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Some thoughts suggested by clothes, 1941.

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SOME THOUGHTS SUGGESTED BY CLOTHES
The Philosophy of Dress



By
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At
The Temple

On
Sunday morning, April 27, 1941

and the fine linen." A garment is frequently a symbol of authority. When Aaron was about to die, Moses ^{was} commanded to place them upon the .

When the great prophet Elijah died and Elisha was to be his successor, it was decreed that the ^{mantle of} Elijah should be passed on to Elishah as a symbol of authority and power, transmitted from master to disciple.

But clothes have been used throughout history among our own people for the purpose of symbolic reminders. Thus the Jews were commanded to put fringes on the corner of their garments and to put in each fringe a thread of blue: "that ye may look upon it and remember all the commandments of the Lord, and do them."

When you come to think of it, this is really the philosophy behind uniforms or special dresses for orders and societies and lodges and groups of men whether they be lay, cleric, scholastic or military - garments to impress not so much other people but to impress the wearer of the garment himself, and to make him continuously aware of the position occupied by the group and the duties assumed.

Sometimes the garment is used to degrade, humiliate - by the use of outer garments to destroy the inner dignity of a man. The convict's garb, the yellow badge are clothing used to degrade.

Clothes have definite moral implications. The Bible prohibits the wearing of certain garments. "Thou shalt not wear a mingled stuff, wool and linen together." It is the same principle as "Thou shalt not sow a vineyard with two kinds of seed." nor "plow with an ox and an ass together." The idea is that God has determined certain natural distinctions that are to be respected and kept apart. You find in the Bible: "A man shall not put on a woman's garment, a woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man - for whosoever doeth these things is an abomination unto the Lord." This was to safeguard men and women against moral dangers, Simulated changes in

I should like to put you at ease. I do not intend to discuss the latest styles in clothes or comment on the new spring fashion dresses or hats or gloves or shoes or purses or the whole interesting and colorful field of cosmetics. That is another department. Although Rabbis have been advised to all times to have a seeing eye, they have also been taught the true wisdom of keeping silence on many things.

At first blush it would appear that the subject of clothes is too light, secular and unrelated a subject to be discussed from the pulpit. What has religion to do with clothes? Yet it is remarkable how much space is actually devoted to the subject of clothes in the Bible. In the very first chapter in the Bible we come upon the story of the invention of clothes. In their original state of innocence Adam and Eve required no clothes. It was only after they partook of the fruit of the tree in the garden -- the Tree of Knowledge -- they discovered a need for clothes. "They sewed fig-leaves together and made themselves some clothes." That account in the early chapters of Genesis, strange as it may seem, is really a scientific explanation for the origin of clothes. Clothes were not invented so much to satisfy the claims of modest as to accentuate the sex life of the race. Later on in the Bible we read that "God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them." Clothing, thus, has a divine origin.

Clothing is nothing apart from man. It expresses man. Every human mood automatically reflects itself in clothes which men wear. The spirit of joy, festivities spontaneously expresses itself in the outer forms of garments. Grief expressed itself in garments of grief - in renting clothes. Also in a joyous mood people expressed themselves by wearing garments of joy.

Position, dignity, authority called for special vestments. "And thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron thy brother, for splendor and for beauty. The Bible spends many chapters in detailed description for the sewing and preparation of these vestments. "And the gold, the blue, the purple, the scarlet

sex were common occurrences in the ancient world among the heathens and were responsible for their utter moral deterioration. Priests attired as women participated in unholy rites. Judaism sought to emphasise the fact of moral purity and cleanliness insisted on the proper observance of the right physical accoutrements for man and woman.

The Bible knew how readily clothes can be used to deceive. So you read how Esau's garments were put on Jacob, the skins which he put on his hands in order to deceive the old blind Isaac. Clothes as masquarade.

And the Bible also knew the many crimes which are committed for fine clothes and all that it implies. The most dramatic narrative of the Bible is built around the story of a coat of many colors and how that disrupted a family and poisoned the hearts of brothers. The favorite son received a coat of many colors from his father. Immediately there was jealousy of brothers who hated Joseph for it. They stripped him of his coat of many colors and sold him into slavery. The crimes which people perpetrated for the sake of fine feathers are well know to the authors of the Bible.

