

There is a lovely, tender moment in this week's *parasha* between Moses and his older brother Aaron. The Mishkan (the Tabernacle) is about to be dedicated, and the whole people is gathered for a big celebration. In the midst of this excitement, Moses takes on the task of dressing Aaron and his sons in their priestly clothes. While the ceremony is public, the action seems deeply intimate. We can almost picture them, one brother gently dressing the other, as if for a wedding, piece by piece; the *kutonet*-the tunic, the sash, the robe, the ephod, the breastplate. As the finishing touch, Moses lays the crown on his brother's head: "Sacred for God." Aaron's brother has readied him for his sacred task; it is time to turn to his work.

At the end of the book of *Bamidbar*, we will watch an even more intimate moment: Moshe undressing Aaron on Mount Hor, as Aaron prepares for death. Moses will gently undress his brother and place each of the garments on Eleazar, Aaron's son, as Eleazar takes over the position of High Priest. The *midrash* imagines God giving Aaron a shroud, so that Aaron is covered as Moses takes each piece off of him. Whatever has happened between Moses and Aaron throughout their story, they are deeply connected to one another from beginning to end. Here, in *Parshat Tzav*, we watch Moses dress his brother, and we are pulled out of the preparation and the festivities, glancing into a quiet moment of love and devotion. It is exactly the balm we may need in the middle of the crowd.

This week at school has been a flutter of costumes and excitement. The big events and hoopla of the holidays are always a thrill, but sometimes it's the opportunities to connect with others that can be truly transformative. As we wind down from our busy, fun-filled week, perhaps *Parshat Tzav* is reminding us to renew our focus on our most important relationships. The bulk of our Torah reading is focused on the ritual of the Mishkan, but it is the moment between Moses and Aaron that moves us, as we ourselves crave that kind of connection within religious practice. The good news is that we can build those moments by caring deeply for one another, brother to brother, teacher to student, friend to friend. May we be blessed with quiet, deeply connected moments as Shabbat arrives. Shabbat Shalom.

The Purim story reminds us that the clothes we wear express who we are and who we want to become. No wonder Haman's first choice reward for loyalty to the king is to wear the royal garments; nothing else could better convey his desire for power and honor. But he is not up to the heroic task. Instead, in a playful irony, it is Mordechai who wears the king's garments as he is paraded through the city.

Why do we wear costumes on Purim? For one day, we get to play with our identities, trying on personalities and outfits that we may not. But Jewish teachings give us a clear message. How we carry ourselves in the world matters.

plays with the meaning of clothing and how it underscores our identity.

The high school fashion show today played with our people's understanding of the power of clothes. The biblical canon wears clothing with the same sense of reverence. When Haman thinks of the ultimate reward for loyalty to the king, he imagines himself wearing garments of royalty, but he never actually does.

Haman wanted to be dressed in

How beautiful to think of the High Priest being clothed in garments that he could wear with pride, as he knew he was up to the task.

interesting to read about this beautiful exchange in our parsha after celebrating Purim, where we may have dressed in clothes that didn't quite suit us. In this brief moment in our parsha, we are reminded, as in Megilat Esther, that our clothes matter. One of the most significant motifs in the book of Esther is that of clothing. Think about the first thing Haman mentions when he thinks of a great honor; he wants the hero to be dressed in robes of royalty!!

dreams of as an honor been surprised that the thing Haman wants most as an honor. Each young woman spends a year dressing to meet the king; Esther puts on special clothes when she is about to meet the king. Both Mordechai and Esther put on sackcloth at different moments in the book, and Haman's first choice of prize for his loyalty to the king is to wear the king's garments!

It's a big week for clothing in Jewish life. Megilat Esther refers to clothes and getting dressed more than any other book in the Torah. Do clothes really make the man? What are the identities we share with the world through our clothing?

And yet, our parsha reminds us that we are meant to choose clothing that allows us to be useful in the world.

Big Idea: Throughout the Purim story, clothing and types of dress are an important motif. Clothing takes an important role in our lives because:

- a) it is a form of self-expression, how we present ourselves to the world
- b) It conveys mood, feeling, and intentions

- c) It conveys our group identity (example: Jewish, part of an athletic team, gang paraphernalia)

Goal: To highlight how costumes and external definitions help to define our identities--as Jews, as women, as teenagers

Why is BEAUTY so important?

Why is CLOTHING so important?

Why is LEVUSH the thing Haman wants most????

6:13 Zeresh if he's a jew, you won't win.

Also, Midianite women are fair!!! Persian women are fair!!! The idea that this is a foolish proposition.

We wear clothing for the sake of our tasks. Esther dresses for the event... The cohen Gadol wears the clothes of the task...