing its wings and coming to earth. 32

The Stolen Garment

According to Jewish tradition, the skin garment given to Adam had an unearthly brilliance and supernatural qualities and was thus used by Adam and his descendants for priestly functions. 33
Jewish tradition also provides us with some interesting stories concerning the fate of the original priesthood garment of Adam, along with some insights into the magical properties attributed to it two millennia ago. Perhaps the best-known is the one preserved in the Book of Jasher.\textsuperscript{34}

And Cush, the son of Ham, the son of Noah, took a wife in those days, in his old age, and she bare a son, and they called his name Nimrod, saying, At that time the sons of men again began to rebel and transgress against God, and the child grew up, and his father loved him exceedingly, for he was the son of his old age. And the garments of skin which God made for Adam and his wife, when they went out of the garden, were given to Cush. For after the death of Adam and his wife, the garments were given to Enoch, the son of Jared, and when Enoch was taken up to God, he gave them to Methuselah, his son. And at the death of Methuselah, Noah took them and brought them into the ark, and they were with him until he went out of the ark.\textsuperscript{35} And in their going out, Ham stole those garments from Noah his father, and he took them and hid them from his brothers.\textsuperscript{36} And when Ham begat his first-born Cush, he gave him the garments in secret, and they were with Cush many days. And Cush also concealed them from his sons and brothers, and when Cush had begotten Nimrod he gave him those garments through his love for him, and Nimrod grew up, and when he was twenty years old, he put on those garments. And Nimrod became strong when he put on the garments, and God gave him might and strength, and he was a mighty hunter in the field, and he hunted the animals and he built altars, and he offered upon them the animals before the Lord. And Nimrod strengthened himself, and he rose up from amongst his brethren against all their enemies round about. And the Lord delivered all the enemies of his brethren in his hands, and God prospered him from time to time in his battles, and he reigned upon earth.\textsuperscript{37}
Among the earlier Jewish sources from which this story may have been drawn are *Pirqe de Rabbi Eliezer* 24 and TB *Pesahim* 44b. Several sources indicate that the wearer of the garment could not be slain and that wild animals prostrated themselves before him. Esau, who took pride in being a great hunter, became jealous of Nimrod's prowess and sought to destroy him. According to one source, he challenged Esau to combat and, following Jacob's advice, got Nimrod to remove his protective garb so he could defeat him. Here is the *Jasher* version, which is also known from earlier sources:

And Nimrod was observing Esau all the days, for a jealousy was formed in the heart of Nimrod against Esau all the days. And on a certain day Esau went in the field to hunt, and he found Nimrod walking in the wilderness with his two men. . . . And Nimrod and two of his men that were with him came to the place where they were, when Esau started suddenly from his lurking place, and drew his sword, and hastened and ran to Nimrod and cut off his head. And Esau fought a desperate fight with the two men that were with Nimrod, and when they called out to him, Esau turned to them and smote them to death with his sword. And all the mighty men of Nimrod, who had left him to go to the wilderness, heard the cry at a distance, and they knew the voices of those two men, and they ran to know the cause of it, when they found their king and the two men that were with him lying dead in the wilderness. And when Esau saw the mighty men of Nimrod coming at a distance, he fled, and thereby escaped; and Esau took the valuable garments of Nimrod, which Nimrod's father had bequeathed to Nimrod, and with which Nimrod prevailed over the whole land, and he ran and concealed them in his house. And Esau took the garments and ran into the city on account of Nimrod's men, and he came unto his father's house wearied and exhausted from flight, and he was
ready to die through grief when he approached his brother Jacob and sat before him. And he said unto his brother Jacob, Behold I shall die this day, and wherefore then do I want the birthright? And Jacob acted wisely with Esau in this matter, and Esau sold his birthright to Jacob, for it was so brought about by the Lord.\textsuperscript{41}

Accordingly, Esau, like Nimrod before him, became a great hunter, ruling over men and animals.\textsuperscript{42}

\textit{Jacob and Joseph}

The stories of the preservation of the garments of Adam and Eve do not agree in the line through which they were transmitted. According to one tradition, the garments, though stolen by Ham, were recovered by Shem who, as Melchizedek, gave them to Abraham as his successor.\textsuperscript{43}

Abraham passed the garments to his son Isaac and he to his eldest son Esau. When Jacob received from Isaac the blessing intended for Esau, “Rebecca took the favorite clothing of her elder son, Esau, which was with her in the house. And she put it on Jacob.”\textsuperscript{44} Isaac then blessed him, noting, among other things, “May nations serve you, and the people bow down to you. Become a lord to your brothers, and may your mother’s sons bow down to you.”\textsuperscript{45} The blessing reminds us of the tradition that people bowed down to Nimrod when they saw him arrayed in the garments of Adam.

Early Jewish commentators saw evidence that Jacob was arrayed in the garment of Adam in Genesis 27:27, where we read that Isaac “smelled the smell of his raiment, and blessed him, and said, See, the smell of my son is as the smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed.”\textsuperscript{46} Origen reflected this view, when he cited the Genesis passage and used the term “divine garments.”\textsuperscript{47}
The concept of the divinely perfumed garment is also applied to Jacob's son Joseph who, when leaving prison to appear before Pharaoh, put on clean clothing brought from paradise by an angel. Similarly, the angel Gabriel miraculously provided Joseph a garment to replace the "coat of many colors" taken from him by his brothers, so that he would not appear naked before the Midianites.

Joseph's "coat of many colors" is said in Keli Yaqar, Genesis 37:3, to be the high priest's tunic, while Darat and Hadar, on Genesis 30:29-30, indicate that Jacob gave to Joseph the garment of Adam which Esau had taken from Nimrod. Ginzberg explained the reasoning behind this: "Pargûd mešûyyâr is a paraphrase of passîm which accordingly is not to be translated 'a coat of many colors,' but 'an upper garment in which figures are woven,' in accordance with Mishnaic paspasîn comp. Negaim 11.6."

Nibley has noted the Jewish tradition reported by the tenth-century Arab scholar Tha'labî that Joseph's garment, which was impregnated with the smell of paradise, had belonged to Adam and was passed down to Abraham and Joseph. According to one of Tha'labî's sources, the garment had miraculous powers by which Jacob regained his eyesight.

**Noah's Garment Again**

At this point, we must return to the story of Noah:

And Noah began to be an husbandman, and he planted a vineyard: And he drank of the wine, and was drunken; and he was uncovered within his tent. And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren without. And Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid it upon both their shoulders, and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces were backward, and they saw
not their father's nakedness. And Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done unto him. And he said, Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. And he said, Blessed be the Lord God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant. God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant (Genesis 9:20–27).

The exact nature of Ham’s sin is not clear from this passage. One Jewish tradition therefore adds that Ham, jealous of his position as the younger son, castrated his father in order to prevent Noah from having other children. What, indeed, was it that "his younger son had done unto him"? President Heber C. Kimball’s answer was that Ham was cursed because he "pulled the clothing off from his father Noah, who had drank a little too much wine."53

According to Jewish tradition, the rewards given to Noah’s other sons because of their good deed in covering their father were directly related to the kinds of garments they were given by God. Shem, who first set about to cover his father, received, as his reward, the tallith, while his brother Japheth, who joined him, was given the toga. Ham’s descendants, by this account, were left naked.54

The tallith today is usually an undergarment covering the chest and upper back, worn by Orthodox Jewish men. For certain prayers, however, a larger version is worn draped over the head (hence the term "prayer shawl"). Anciently, it appears to have been a long garment.

Protection of the Garment

According to a number of early Jewish sources, the long garment worn by the Assyrians was the one allotted to Shem’s descendants as a reward for his having covered his father Noah.55 These garments are said to have remained
unsinged when the angel of the Lord burned the Assyrian army during Sennacherib’s siege of Jerusalem. Similarly, when Abraham was placed in the furnace by Nimrod, “his lower garments were not burned.”

When two of Aaron’s sons offered “strange fire” at the Tabernacle, a fire from the Lord came out and “devoured
them.” But their garments were apparently unharmed, for we read that their bodies were carried “in their coats out of the camp” (Leviticus 10:1–5). Of this, Ginzberg wrote, “Opinions differ as to whether the bodies of Nadab and Abihu were injured by the heavenly fire, which brought about their death, or not; but all agree that their garments remained intact.”

According to Jewish tradition, the Israelites who traveled in the wilderness with Moses were given special robes by angels. These robes grew with them but never wore out. Fire could not damage them, and they protected even the dead from worms.

The garment was meant to be a protection, perhaps not from physical danger, but from spiritual. An early Christian document implores, “Clothe me in thy glorious robe and thy seal of light that ever shineth, until I have passed by all the rulers of the world and the evil dragon that opposeth us.”