Cbthes have very much to do with religion and morals. That is why religious biblical literature abounds in customs touching dress. Among our sages dress has always been regarded as important. A neat, respectable appearance is mandatory. Judaism was never an ascetic religion. Judaism never made a virtue of rags. It never extolled poverty. It never deprecated an attractive appearance. "He who treats clothes cheaply, holds them in contempt will not have them when he needs them. One should not be supercilious toward the subject of dress. Neatness, cleanliness, impressive appearance - that is to be desired, reached after. First impressions are important. Initial respect comes to him who is properly dressed.

"For thy back buy even what is dear; but for thy stomach only what is reasonable." In other words, it is much more necessary for a man to be well dressed than well fed. That is another illustration of the practical sagacity of Jewish ethics. Jewish ethics meant to help human beings, to sweeten them for human contacts.

On the other hand, all Jewish teachers without exception denounced, spoke with contempt of vulgar display, ostentation, of advertising one's wealth through lavish dress, lavish jewels. That tendency betrayed a barbaric spiritual soul, betrayed a lack of spiritual cultural and/refinement; because historically it is the primitive man and the primitive woman who use clothing less for purposes of utility and comfort and more for the purpose of display, ornamentation, than the civilized man. Excessive and arrogant display of wealth through dress incites envy, hate. It makes for bitter class and group resentments.

"Boast not of thy clothing and raiment said Ben Si .

And Isaiah said:

Because the daughters of Zion are
 haughty,
And walk with stretched-forth necks
And wanton eyes,
Walking and mincing as they go,
And making a tinkling with their
 feet;
Therefore the Lord will smite
The crown of the head of the daughters
 of Zion,.....

"In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of their anklets,
and the fillets, and the crescents; the pendants, and the bracelets, and the
veils; the headtires, and the armlets, and the sashes, and the corselets, and
the amulets; the rings, and the nose-jewels; the aprons, and the mantelets, and
the cloaks, and the girdles; and the gauze robes, and the fine linen, and the
turbans, and the mantles.

"And it shall come to pass, that
Instead of sweet spices there shall be
rottenness;
And instead of a girdle rags;
Branding instead of beauty."

Amazing! People had all those things in those days! Now it wasn't due to the fact that Isaiah didn't love beautiful things. Not at all... Denounced those who sought to impress the poor and arouse in them hatred thus preparing the way for revolution.

In 15th Century Spain there was another great Jewish teacher, Solomon Alemi who felt called upon to utter similar warnings to the Jews of his day. The Jewish Spanish men and women shortly before the exile, competed with each other and with the nobility of Spain in lavish dress, expensive Jewels, the building of palaces, arousing the hatred and resentment of the masses of the Spanish people and preparing for the day of retribution for themselves. Rabbi Solomon Alemi, the leading Jewish teacher of that day issued a letter of admonition to his fellow Jews, warning the men and the women to restrain themselves, to curb their lust for finery and display, luxuries and to live ~~more modestly~~ more modestly. His words were of no avail. It was the wealth of the Jews of Spain which proved one of the important facts of ultimately uprooting root and branch the great Jewish Spanish community which had lived there for more than a thousand years.

Our own age is shot through with bitter struggle. The denied and dispossessed are reaching out for their heritage. It is part of wisdom and prudence, if nothing else in these days, not to flaunt one's wealth or one's grasping for wealth, to be modestly dressed. It is not important for men to ride in the most expensive cars, to stop at the most expensive one's wealth hotels. It is much more important to devote ~~money~~ in these days, whatever one can spare from one's own actual needs to meet the needs of others, to relieve

their burdens and the growing crises of the world. Neither the classes nor the masses are any more impressed with fine wealth and the craving for them is just a hangover from an older civilization which is fast dying.

And those who still spend their lives and energies to procure these things for themselves or for their wives are just unspeakable fools.

You know how rapidly styles change and how eagerly people are to be stylish and how ridiculous styles of five and ten years ago look to us as we turn the pages of the family album.

Well, my good friends, there is a very decisive change in style coming over the whole world. There will be a decisive change in dress, in manner of living, in standards of living, in possession of property and wealth. If this war which is now raging will last another four or five years there will hardly be a rich man left in Europe or in the United States. New styles will emerge, new standards of living, new standards of human worth, human importance. There is a social revolution sweeping over the world. And fine feathers will be distinctly out-moded in that world. They will not be fashionable. And those men and women whose chief life interests continue to center in clothes, in the ornaments to be put on their wrists or fingers, or on powder and paint and perfumes will simply be lost in this new order which is fast coming to be.