*The Garments of Wisdom*

Just as early tradition attributes to the priesthood garments qualities which both protected the wearer and made animals and men subject themselves to him, so, too, we find accounts in which the garments are said to impart wisdom to the wearer. After the death of Moses:

Then God said to Joshua the son of Nun, “Why do you mourn and why do you hope in vain that Moses yet lives? . . . Take his garments of wisdom and clothe yourself, and with his belt of knowledge gird your loins, and you will be changed and become another man. . . . And Joshua took the garments of wisdom and clothed himself and girded his loins with the belt of understanding. And when he clothed himself with it, his mind was afire and his spirit was moved.”
Perhaps Joshua inherited the very garments worn by Moses, just as the patriarchs are said to have passed Adam's original garments from father to son. Wearing the clothing of one's predecessor appears to denote succession to a position of authority. The expression concerning the "mantle (coat) of the prophet" passing to his successor comes from the story of Elijah and Elisha. When Elijah was taken into heaven,

[Elisha] took up also the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and went back, and stood by the bank of Jordan; And he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and smote the waters, and said, Where is the Lord God of Elijah? and when he also had smitten the waters, they parted hither and thither: and Elisha went over. And when the sons of the prophets which were to view at Jericho saw him, they said, The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha (2 Kings 2:13–15).

With this mantle, both Elisha and Elijah performed the miracle of dividing the waters of the Jordan (see 2 Kings 2:8, 14). In the pseudepigraphal Lives of the Prophets, we read that the garment was a sheepskin.

With a sheepskin he [Elijah] struck the Jordan and it was divided, and they crossed over with dry feet, both he and Elisha.63

He too [Elisha] struck the Jordan with Elijah's sheepskin, and the water was divided, and he too passed over with dry feet.64

**Temple Clothing**

Anciently, the priests, descendants of Aaron, wore special garments when serving in the tabernacle and later in the temple. Exodus 29:29 refers to "the holy garments of Aaron" in which he and his descendants were to be anointed and consecrated. In one of the books of the
Apocrypha, the priest Ezra refers to "the holy garment" he wore (1 Esdras 8:71).

Such was the sanctity of the priestly clothing that Ezekiel, after describing it, wrote that the priests should wear it only "when they enter in at the gates of the inner court," and that

when they go forth into the utter court, even into the utter court to the people, they shall put off their garments wherein they ministered, and lay them in the holy chambers, and they shall put on other garments; and they shall not sanctify the people with their garments (Ezekiel 44:19).

The clothing of the anointed high priest was considered especially sacred (see Leviticus 21:10). According to Josephus, the punishment that came upon king Uzziah when he offered incense in the temple (see 2 Chronicles 26:16–21) resulted because he had "put on the holy garment," restricted for priestly use.\textsuperscript{65}

**Priestly Attire**

The priesthood garments used in the tabernacle and temple in Old Testament times are described in Exodus 28 and 39 and in Ecclesiasticus (Ben Sirach) 45:6–15. The principal elements for the high priest's clothing were linen breeches, a coat, a robe, a bonnet with a gold mitre and a gold engraved frontlet attached, a girdle, and a garment called the ephod to which was attached a breastplate.

*Pseudo-Philo* 13:1 says that Moses set in order "all the vestments of the priests, the belt and the robe and the head-dress and the golden plate and the holy crown. And the oil for anointing priests and the priests themselves he consecrated."\textsuperscript{66}

Ezekiel wrote of the "linen garments," the "linen bonnets
upon their heads,” and the “linen breeches upon their loins” to be worn by priests in the latter-day temple in Jerusalem (Ezekiel 44:17–18). He noted that linen was used instead of wool to prevent sweating. The length of the garments was also intended to provide modest attire while serving in the house of the Lord. Speaking of the altar in the Jerusalem temple, Aristeas recorded: “The site had the ladder designed in a manner consistent with seemliness for the ministering priests swathed up to the loins in ‘leather garments.’”

Another translation renders the latter part of this passage, “the ministering priests were robed in linen garments, down to their ankles.” This accords with an account in the Apocrypha that speaks of King Josiah “having set the priests according to their daily courses, being arrayed in long garments, in the temple of the Lord” (1 Esdras 1:1).

Aristeas described the garb of the high priest in glowing terms:

It was an occasion of great amazement to us when we saw Eleazar engaged on his ministry, and all the glorious vestments, including the wearing of the “garment” with precious stones upon it in which he is vested; golden bells surround the hem (at his feet) and make a very special sound. Alongside each of them are “tassels” adorned with “flowers,” and of marvelous colors. He was clad in an outstandingly magnificent “girdle,” woven in the most beautiful colors. On his breast he wears what is called the “oracle,” to which are attached “twelve stones” of different kinds, set in gold, giving the names of the patriarchs in what was the original order, each stone flashing its own natural distinctive color—quite indescribable. Upon his head he has what is called the “tiara,” and upon this the inimitable “mitre,” the hallowed diadem having in relief on the front in the middle in holy letters on a golden leaf the name of God, ineffable in glory. The wearer is considered worthy of such vest-
ments at the services. Their appearance makes one awe-struck and dumbfounded: A man would think he had come out of this world into another one. I emphatically assert that every man who comes near the spectacle of what I have described will experience astonishment and amazement beyond words, his very being transformed by the hallowed arrangement on every single detail.  

The other-worldly feeling at seeing the high priest thus arrayed was, of course, deliberate. The priestly clothing was intended to represent the garb of God and of the angels, as we shall see below. Aristeas supplemented his description of the priestly clothing with the following words of Eleazar, the high priest, to Aristobulus: "Furthermore in our clothes he has given us a distinguishing mark as a reminder."  

The symbols of remembrance may be the fringes on the tallith, four in number. The symbolism may be to the twelve tribes of Israel, which, in Old Testament times, were represented by four rows of three stones each set in the high priest’s breastplate. The symbolism is explained in the apocryphal Wisdom of Solomon: "For in the long garment was the whole world, and in the four rows of the stones was the glory of the fathers graven, and thy Majesty upon the diadem of his [Aaron’s] head" (Wisdom of Solomon 18:24).  

The special sanctity of the priestly garments is indicated by the fact that when they wore out, rather than discard them, the Jews burned them in the temple during the feast of tabernacles.  

Investiture  

The Bible describes the ceremony in which Aaron and his sons were ordained to the priesthood at the tabernacle. They were washed with water, dressed in “the holy
garments," anointed and consecrated (Exodus 28:40–41; 29:4–9; 40:12–15; Leviticus 8:12–13, 30; Psalm 133:2; Ben Sirach 45:8–15). This investiture was partially repeated each time the priests prepared for service, when they were required to wash and don the "holy garments" (Leviticus 16:3–4), which they then removed after completing the ordinances of the tabernacle or the temple (see Leviticus 16:23–24). Dressing in special clothing in the temple denotes a change in role, from that of mortal to immortal, from ordinary human to priest or priestess, king or queen. A number of ancient texts, both in the Bible and elsewhere, discuss temple clothing, its symbolism and some of its uses.

Perhaps the most impressive investiture account is the one ascribed to Levi, ancestor of Moses and Aaron, in a vision at Beth-El, where his father Jacob had experienced his dream of the ladder ascending into heaven.²⁵

And I saw seven men in white clothing, who were saying to me, "Arise, put on the vestments of the priesthood, the crown of righteousness, the oracle of understanding, the robe of truth, the breastplate of faith, the miter for the head, and the apron for prophetic power." Each carried one of these and put them on me and said, "From now on be a priest, you and all your posterity." The first anointed me with holy oil and gave me a staff. The second washed me with pure water, fed me by hand with bread and holy wine, and put on me a holy and glorious vestment. The third put on me something made of linen, like an ephod. The fourth placed . . . around me a girdle which was like purple. The fifth gave me a branch of rich olive wood. The sixth placed a wreath on my head. The seventh placed the priestly diadem on me and filled my hands with incense, in order that I might serve as priest for the Lord God."²⁷
The *Jubilees* version of this story also has the event taking place at Beth-El but has Jacob performing the ceremony for his son:

And he [Jacob] abode that night at Bethel. And Levi dreamed that he had been appointed and ordained priest of the Most High God, he and his sons forever. And he awoke from his sleep and blessed the Lord . . . and [the lot of] Levi fell with the portion of the Lord. And his father put the garments of the priesthood upon him and he filled his hands.⁷⁸

The pseudepigraphal 2 *Enoch* also speaks of this kind of investiture:

And the Lord said to Michael, “Go, and extract Enoch from [his] earthly clothing. And anoint him with my delightful oil, and put him into the clothes of my glory.” And so Michael did, just as the Lord had said to him. He anointed me and he clothed me. And the appearance of that oil is greater than the greatest light, and its ointment is like sweet dew, and its fragrance like myrrh; and it is like rays of the glittering sun. And I looked at myself, and I had become like one of his glorious ones.⁷⁹

The Hebrew version in 3 *Enoch* has the angel Metatron, who is identified in Jewish tradition with Enoch, saying,

The Holy One, blessed be he, fashioned for me a majestic robe, in which all kinds of luminaries were set, and he clothed me in it. He fashioned for me a glorious cloak in which brightness, brilliance, splendor, and luster of every kind were fixed, and he wrapped me in it.⁸⁰

This story seems to be the same one recorded by Joseph Smith in Moses 7:2–4:

From that time forth Enoch began to prophesy, saying unto the people, that: As I was journeying, and stood upon the place Mahujah, and cried unto the Lord, there
came a voice out of heaven, saying—Turn ye, and get ye upon the mount Simeon. And it came to pass that I turned and went up on the mount; and as I stood upon the mount, I beheld the heavens open, and I was clothed upon with glory; and I saw the Lord; and he stood before my face, and he talked with me, even as a man talketh one with another, face to face.

In the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, the archangel Jaoel takes Abraham by the right hand and sets him on his feet (11:1), then takes him to heaven where the patriarch is given the garment formerly set aside for Satan (13:14). According to Jewish tradition, God gave Abraham the same kind of garment he himself wore when appearing to the prophets.

Similar investiture stories appear in the Old Testament:

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me . . . to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. . . . I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels (Isaiah 61:1, 3, 10).

And [the angel] shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire? Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with a change of
raiment. And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments (Zechariah 3:1–5)."^{14}

**The Apron or Girdle**

The Hebrew term translated "girdle" in the description of the priestly clothing (Exodus 28:8; 39:5) is rendered "apron" in the story of Adam and Eve: "And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons" (Genesis 3:7).

Edersheim wrote that the priestly girdle was a type of sash/apron/robe combination, adding that it was quite long, reaching "below the feet, and required to be thrown over the shoulder during ministration. Hence its object must chiefly have been symbolical. In point of fact, it may be regarded as the most distinctive priestly vestment, since it was only put on during actual ministration, and put off immediately afterwards."^{15}

That the girdle was considered to have supernatural qualities is asserted in the Testament of Job, where R. P. Spittler's translation in Charlesworth reads "cord" instead of "girdle." Job instructs one of his daughters, Hemera, to bring "three golden boxes" containing their inheritance, described as "multicolored cords" in most Greek manuscripts, as "multicolored objects" in a Greek manuscript of A.D. 1307/8 in Messina, Sicily, and as "three cordlike aprons" in Greek Manuscript 1238 (A.D. 1195) in the Vatican. Their "appearance was such that no man could describe, since they were not from earth but from heaven, shimmering with fiery sparks like the rays of the sun." Job instructed his daughters, "Place these about your breast, so it may go well with you all the days of your life."^{16}
One of the daughters then asked what good the cords were, to which Job replied that “these cords will lead you into the better world, to live in the heavens.”[^97] He then told how the Lord used them to rid Job of his plagues and worms, telling him, “Arise, gird your loins like a man.”[^98] So Job put them on and the worms disappeared.[^80] Job then continued his explanation: “Since you have these objects you will not have to face the enemy at all, but neither will you have worries of him in your mind, since it is a protective amulet of the Father. Rise then, gird yourselves with them before I die.”[^90]

So Hemera wrapped her girdle on, “And she took on another heart—no longer minded toward earthly things—but she spoke ecstatically in the angelic dialect. . . . And as she spoke ecstatically, she allowed ‘The Spirit’ to be inscribed on her garment.”[^91] Another of Job’s daughters, “Amaltheia’s Horn . . . bound on her cord. And her mouth spoke ecstatically in the dialect of those on high, since her heart also was changed, keeping aloof from worldly things.”[^92] When, after three days, Job became ill, it is said that he could not suffer pain “on account of the omen of the sash he wore.”[^93]

**Removal of Shoes**

Though special clothing was donned anciently before entering the temple, one piece of attire was always removed: the shoes or sandals. Midrash Shemot Rabbah indicates that one must stand barefoot in the presence of God, which is why the priests were barefoot while performing the service in the temple.[^94]

Removal of street shoes enabled the temple to remain ritually pure from the ground, which was cursed because of the Fall of Adam (see Genesis 3:17–18). The practice of
removing the shoes in sacred places is very ancient. The ear-
liest biblical reference is to the time Moses first encountered
the Lord:

And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see,
God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and
said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I. And he said,
Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet,
for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground
(Exodus 3:4–5; also cited in Acts 7:33).

Similar words were addressed to Joshua, Moses’ successor
in the leadership of ancient Israel (see Joshua 5:15).

Shoes are necessary only on the earth because of the
filth of the ground. By removing them, we symbolically
leave the world outside the Lord’s sanctuary. Muslims and
others remove their shoes when entering mosques and
other holy places (in Islam, one may not pray with one’s
feet shod). The Japanese and some other peoples even
remove their shoes upon entering a house.

Shoes are not needed in the celestial world, where,
according to pseudepigraphal works such as those attributed
to Enoch, the angels walk on flames of fire, which is a puri-
ifying element, as in 1 Enoch 14:10–22 and 71:1. Therefore, in
the presence of God, one goes barefoot. In this connection, we
note that Joseph Smith described Moroni as being barefoot,
while wearing an exquisite white robe that extended nearly
to his ankles and wrists (see Joseph Smith–History 1:31).

**Symbolism of Priestly Clothing**

As with most things religious, there is a symbolism
behind the priestly clothing used in biblical times. This sym-
bolism, while multiple, ties to the ethical and moral values
taught by the ancient prophets. Early Christians, during
baptism, were also anointed and clothed in white garments,
in imitation of temple rites. The Hellenistic synagogal Prayer on Behalf of the Catechumens implores, “Grant them [the] washing of regeneration, the garment of incorruption.” The white robe, along with the anointing, symbolized the Holy Ghost’s protection against Satan. In a pseudepigraphic text, the apostle Thomas anoints a group of women who have changed their clothes, then baptizes them and gives them bread and wine, saying, “let us receive the dew of thy goodness.” He compared their new clothing with the linen cloth in which Christ’s body was wrapped, asking the Lord that they might be “girt about with thy power.”

Garments of Righteousness

In some scriptural and pseudepigraphal passages, sacred clothing is equated with righteousness. Here are some examples from the scriptures:

O Lord, wilt thou encircle me around in the robe of thy righteousness! (2 Nephi 4:33).

And the righteous shall have a perfect knowledge of their enjoyment, and their righteousness, being clothed with purity, yea, even with the robe of righteousness (2 Nephi 9:14).

And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins (Isaiah 11:5; also cited in 2 Nephi 30:11).

I put on righteousness, and it clothed me: my judgment was as a robe and a diadem (Job 29:14).

The same idea is found in a modern revelation: “Clothe yourselves with the bond of charity, as with a mantle, which is the bond of perfectness and peace” (D&C 88:125; cf. 109:76, 80; 124:116). The Koran also compares the garments of Adam and Eve with the principle of righteousness
PRIESTLY CLOTHING IN BIBLE TIMES

(Sura 7.27–28), as does Apocalypse of Moses 20:1–2, both of which were cited earlier. St. Ignatius wrote of being clothed with the grace of God. 99

Paul wrote of putting on the “whole armor of God,” and equated various virtuous qualities with armor such as would be worn by a soldier of his time, including “loins girt about with truth . . . the breastplate of righteousness . . . feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace . . . shield of faith . . . helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit” (Ephesians 6:13–17; paraphrased in D&C 27:15; cf. D&C 63:37). To the Thessalonians he wrote of the “breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation” (1 Thessalonians 5:8). He wrote to the Corinthians of the “armour of righteousness” (2 Corinthians 6:7 [see the list of virtues in verses 3–10]; cf. 2 Nephi 1:23). Of particular interest is his mention of the “armour of light” (Romans 13:12), which seems to tie the protective military clothing to the garment of light said to have been worn by Adam, discussed earlier.

The wearing of special clothing that symbolizes purity and righteousness is designed to impress these qualities on the mind of the person so clad. The use of clothing symbolism appears to be reflected in the following passage, where we note the use of such “temple-context” words as “seal” and “fellowship”:

For whom shall put on your grace, and be rejected? Because your seal is known; and your creatures are known to it. And your [heavenly] hosts possess it, and the elect archangels are clothed with it. You have given us your fellowship. 100

The use of sacred clothing to symbolize righteousness and purity is also found in a pseudepigraphic work entitled The Shepherd of Hermas. The text is attributed to Hermas,
brother to Pius, bishop of Rome (A.D. 140–155), and comprises three books describing a vision in which an angel appeared to Hermas as a shepherd. The last of these books, the Similitude, speaks at length concerning the symbolism of the garment and of the temple. The Church, like the temple in D&C 101:43–64, is represented as a tower. In the vision, an angel of the Lord crowns and sends into the tower those

who had branches that were green and had offshoots, but no fruit, having given them seals. And all who went into the tower had the same clothing—white as snow. And those who returned their branches green, as they received them, he set free, giving them clothing and seals.