It may well be that in this new world men will be satisfied to have the prayer which the Patriarch, Jacob, uttered: "bread to eat and raiment to wear". Perhaps it will be a better world than the world in which we are now living, one shot through with hate, bitter complaints, suffering, strife, war, insecurity, where men trample upon their fellow men in blind haste to reach after things which they really do not need.

Our Bible and Religion knows a great deal of other clothes far more

permanent in style and truly inalienable. Our Bible frequently speaks of this: "To be clothed with honor; to be clothed in righteousness; to be clothed in strength and dignity; to be clothed in garments of salvation." These are actual phrases from our sacred texts. Here are garments which are never cheap, never disreputable - never provocative of human envy - garments of strength, dignity, honor and salvation. The only trouble with these garments is that you have to make them out of your own hands, with your own life. They can not be purchased in a shop. They have to be tenderly, skillfully assiduously spun, woven, made. It takes a life-time to make these garments. But these garments remain, my good friends, always, even when we are dressed in our final raiment, in the shroud, when we are called upon to lay aside all our trappings for which we spent our hearts' blood and which we thought so important. There remains nothing of these.

Our dear ones in whose hands we should like to leave memories of our life, in whose hearts we leave the echoes of our life in this world, to them there remains nothing that is more precious and beautiful and indestructible than the garments of honor, esteem, dignity, righteousness which we leave them.

Adam and Eve - garments of light.

Thus, clothes, my friends may suggest a great number of helpful thoughts to thoughtful men and women.

1/ Put you at ease. Will not discuss latest styles in clothes, or comment on the ^{new} fashions in dresses or hats or gloves, or shoes or purses or the ^{whole} colorful field of cosmetics. It is not a dept. of Rabbinics, altho Rabbis have been accused to have ^{at all times} a seeing eye - they have also been taunted ^{themselves} with the wisdom of keeping silent on many things.

2/ At first blush it would appear that the subject of clothes is too light, secular and unimportant a subject to be discussed in a pulpit. What has religion to do with clothes? And yet it is remarkable to find, for example, how much space the Bible devotes to clothes. In the very first chapters, the B. we come upon the primordial story, the invention of clothing. So then story involvement - It was only after - ~~was~~ "sewed by-leaves together and made themselves girdles" - That, strange as it may seem, is the re. explanation of the origin of clothes. Not to satisfy claims of modesty but to ^{accentuate} ~~the~~ sex life of the race, ~~which was the~~ later on, we read that ~~it was~~ "God made for Adam & for his wife garments, skins and clothed them" Clothing, thus, has a divine origin.

3/ It is not some thing apart from man. It expresses man. Human words in entirely express themselves in clothes - Festive garments - for joy. Sack-cloth for mourning. Buryat word - put on white garments. In grief - rent their garments.

(a) Position - dignity - authority called for special vestments "And thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron thy brother, for splendor and for beauty. Details - Ex. 28 and 39 "Gold, the blue, the purple, the scarlet & the fine linen"

(2)

(b) A garment ^{may be} is a symbol of authority. Aaron - Egoz
"Mantle of Egoz"

4) Clothes may be symbolic reminders. x 3 x - commanded to put fringes in the corners of their garments, and put in each fringe a thread of blue: "that ye may look upon it and remember all the commandments of the Lord, and do them" This is the philosophy behind the special dress or uniforms of all special societies of men - lay, clerical, ^{voluntary} military. Not only to impress others, but to be impressed - to be constantly reminded of disciplines and duties -
To Regard - Convicts' cap - Fools' Cap - Yellow Badge -

5) Clothes have definite moral implications. Bible prohibits the use of certain garments: "Thou shalt not wear a mingled stuff, wool and linen together" (Lev 19:19). Same principle as "Thou shalt not sow a vineyard with 2 kinds of seed, nor plow with an ox and an ass together" - Preserve natural distinctions - Eat without mixing meat and drink.
→ "A man shall not put on a woman's garment, a woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man - for whosoever doeth these things is an abomination unto the Lord" - safeguard against obvious moral dangers - simulated changes of sex commonly occurred in Canaanite & Syrian heathenism + responsible for their utter moral deterioration - Priest attire as woman, participatory in unholy rites.