Hermas then saw twelve virgins, four of them standing at the gate “clothed with linen tunics, and gracefully girded, having their right shoulders exposed,” as if about to bear some burden.” He was told by an angel that the tower represented the Church and that the virgins were holy spirits, and men cannot otherwise be found in the kingdom of God unless these have put their clothing upon them: for if you receive the name only, and do not receive from them the clothing, they are of no advantage to you. For these virgins are the powers of the Son of God. If you bear His name but possess not His power, it will be in vain that you bear his name.

The angel then explained certain stones that had been removed from the tower, which “bore His name, but did not put on the clothing of the virgins. Their very names... are their clothing. Everyone who bears the name of the Son of God, ought to bear the names also of these; for the Son Himself bears the names of these virgins.” He went on to explain that all who hoped to remain in the building should wear the same garment and receive
the name of God, and . . . also the strength of these virgins. Having received, then, these spirits, they were made strong, and were with the servants of God; and theirs was one spirit, and one body, and one clothing.\textsuperscript{107}

The angel gave the names of the virgins standing at the gate as Faith, Continence, Power, and Patience. The other virgins or qualities of righteousness are Simplicity, Innocence, Purity, Cheerfulness, Truth, Understanding, Harmony, and Love. "He who bears these names and that of the Son of God will be able to enter into the kingdom of God."\textsuperscript{108}

The symbolism found in the \textit{Similitude} derives from the writings of Paul. The concept that the Saints are building blocks in the Church, with "Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone," is from Ephesians 2:19–22 (cf. 1 Peter 2:5–9, citing Isaiah 28:16). That the Saints are temples of God is also affirmed in 1 Corinthians 3:16–17 and 6:16, 19. St. Ignatius further compared Christians to stones in a temple.\textsuperscript{109}

\textbf{Wedding Garments}

The virgins in the \textit{Similitude} remind us that virgins are used in the New Testament to symbolize the righteous of the Church, the bride of Christ (see Matthew 25:1–11; D&C 45:56; 63:54). At the wedding feast of the Lamb, all who are invited must wear the appropriate garment or be cast out (see Matthew 22:11–13).

The Bible also mentions the special garments worn by the bride for her wedding (see Isaiah 49:18; 61:10; Jeremiah 2:32; Revelation 21:2). In one pseudopigraphal work, the daughter of Jephthah, knowing that she can never marry, lamented with these words:

\textit{But I have not made good on my marriage chamber, and I have not retrieved my wedding garlands. For I}
have not been clothed in splendor while sitting in my woman's chamber, and I have not used the sweet-smelling ointment. And my soul has not rejoiced in the oil of anointing that has been prepared for me.\textsuperscript{110}

The pseudopepigraphic story of Joseph and Aseneth has a number of references to special garments, particularly in association with Aseneth's preparations to become Joseph's bride. When she first heard that Joseph was coming, she "hurried into the chamber, where her robes lay, and dressed in a [white] linen robe interwoven with violet and gold, and girded herself [with] a golden girdle."\textsuperscript{111} This was prior to Aseneth's conversion to the religion of Israel. Nevertheless, it reflects the importance that the ancient Egyptians—whose temple rites bore similarities to those of Israel—placed on ritual clothing.

Aseneth then went down to see Joseph and her parents, "and Pentephres and his wife rejoiced over her daughter Aseneth [with] great joy, because they saw her adorned like a bride of God."\textsuperscript{112} Joseph began teaching Aseneth about his religious beliefs. Afterward, she fasted and prayed in sackcloth and ashes, asking God to assist her in understanding the truth. The Lord sent his chief angel to earth, and he told the young woman, "Wash your face and your hands with living water, and dress in a new linen robe [as yet] untouched and distinguished and gird your waist [with] the new twin girdle of your virginity."\textsuperscript{113}

Accordingly, Aseneth rushed to where she kept her garments "and dressed in her distinguished [and as yet] untouched linen robe, and girded herself with the twin girdle of her virginity, one girdle around her waist, and another girdle upon her breast. And she . . . washed her hands and her face with living water. And she took an [as
yet] untouched and distinguished linen veil and covered her head."\textsuperscript{114}

When she returned, the chief angel told her:

And Joseph will come to you today . . . and you will be a bride for him for ever [and] ever. And now listen to me, Aseneth, chaste virgin, and dress in your wedding robe, the ancient and first robe which is laid up in your chamber since eternity, and put around you all your wedding ornaments, and adorn yourself as a good bride, and go meet Joseph.\textsuperscript{115}

Later, when Joseph was coming to dinner at the house of Aseneth’s parents, Aseneth removed her normal clothing,

opened her big coffer and brought out her first robe, [the one] of wedding, like lightning in appearance, and dressed in it. And she girded a golden and royal girdle around [herself] which was [made] of precious stones.\textsuperscript{116}

The bridal clothing, like the priestly clothing discussed earlier, was of white linen, symbolic of righteousness and purity. In the book of Revelation, John saw the Church as the bride of the Lamb. “And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints” (Revelation 19:8). The heavenly woman “clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars” was evidently another representation of the Church (Revelation 12:1).

\textbf{Heavenly Clothing}

Priestly clothing, by its symbolic nature and pure whiteness, replaces the everyday garb which reminds us that we are in the world, thus bringing the wearer closer to heaven. A number of passages speak of removing one’s corrupt
earthly clothing and replacing it by the divine. Here is a sampling:

And I was covered with the covering of your spirit, and I removed from me my garments of skin.\textsuperscript{117}

I raised my arms on high on account of the grace of the Lord: because he cast off my chains from me. And my Helper raised me according to his grace and his salvation. And I stripped off darkness and put on light. . . . And abundantly helpful to me was the thought of the Lord, and his incorruptible fellowship. And I was lifted up in the light, and I passed before his face.\textsuperscript{118}

Put off, O Jerusalem, the garment of thy mourning and affliction, and put on the comeliness of the glory that cometh from God for ever. Cast about thee a double garment of the righteousness which cometh from God; and set a diadem on thine head of the glory of the everlasting (1 Baruch 5:1–2).

Jesus, before ascending to heaven after a special visit to his apostles, reputedly declared, “From this moment on, I shall strip myself that I may clothe myself.”\textsuperscript{119}

\textit{The Garb of Angels}

From numerous scriptural and pseudepigraphical descriptions (some of them noted above), we know that temple garments symbolize those worn in the celestial kingdom. Angels are frequently described as being clothed in special garments. We have, for example, the angels associated with the resurrection of Jesus. Matthew wrote of the angel, “his countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow” (Matthew 28:3). Mark wrote of the angel seen at the tomb by the women, who was “clothed in a long white garment” (Mark 16:5), while Luke said there were two of them, “in shining garments” (Luke 24:4). John
recorded that Mary Magdalene had seen “two angels in white” (John 20:12).

After Jesus ascended to heaven, two angels “in white apparel” appeared to the apostles (Acts 1:10). Later, an angel “in bright clothing” appeared to Cornelius to give him instructions (Acts 10:30). These descriptions are similar to the one given of the angel Moroni who, according to Joseph Smith, “had on a loose robe of most exquisite whiteness” (Joseph Smith–History 1:31).

In his vision, John saw a number of individuals dressed in marvelous clothing. “And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud . . . [who] lifted up his hand to heaven, And sware by him that liveth for ever and ever” (Revelation 10:1, 5–6). He also saw “seven angels [who] came out of the [heavenly] temple . . . clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles” (Revelation 15:6). The garb of angels is similarly described in Apocalypse of Paul 12.

Similar descriptions are found in various pseudepigraphic works. In 3 Maccabees 6:18, two angels descend from heaven, “clothed in glory and of awe-inspiring appearance.” In fragments from the Book of Jannes and Jambres, we read that “two clad in white” were sent to accompany the Egyptian magician Jannes to Hades.

Before appearing to Abraham, the angel Death “donned a most radiant robe and made his appearance sunlike and became more comely and beautiful than the sons of men, assuming the form of an archangel.” As Death approached, Abraham detected “a sweet odor . . . and a radiance of light.” Abraham mistook him for Michael and greeted him with the words, “you who are sunlike in appearance and form, most glorious assistant, bearer of light, marvelous man.”
In another pseudepigraphic work, Abraham describes an angel who appeared to him:

And I stood up and saw him who had taken my right hand and set me on my feet. The appearance of his body was like sapphire, and the aspect of his face was like chrysolite, and the hair of his head like snow. And a kidaris [headdress] (was) on his head, its look that of a rainbow, and the clothing of his garments (was) purple; and a golden staff/scepter [was] in his right hand.\textsuperscript{124}

The "chief of the angels" who appeared to Aseneth prior to her marriage to Joseph also fits the pattern described in other passages:

And Aseneth raised her head; and saw, and behold, (there was) a man in every respect similar to Joseph, by the robe and the crown and the royal staff, except that his face was like lightning, and his eyes like sunshine, and the hairs of his head like a flame of fire of a burning torch, and hands and feet like iron shining forth from a fire, and sparks shot forth from his hands and feet.\textsuperscript{125}

\textit{Celestial Garments of the Righteous}

"Thou standest clad in robes that grow old and desirest not those that are eternal?"\textsuperscript{126}

That the righteous will wear splendid white clothing when received into the celestial kingdom was noted by John in the book of Revelation:

And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold (Revelation 4:4).

And white robes were given unto every one of them (Revelation 6:11).

After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which
no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands (Revelation 7:9).

The celestial garments given to the righteous at the time of the resurrection and judgment are a common motif in pseudepigraphic and kabbalistic literature. One of the more impressive descriptions is found in the book of 4 Ezra:

I Ezra saw on Mount Zion a great multitude, which I could not number, and they were all praising the Lord with songs. In their midst was a young man of great stature, taller than any of the others, and on the heads of each of them he placed a crown, but he was more exalted than they. And I was held spellbound. Then I asked an angel, “Who are these, my lord?” He answered and said to me, “These are they who have put off mortal clothing and put on the immortal, and they have confessed the name of God: now they are being crowned, and receive palms.” Then said I to the angel, “Who is that young man who places crowns on them and puts palms in their hands?” He answered and said to me, “He is the Son of God, whom they confessed in the world.”

The palms, crowns, and special clothing mentioned in this passage are motifs found in the temple anciently. The priests wore special garments, while the high priest wore a crown or plate of gold on his head. Palm fronds were carried to the Jerusalem temple during the Feast of Tabernacles. The wearing of the crowns implies that the righteous have become kings and queens, priests and priestesses, and have thus been anointed and invested with royal or priestly garb (see Exodus 19:5–11; 1 Peter 2:9; Hebrews 12:28–29, citing Deuteronomy 4:24; cf. Exodus 19:18).

In some pseudepigraphic works, we read that the celestial garments of the righteous are laid up for them in heaven
and will be made available to them after the resurrection. For example, when Abraham was atop Mount Horeb, the archangel Iaoel declared of him to Azazel (Satan), “For behold, the garment which in heaven was formerly yours has been set aside for him, and the corruption which was on him has gone over to you.”

The Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah speaks of “the robes of the saints and their going out” and states that “many will exchange the glory of the robes of the saints for the robes of those who love money.”

But the saints will come with the LORD with their robes which are stored up in the seventh heaven above; with the LORD will come those whose spirits are clothed, they will descend and be present in the world, and the LORD will strengthen those who are found in the body, together with the saints in the robes of the saints, and will serve those who have kept watch in this world. And after this they will be turned in their robes upwards, and their body will be left in the world.

The angel who shows Abraham the heavens speaks to him of the celestial clothing reserved for the patriarch:

For above all the heavens and their angels is placed your throne, and also your robes and your crown which you are to see.

[When from the body by the will of God you have come up here], then you will receive the robe which you see, and also other numbered robes placed [there] you will see, and then you will be equal to the angels who [are] in the seventh heaven.

The angel further spoke to Isaiah regarding the person who would be known on the earth as “the Son”:

He who is to be in the corruptible world has not [yet] been revealed, nor the robes, nor the thrones, nor the
crowns which are placed [there] for the righteous, for those who believe in that LORD who will descend in your form. For the light which [is] there [is] great and wonderful.\textsuperscript{137}

Arriving in the seventh heaven, the angel told Isaiah, "Behold! From there another voice which was sent out has come, and it says, 'The holy Isaiah is permitted to come up here, for his robe is here.'"\textsuperscript{138} Of this visit to the seventh heaven, we read:

And there I saw Enoch and all who [were] with him, stripped of [their] robes of the flesh; and I saw them in their robes of above, and they were like the angels who stand there in great glory. But they were not sitting on their thrones, nor were their crowns of glory on them. And I asked the angel who [was] with me, "How is it that they have received these robes, but are not on [their] thrones nor in [their] crowns?" And he said to me, "They do not receive the crowns and thrones of glory—nevertheless they do see and know whose [will be] the thrones and whose the crowns—until the Beloved descends in the form in which you will see him descend."\textsuperscript{139}

The angel then returned to the subject of Christ to come:

And then many of the righteous will ascend with him, whose spirits do not receive [their] robes until the LORD Christ ascends and they ascend with him. Then indeed they will receive their robes and their thrones and their crowns, when he has ascended into the seventh heaven.\textsuperscript{140}

And I saw many robes placed there, and many thrones and many crowns, and I said to the angel who led me, "Whose [are] these robes and thrones and crowns?" And he said to me, "As for these robes, there are many from that world who will receive [them] through believing in the words of that one who will be named as I have told you, and they will keep them, and
believe in them, and believe in his cross; [for they (are) these] placed [here].”\textsuperscript{141}

The angel then told Isaiah, “And you shall return into your robe until your days are complete; then you shall come here.”\textsuperscript{142} By “robe,” he evidently had reference to mortality, either the body itself or earthly clothing.

Based on these experiences, Isaiah later told King Hezekiah, “But as for you, be in the Holy Spirit that you may receive your robes, and the thrones and crowns of glory, which are placed in the seventh heaven.”\textsuperscript{143}

A number of early Christian texts note that the righteous will receive, in the resurrection, the garment which they shed in the heavenly realm in order to come to earth and take up the garment of corruption, the body. The Coptic Gospel of Philip notes that “those who wear the flesh” are naked. “In this world those who put on garments are better than the garments. In the kingdom of heaven the garments are better than those who have put them on.”\textsuperscript{144}

In the pseudepigraphal work known as the Book of the Resurrection of Christ by Bartholomew the Apostle, Thomas’s son Siophanes dies, then returns to life to recount his experience. His soul was taken by Michael and wrapped in a fine linen cloth, then washed in the Acherusian lake.\textsuperscript{145}

An early Christian document known as The Hymn of the Soul or The Pearl traces mankind’s life in parable form. The soul of the protagonist removes his glorious royal garb before coming to “Egypt” (the earth) and replaces it with an earthly garment. After successfully accomplishing his purpose on earth, he returns to his (heavenly) parents and again dons the robe he had in the beginning.\textsuperscript{146} Hugh Nibley has shown parallels to the story in the Coptic Pistis Sophia.\textsuperscript{147}

The concept of celestial garments that are reserved for the righteous is also found in the Book of Mormon. Alma
admonished the people to "keep your garments spotless," that they might "sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the holy prophets . . . having your garments spotless even as their garments are spotless, in the kingdom of heaven" (Alma 7:25).

When righteous prophets are brought before God, they are allowed to don the special clothing reserved for them. Thus, when Nephi saw the apostle John in vision, John was "dressed in a white robe" (1 Nephi 14:19–20). A pseudepigraphal work has the prophet Zephaniah writing of his visit to the celestial world, "I, myself, put on an angelic garment." One of the *Odes of Solomon* declares, "And I abandoned the folly upon the earth, and stripped it off and cast it from me. And the Lord renewed me with his raiment, and possessed me by his light, and from above he gave me immortal rest."

Ultimately, the righteous are received into the presence of God and allowed to wear the special clothing:

The righteous and elect ones shall rise from the earth and shall cease being of downcast face. They shall wear the garments of glory. These garments of yours shall become the garments of life from the Lord of the Spirits. Neither shall your garments wear out, nor your glory come to an end before the Lord of the Spirits.

Receive what the Lord has entrusted to you and be joyful, giving thanks to him that has called you to heavenly kingdoms. Rise and stand, and see at the feast of the Lord the number of those who have been sealed. Those who have departed from the shadow of this age have received glorious garments from the Lord. Take again your full number, O Zion, and conclude the list of your people who are clothed in white, who have fulfilled the law of the Lord.

Then Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob will rejoice, and I
shall be glad, and all the saints shall be clothed in righ- 
teousness.\textsuperscript{152}

These passages are reminiscent of the wording of a 
modern revelation to Joseph Smith:

Mine apostles, the Twelve which were with me in my 
ministry at Jerusalem, shall stand at my right hand at the 
day of my coming in a pillar of fire, being clothed with 
robes of righteousness, with crowns upon their heads, in 
glory even as I am . . . yea, even the dead which died in 
me, to receive a crown of righteousness, and to be clothed 
upon, even as I am (D&C 29:12–13).