(3)

7/ Crimes committed for fine clothes. - Achan - "a
gordly Babylonian mantle" - lost death

Sealove can be around - "a coat of many colors"
- hated him - kept him - sold him -

8). Yes, indeed, ~~this~~ clothes have much to do with rel. and morals. Our rel. literature, Bib. Post-Bib. ~~is~~ abounds in counsel + admonition touching dress.

Dress is important! A neat, respectable appearance ^{although} mandatory. Judaism was not ascetic, men desired physical appearance, and women wore tall caps + shawls. Shew ? modesty.

② 220 אבולנטים -

First impressions are important! Initial respect comes to him who is properly accounted.

③ $\gamma \eta \iota \kappa \lambda \mu \nu \zeta \eta \theta \iota \kappa \lambda \mu \nu \zeta \eta \theta$; "For thy brek buy
even what is deer; but for thy stomach only what is
reasonable"

9). On the other hand. - all with art exceptions - defecate - denounce vulgar
display - ~~show~~ - ostentation - advertising / wealth than lavish
dress + jewels. It betrays a barbaric soul - ~~a~~ ^a
~~at~~ lack of sp. culture + sublimation ~~was~~. In it is the
primitive man and woman in whom dress is least
a matter of whiskers + combs - + cost a million

9 display. It is also socially harmful. It incites envy,
and hatred. Bitter class + group resentment
Boost not of the clothing and harmful Ben. Smith
② March 3. 16 (Jewell)

③ R. Solomon Alami - 20/11 2/26 - men + women -
love of funny + display - imitate the rich - + out-
do them - finer palaces - luxury - jewels.

③ This age - little class struggle - desire as packing
up for their heritage - part of wisdom + prudence to
- most expensive cars - bottles -
be modestly dressed - and to devote some wealth
whatever one can spare to meet the needs of the
men - ease burdens - relieve crises -

④ Neither the clarks nor the masses are any more
impressed with fine feathers - The craving for
them is a hang-over from a older era - dying.

⑤ And those who spend their lives + energy - to
promote these things for ees - & their wives - are
unprofitable foes -

10) You know how rapidly styles change - and how eager
people are to be stylish - and how ridiculous the
fashion of 5 or 10 or 20 yrs ago often seem to us -
When we turn back the family album -

Well, there is a decisive change in style coming over
the whole world - in dress - in manner / living -
in standards / living - in possession of wealth.
If there was lost 4-5 yrs. then all could be

- ~~Wilson~~ all fed.
- a rich man left any where in ~~Europe~~ ^{the US} - (5)
- new styles will emerge - new standards, worth - + importance.
 - Few fashions will be distinctly out-moded - Not to be fashionable
 - Those whose life's interests center in clothes etc. ^{in garments for days with fresh ~~new~~ in ~~new~~ ^{in ~~new~~ ^{new}}} will be ^{hardly} ^{preferred}
 - lost + bereft in the new order.
 - Joseph - "bread to eat and raiment to wear"
 - a better world -

11/ On Bible - our religion - know of the clothes -
far more desirable, + permanently in style + inalienable -
"To be clothed with honor - in righteousness - in strength
and dignity - in garments of salvation -
- Never shabby - Cold - hated -

12/ They remain - When we are dressed in our best
^{have all our fine ~~best~~ ^{new} ~~clothes~~ ^{garments} ~~pay~~}
raiment - the shroud.
Lay all our trappings aside - bubbles + Kevlar nails -
+ colored tops - spent our heart's blood on -

13/ > 18 x 12 - > 15 - walk in the splendor
of light - inner light -

Because the daughters of Zion are
 haughty,
And walk with stretched-forth necks
And wanton eyes,
Walking and mincing as they go,
And making a tinkling with their
 feet;
Therefore the Lord will smite ~~with~~
 ~~a scorb~~
The crown of the head of the daughters
 of Zion,
~~And the Lord will lay bare their~~
 secret parts.

In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of
their anklets, and the fillets, and the crescents; the pendants, and
the bracelets, and the veils; the headtires, and the armlets, and
the sashes, and the corselets, and the amulets; the rings, and the
nose-jewels; the aprons, and the mantelets, and the cloaks, and
the girdles; and the gauze robes, and the fine linen, and the
turbans, and the mantles.

And it shall come to pass, that
Instead of sweet spices there shall be
 rottenness;
And instead of a girdle rags; *And*
~~And instead of curled hair baldness;~~
~~And instead of a stomacher a girding~~
 of sackcloth;
Branding instead of beauty.