That these heavenly garments resemble the clothing of 
earthly prophets or priests is implied in a story of Saul’s 
visit to the witch of En-Dor. Samuel had appeared to her 
and she said to the king:

“You are asking me about divine beings. For behold 
his appearance is not the appearance of a man. For he is 
clothed in a white robe with a mantle placed over it, and 
two angels are leading him.” And Saul remembered the 
mantle that Samuel wore when he was alive.\textsuperscript{153}

The Manual of Discipline says that the righteous will 
receive a garment of light (1QS 4), reminding us of the gar-
ment of light given to Adam and Eve. Satan has used his 
knowledge of celestial garb to deceive men, appearing in 
the emblems of his “priesthoods” as an angel of light. In 
2 Adam and Eve 17, Satan and his host appear to Jared in the 
guise of people from another country to lead the patriarch 
to the children of Cain. Along the way,

Then said the elder to one of his companions, “We 
have forgotten something by the mouth of the cave, and 
that is the chosen garment we had brought to clothe Jared 
withal.” He then said to one of them, “Go back, thou, 
some one; and we will wait for thee here, until thou come
back. Then will we clothe Jared and he shall be like us, good, handsome, and fit to come with us into our country."\textsuperscript{154}

The one who returned, however, brought a "phantom" garment which, nevertheless, impressed Jared.\textsuperscript{155}

\textit{Cleansing the Garments}

Anciently, when one's person or clothing was defiled (e.g., by touching a dead body or by bodily issue), it was necessary to undergo ritual purification in water and change the clothes. Thus, we read that Kenaz, after a battle, "took off his clothes and threw himself into the river and washed himself. And he came up again, changed his clothes."\textsuperscript{156}

Speaking of Jerusalem as his bride, the Lord declared through Ezekiel,

\begin{quote}
Then washed I thee with water; yea, I throughly washed away thy blood from thee, and I anointed thee with oil. I clothed thee also with broidered work . . . and I girded thee about with fine linen (Ezekiel 16:9–13).
\end{quote}

This cleansing was particularly important when entering the temple. We read, for example, that David washed, anointed himself, and changed his apparel before going into the house of the Lord (see 2 Samuel 12:20).

The cleansing of one's garments was ritually important in ancient Israel as a necessary preparation for appearing before God. Thus we read concerning the events in Sinai:

\begin{quote}
And the Lord said unto Moses, Go unto the people, and sanctify them to day and to morrow, and let them wash their clothes, and be ready against the third day: for the third day the Lord will come down in the sight of all the people upon mount Sinai. . . . And Moses went down from the mount unto the people, and sanctified
the people; and they washed their clothes (Exodus 19: 10–11, 14).

This washing was to prepare the people for meeting the Lord and becoming a "kingdom of priests" (Exodus 19:5–11). As such, it was an initiation into a new relationship with the God of their fathers, who had rescued them from bondage in Egypt.

In ancient Israel, garments were cleansed before the performance of sacred functions (see Leviticus 16:23–24, 28). A ritually unclean person was required to wash himself and his clothes, sometimes following this practice by sacrifice (see Leviticus 15:5–13, 16–27). The practice of cleansing one's clothing seems to have applied to festival days as well, such as the first day (the new moon) of the seventh month, which was the most sacred month in the Israelite calendar:

And on the new moon of the month Jacob spake to all the people of his house, saying: "Purify yourselves and change your garments, and let us arise and go up to Bethel, where I vowed a vow to Him. . . ." And he went up on the new moon of the seventh month to Bethel. And he built an altar at the place where he had slept, and he set up a pillar there.157

Other passages indicate that ridding one's garments of filth was symbolic of casting off sin:158

Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy. He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels (Revelation 3:4–5).

And may the Lord bless you, and keep your gar-
ments spotless, that ye may at last be brought to sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the holy prophets who have been ever since the world began, having your garments spotless even as their garments are spotless, in the kingdom of heaven to go no more out (Alma 7:25).

Jude wrote of those who hate "even the garment spotted by the flesh" (Jude 1:23). His words were repeated in a modern revelation:

Save yourselves from this untoward generation, and come forth out of the fire, hating even the garments spotted with the flesh... I am Jesus Christ, the Son of God; wherefore, gird up your loins and I will suddenly come to my temple (D&C 36:6, 8).\(^\text{159}\)

We noted earlier that the wearing of proper raiment at the coming marriage supper of the Lamb is stressed in Matthew 22:11–13. In other passages, those who are not properly attired are said to be "naked":

Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame (Revelation 16:15).

I counsel thee to buy of me... white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see (Revelation 3:18).

The Blood of the Lamb

"Let thy garments be always white; and let thy head lack no ointment" (Ecclesiastes 9:8).

White clothing symbolizes purity. As such, it reminds the wearer that he should always conform his thoughts, his actions and his words to the righteous principles of heaven. The clothing of the righteous, in both the Bible and the Book
of Mormon, is made white by being cleansed in the blood of the lamb.\textsuperscript{160} John wrote:

And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them (Revelation 7:13–15).\textsuperscript{161}

In a similar vision, Nephi saw the twelve disciples Jesus would choose from among the Nephites, who would be “righteous forever; for because of their faith in the Lamb of God their garments are made white in his blood . . . and their garments were white even like unto the Lamb of God. And the angel said unto me: These are made white in the blood of the Lamb, because of their faith in him” (1 Nephi 12:10–11). Alma also explained this principle:

For there can no man be saved except his garments are washed white; yea, his garments must be purified until they are cleansed from all stain, through the blood of him of whom it has been spoken by our fathers, who should come to redeem his people from their sins (Alma 5:21; see also Alma 13:11; 34:36; 3 Nephi 27:19; Ether 13:10–12; cf. D&C 76:69).\textsuperscript{162}

It is by preaching repentance to the people that one’s garments are made clean. Jacob shook his garment before the people assembled at the temple as a witness “that I shook your iniquities from my soul, and that I stand with brightness before him, and am rid of your blood” (2 Nephi 9:44; cf. Jacob 2:2 and see Acts 18:6). He later wrote:

And we did magnify our office unto the Lord, taking
upon us the responsibility, answering the sins of the people upon our own heads if we did not teach them the word of God with all diligence; wherefore, by laboring with our might their blood might not come upon our garments; otherwise their blood would come upon our garments, and we would not be found spotless at the last day (Jacob 1:19).

King Benjamin likewise assembled the people at the temple, “that I might be found blameless, and that your blood should not come upon me, when I shall stand to be judged of God of the things whereof he hath commanded me concerning you . . . that I might rid my garments of your blood” (Mosiah 2:27–28; cf. Mormon 9:35; Acts 20:26–27). Modern revelation has also made it clear that missionary work is a means to free oneself from the “blood of this generation” (D&C 88:85–86; 112:33). In another passage, after exhorting early missionaries to preach, the Lord promised them, “And inasmuch as they do this they shall rid their garments, and they shall be spotless before me” (D&C 61:34).

The Savior’s Vesture

“And I saw that a virgin was born from Judah wearing a linen stole; and from her was born a spotless lamb.” The Book of Mormon takes special note of the “white robe” worn by Jesus when he appeared to the Nephites in the city of Bountiful after his resurrection (3 Nephi 11:8). Its “whiteness . . . did exceed all the whiteness, yea, even there could be nothing upon earth so white as the whiteness thereof” (3 Nephi 19:25). The celestial clothing worn by Christ in John’s vision is similarly described: “And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.”
Evidently, some of Jesus' contemporaries attributed miraculous powers to the clothing worn by the Savior during his mortal ministry. We read of a woman who touched the hem of Jesus' garment to be healed (see Matthew 9:20-22; Luke 8:44; Mark 5:27-28). We read that the sick "besought him that they might only touch the hem of his garment: and as many as touched were made perfectly whole" (Matthew 14:36; Mark 6:56).

The robe of Jesus, like that of the high priest in ancient Israel (see Exodus 28:32) was woven as one piece (see John 19:23). Much has been written of this robe, some in popular fiction. According to some of the legends, after the crucifixion (when the soldiers removed Jesus' clothing), the robe fell into Pilate's hands. Subsequently arrested, he was brought before the emperor at Rome, wearing the tunic of Christ. The emperor's rage calmed each time Pilate stood thus clothed in his presence, but returned as soon as Pilate departed. This cycle stopped when Pilate was either executed or accidentally slain.

Matthew made a point of the symbolic importance of Jesus' robe being preserved intact: "And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots" (Matthew 27:35).

The prophecy cited by Matthew is from Psalm 22:18. Many of the Psalms, written by David, seem to be a prophetic view of his descendant and rightful successor, Jesus Christ. The following may also be a prophecy of the Christ, though referring to actual historical characters.

And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will call my servant Eliakim the son of Hilkiah: And I will clothe him with thy robe, and strengthen him with thy girdle,
and I will commit thy government into his hand: and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah. And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open. And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place; and he shall be for a glorious throne to his father’s house. And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his father’s house, the offspring and the issue, all vessels of small quantity, from the vessels of cups, even to all the vessels of flagons. In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, shall the nail that is fastened in the sure place be removed, and be cut down, and fall (Isaiah 22:20–25).

In Gethsemane, Jesus sweat great drops of blood (see Luke 22:44; D&C 19:18), which must have stained his garment red. The symbolic nature of the bloodstained garment is explained in a pseudepigraphal work that discusses the scapegoat which was cursed anciently with Israel’s sins (see Leviticus 16:7–10):

And why [do you behold] the one that is accursed crowned? Because they shall see Him then in that day having a scarlet robe about his body down to his feet; and they shall say, Is not this He whom we once despised, and pierced, and mocked, and crucified? Truly this is He who then declared Himself to be the Son of God.

Jewish tradition holds that the Messiah’s garment will be red with blood, as from the winepress. The same idea is found in several biblical passages (see Isaiah 63:1–8; Revelation 14:18–20; 19:13–15; Genesis 49:10–11; Lamentations 1:15). The apostle John wrote of his vision of the returning Christ:

And on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his
name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him . . . clothed in fine linen, white and clean. . . . And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS (Revelation 19:12–14, 16).

Christ's celestial garb is therefore both royal and priestly in nature.

Conclusions

The priestly garb of biblical times has traditionally been associated with the celestial attire of God and of angels, which is reserved for the righteous who will enter God's presence. Because of its divine symbolism, miraculous powers (such as protection of the wearer's body) have been attributed to priestly clothing. After the construction of the tabernacle and later the temple, it was deemed inappropriate to wear the special outer garments outside the sanctuary. This changed in early Christianity. Hugh Nibley has noted that Christians, longing to retain temple rites, transferred some of them to nontemple ceremonies. This included the imitation of temple clothing in the celebration of Christian sacraments or ordinances.176 For example, the wearing of the cossack (robe), the apron, the stole, and the mitre by Roman Catholic clergy is a vestige of ancient priestly dress used in the temple.

Investiture of kings and priests in much of Christianity today also follows the ancient rite, with anointing and clothing in special garments. Anciently, the investiture ceremony denoted a symbolic change from an earthly to a heavenly status. Because the priestly clothing was considered to be divine in origin, it gave the wearer authority to act as a representative of God among men. It was this
outward expression of an inner power that made priestly garb a fitting symbol of God's presence.

Notes

1. The document was composed in Arabic, probably in Egypt, in the eleventh century A.D. using earlier texts and was soon thereafter translated into Ethiopic. Charlesworth refers to the work as "The Conflict of Adam and Eve," though he does not include it in his Old Testament Pseudepigrapha. It was called 1 and 2 Adam and Eve by S. C. Malan, whose translation appears in Rutherford H. Platt, Jr., ed., The Forgotten Books of Eden (Cleveland: World Publishing; copyrighted 1927 by Alpha House).

2. Theodoretus, in his commentary on Genesis 3:27 (Quaestiones in Genesis), found it difficult to believe that God could have slain animals to provide clothing for Adam and Eve. The same concern may have given rise to the idea in TB Sotah 14a and Midrash Bereshit Rabbah 20:12 that these garments were made of wool or of linen. The priestly garments used by descendants of Aaron were made of linen.

4. 1 Adam and Eve 52:3-9, in ibid., 34.

5. See Pirque de Rabbi Eliezer 20; Targum Yerushalmi Genesis 3:21.


7. We should note the very common belief that the serpent (and sometimes the lizard) does not die because it sheds its skin each year. Frazer noted the existence of this tradition among the ancient Phoenicians as well as among tribes of Africa, South America, and various islands of the South Pacific. Some legends indicate that God originally intended to tell humans to cast their skin as they grew old in order to become young again, but the message was somehow delivered to the serpent instead. The receiving of celestial garments in place of earthly garb is likewise thought in early Jewish and Christian lore to bestow eternal life and protection from earthly dangers. For a detailed study of the subject of the cast skin, see Sir James George Frazer, Folk-Lore in the Old Testament (New York: Tudor, 1923), 1:18, 26-32.

8. 3 Baruch 9:7, Slavonic version, in OTP, 1:672.
9. Ibid., 1:673.

10. See Midrash Bereshit Rabbah 20:12.
11. E.g., Midrash Bereshit Rabbah 18:56; 20:12. According to this view, God and the angels are also clothed in light. In a Kabbalistic
text on the creation of the world, we read that the heavens were made from the light of God’s garment (Pirque de Rabbi Eliezer 3). For being clothed in light, see D&C 85:7. According to the Book of the Rolls f.93a, Adam’s body, at the creation, was brighter than the sun.

12. See Avot de Rabbi Nathan 42:116–17; according to 3 Baruch 4:16 (Greek), Adam and Eve lost the glory of God; cf. 3 Baruch 13:4 (Slavonic).


14. See Pirque de Rabbi Eliezer 14; Targum Yerushalmi 3:7, 3:21; Orchat Haqqim 1, 68c.

15. See Zohar I, 36b.


18. 1 Adam and Eve 51:5, in Platt, The Forgotten Books of Eden, 34.

19. 1 Adam and Eve 37:4, in ibid., 26; see also 1 Adam and Eve 8:2; 51:5.

20. 1 Adam and Eve 60:16, in ibid., 41; cf. 1 Adam and Eve 33:5–6.


22. Book of the Rolls f.94a, in ibid., 7.


24. When Satan rebelled, “God . . . deprived the Devil of the robe of praise and dignity” (Book of the Rolls f.93b, in ibid., 7). In view of the Book of Mormon teaching that Satan wants mankind to become like him (2 Nephi 2:18, 27), this may explain why he was so anxious that Adam and Eve be stripped of their heavenly clothing.

25. In some Bible and Book of Mormon passages, “nakedness” refers to mankind’s sinful state (see 2 Chronicles 28:19; Lamentations 1:8; 2 Nephi 9:14; Mormon 9:5; cf. Revelation 16:15). This concept is reflected in the Jewish tradition that the fall caused Adam and Eve to become aware of their lack of good deeds (Midrash Bereshit Rabbah 19.6; Pirque de Rabbi Eliezer 14; Targum Yerushalmi Genesis 3:10).

26. Apocalypse of Moses 20:1–2, in OTP, 2:281; the use of sacred clothing to denote righteousness is discussed later in this article.


32. See Origen, Contra Celsum IV, 40.
33. See Sifre Dvrc ha-Yamin 355; Mekilla wa-Yassa’ 5:51a; TB Pesahim 54b; Aletot de Rabbi Nathan 57, 95; Midrash Bereshit Rabbah 20:12; Abkir in Yalkut I, 34; Midrash Tanhuma ha-Qadosh weha-Yashan 1:17–18, 33. Jerome, in his commentary on Genesis 27:16, mentioned the Jewish tradition that Adam’s garment was worn anciently by the firstborn in the family, who performed priestly service before Aaron’s time. Other early Christian sources also state that the garments of Adam and Eve were created before the world; for references, see LJ, 5:104, n. 93.
34. The Book of Jasher (from the Hebrew meaning “book of the righteous [one]”) is not the book of that name mentioned in the Bible (see Joshua 10:13; 2 Samuel 1:18). Rather, it is a thirteenth-century A.D. document that imitates biblical Hebrew and was probably composed in Spain. It nevertheless preserves a number of early Jewish traditions known from midrashic and pseudepigraphal sources such as Jubilees, and is therefore valuable as a collection of Jewish lore. The English translation most familiar to us (and cited in this article) was published by J. H. Parry and Company of Salt Lake City in 1887.
35. Rabbi Bahya, in his commentary on Genesis 3:21, has the garment descending from Adam to Cain, then to Nimrod.
36. Regarding Ham’s claim on the priesthood, see Abraham 1:25–27.
38. See Midrash ‘Aseret Melakim 38–39; Zohar I, 73b–74a, 142b; Sabba, Toledot, 28a; Pirque de Rabbi Eliezer 24.
40. See Targum Yerushalmi Genesis 25:25; Pirque de Rabbi Eliezer 32; Yalkut Reuben I, 110; Nur al-Zulm 95; see also LJ, 5:276, n. 38.
42. See Midrash Bereshit Rabbah 63:13.
43. See Midrash Bereshit Rabbah, 420–22; Midrash Va-yiqra Rabbah 25:6; Midrash ha-Midbar Rabbah 4:8; TB Nedarith 32b; Tanhuma Buber Genesis 76; Pirque de Rabbi Eliezer. The Book of the Rolls f.110b (in Gibson, Apocrypha Arabic) notes that Melchizedek’s priestly clothing was made of animal skins.
46. Midrash Tanhuma ha-Qadish weha-Yashan I, 145, notes that the bodies of the pious emit a celestial fragrance of paradise; this fragrance was later identified with that of the incense used in the temple
(Midrash Tanhumah ha-Qadum weha-Yashan I, 145; Midrash Bereshit Rabbah 65:23; Targum Yerushalmi Genesis 27:27); see also LJ, 5:284, n. 92.

47. Origen, Contra Celsum I, 48.
48. See Midrash Bereshit Rabbah 89:9; Zohar I, 194b.
49. ‘Asarah ha-Ruge Malkut 20 (whence borrowed by Hadar and Đarät); Imre No‘am on Genesis 38:22–23, which has Raphael instead of Gabriel; cited in LJ, 5:330, n. 51.
50. In Alma 46:21–24 we read of a particular ceremony associated with the story of Joseph’s garment. Because Jewish tradition indicates that Joseph’s garment was the high priestly garment of Adam, this passage may have more meaning than previously supposed. In this passage, the desecration of the garment symbolizes being “ashamed to take upon them the name of Christ.”
51. LJ, 5:329, n. 43.
53. JD, 4:172.
55. TB Shabbat 113b; TB Sanhedrin 94a; Midrash Tanhumah ha-Qadum weha-Yashan I, 50; III, 13–14; Tanhumah Noah 15; Tehillim 11,100; cf. Targum Yerushalmi Numbers 11:26, cited in LJ, 6:363.4, n. 59.
56. TB Shabbat 113b; TB Sanhedrin 94a; Jerome on Isaiah 10:16; Tosefta-Targum 2 Kings 19:35; Targum 2 Chronicles 32:21; 2 Baruch 63:8.
58. By this we are to understand that they did not use the incense prepared according to the formula mentioned in Exodus 30:34–38.
59. LJ, 6:75, n. 385, referring to Leviticus 10:1–2. His references are Sifra 10:2; TB Sanhedrin 52a; Midrash Tanhumah ha-Qadum weha-Yashan I, 50; III, 13–14; and Tanhumah Noah 15.
60. Midrash Pesikta Rabbati, 10, 92a–b; Midrash Devarim Rabbah 7:11; Midrash Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah 4:11; Tehillim 23, 199–200. The story was known to Justinian, Dialogue, 131.
63. The Lives of the Prophets 21:14, in ibid., 2:397; this text follows the Greek Septuagint version of the Bible, while the Hebrew text has “mantle.”
64. The Lives of the Prophets 22:5, in ibid., 2:397.
67. According to *Midrash Bereshit Rabbah* 20:12, Rabbi Johanan said that the garments of Adam and Eve were like the fine linen garments from Beth-Shean.
68. As required by the law of Moses; see Exodus 20:26.

73. In the verse that follows, Eleazar speaks of the *tephillin*, or phylacteries; one of the features of the phylactery box worn on the forehead is that it has four separate compartments, each containing a specific passage of scripture from the law of Moses.
74. See M *Sukkah* 5:2–3.
75. See *Testament of Levi* 7:4–8:1. The name Beth-El, given to the site by Jacob (Genesis 28:16–17), means “house of God,” evidently because Jacob saw in vision the heavenly temple. Among other prophets who saw the heavenly temple are Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, John the Revelator, Lehi, Nephi, and Enoch.
76. For virtues associated with garments, see the section Garments of Righteousness, later in this chapter.
80. 3 *Enoch* 12:1–3, in *ibid.*, 1:265. He then speaks of having been given a new name. Charlesworth notes that in the Alphabet of Metatron, the angel wears eight garments, corresponding to the eight garments of the high priest (see note 12a, p. 265).
81. See 1 *Enoch* 71:3, where the archangel Michael takes Enoch by the right hand to lead him into the mysteries; cf. Abraham 1:18.
82. See Midrash Bereshit Rabbah 58:9; Midrash ha-Gadol, *Sepher Bereshit* 1, 362; *Mishle* 16, 38; Tanuma Hayye 4; *Aggadat Bereshit* 32, 68.
84. The renunciation of the devil is also found in third-century A.D. Christian baptism, where the initiate is also anointed and dressed in white clothing. The practice, formerly confined to the temple, was ultimately moved to the more open ordinance because the temple had long since ceased to exist (see John A. Tvedtne, “Olive Oil: Symbol of the Holy Ghost,” in *The Allegory of the Olive Tree: The Olive*,...


87. Testament of Job 47:3, in ibid.
89. See Testament of Job 47:6, in ibid.
94. Theodoretus, commenting on Exodus 3:5 (Quaestiones in Genesis), makes the same inference; cf. TB Rosh ha-Shanah 31b and TB Shekalim 5:48d.


96. Apostolic Constitutions viii, 6, 6; in OTP, 2:688.
97. For a more complete discussion of this subject, see my article “Olive Oil: Symbol of the Holy Ghost,” 427–59.
99. See Ignatius to Polycarp 1:3.
100. Odes of Solomon 4:7–9, in OTP, 2:736.

103. This would imply that the robe was draped over the left shoulder.
106. Ibid.
107. Ibid.
108. Similitude 9:15, in ibid., 49.
117. Odes of Solomon 25:8, in ibid., 2:758; note the earlier discussion about garments of skin and garments of light.
120. OTP, 2:528.
121. Papyrus Chester Beatty XVI.25a.
122. The sweet odor of garments from paradise was discussed above.
128. For crowns in the Bible, see 1 Corinthians 9:25; 2 Timothy 4:8; James 1:12; 1 Peter 5:4; Revelation 2:10; 3:11; 4:4, 10. The crown motif is also found in pseudepigraphal works, including 2 Baruch 15:8; Apocalypse of Elijah 1:7–8; 4:29; 4 Ezra 2:46; Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah 9:25.
129. 3 Enoch 43:1–3 notes that when the souls of men return to God, they clothe themselves in his presence.
131. Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah 1:5, in ibid., 2:157. The translator, M. A. Knibb, indicates that this expression typically relates, in pseudepigraphal literature, to the descent of the Beloved through the seven heavens (ibid., 2:157, note q).
137. Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah 8:26, in ibid.
138. Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah 9:2, in ibid.
140. Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah 9:17–18, in ibid.
143. Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah 11:40, in ibid.
150. 1 Enoch 62:15–16, in ibid., 1:44.
151. 4 Ezra 2:37–40, in ibid., 1:527.
154. 2 Adam and Eve 17:27–28, in Platt, Forgotten Books of Eden, 73.
155. 2 Adam and Eve 17:32–33, in ibid.
157. Jubilees 31:1, 3, in ibid., 2:114; the event took place at Beth-El, the site of Jacob’s dream of the ladder and of Levi’s vision of the men who washed, anointed, and clothed him to serve as a priest.
158. In the Ugaritic texts of the fourteenth century B.C., Anat, goddess of war, is bespattered by blood and gore as she slays men on the earth. She casts her filth into the sea and receives rain from her husband, the sky-god Baal, to wash her clean. The annual rains were seen by the Canaanites and related peoples to be Baal’s means of cleansing the blood of the slain from the body of his wife, who was the earth. The idea of washing away “filthiness” is found in Proverbs 30:12 and Isaiah 4:4 (where the word parallels “blood”). In both passages, the Hebrew word for “filth” is cognate to the Ugaritic word used in the story of Anat. See the Ugaritic text and translation in Umberto Cassuto, The Goddess Anath, trans. Israel Abrahams (Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, The Hebrew University, 1971), 88–89.
159. In some passages of scripture, we read that the garments of the righteous shall be made clean (e.g., Ether 12:37–38 = D&C 135:5).
160. Cf. the following New Testament passages and note the use of temple terminology in each:

"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7).

"And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen" (Revelation 1:5–6).

161. This passages resembles 4 Ezra 2:42–47, cited earlier in this article.

162. The "Lamb ... slain from the foundation of the world" was seen by Enoch (Moses 7:47) and was later depicted by John the Baptist (John 1:29, 36) and the apostle John (Revelation 5:6; 13:8). Sanctification through his atoning blood is paramount in the plan of redemption. Some ancient religions practiced actual baptism in the blood of lambs and bulls.

163. This discourse was delivered by king Benjamin at the temple (Mosiah 1:18; 2:1, 5–7).

164. The passage from Doctrine and Covenants 88 is from the section denoted the "Olive Leaf" by Joseph Smith, which is a revelation specifically designed to prepare the Latter-day Saints for the temple that the Lord commanded them to build. In this connection, we note the Bible's most prominent temple hymn, Psalm 24, in which we read that those who are worthy to enter the sanctuary (the "hill of the Lord") are those who have "clean hands and a pure heart."

165. Testament of Joseph 19:8, in OTP, 1:824. This is the reading of the Greek Θ text; the Armenian has "a multicolored stole."

166. Revelation 1:13; Apocalypse of Zephaniah 6:12 (in OTP, 1:513) similarly describes an angel: "And he was girded as if a golden girdle were upon his breast." We have seen the golden girdle in other passages cited earlier.

167. The "hem" is generally considered to be the tassel on the corner of the tallith worn by all Jewish men at the time, and called "the borders of their garments" by Jesus (Matthew 23:5; cf. Mark 12:38).

168. Note especially the novels of General Lew Wallace, The Robe and its sequel, Demetrius and the Gladiators, both of which later became major motion pictures.

169. See James, Apocryphal New Testament, 158, on "The Death of Pilate."
170. See and cf. Psalm 45:6–7; Hebrews 1:8; and note the comment by Peter in Acts 2:25–35.

171. Eliakim means “God will set up” and Hilkiah means “the portion of Jehovah”; both can be symbolic titles of Christ.

172. This seems to refer to the sealing power given by Jesus to his twelve apostles (see Matthew 16:19; 18:18).

173. Note that Jesus holds the “key of David” (Revelation 3:7). If this is a prophecy of Christ, the words “shall fall” perhaps refer to his death.


175. See Tanhuma wa-Yehi 10; Targumim 49:8–12; Midrash ha-Gadol Bereshit 1, 735–9; Yelammedenu 35; cited in Lj 2:143, 5:367, n. 388.