

SEEING THE FACE OF THE LORD IN THE TEMPLE.

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The people who worshipped in the temple came to seek and to see the face of the LORD. Since ‘face’ and ‘presence’ both translate the Hebrew word *pānîm*, we could say that the worshippers came to seek and to see the Presence of the LORD in the temple. What did they hope to find? Seeking the Presence of the LORD could have meant just going to the holy place and deriving spiritual benefit from the pilgrimage. But ‘seeing’ the Presence implies something more; and so I shall try to answer the question: what did they see?

First, though, we have to bear in mind how the Hebrew Scriptures were transmitted. Later scribes removed from the texts what they considered to be blasphemies. Their changes were called *tiqqunê sophêrîm*, the corrections of the scribes. This is a quotation from Prof. Saul Levin’s study of the corrections:

Rabbinical literature and the marginal and final Massorah of many Hebrew Bible codices record that the scribes (who flourished in the second temple – i.e. down to AD 70) altered the text in a small but hardly negligible number of passages. The changes are deliberate departures from the previous state of the text.¹

In some cases letters were changed, but in some cases the text was simply read with different vowels.

In the present text of Exodus 23, for example, we read that three times a year – at the feast of Unleavened Bread, at the feast of Weeks and at the feast of Tabernacles – each man of Israel had to appear before the Lord Yahweh (Exod.23.17; 34.23; Deut. 16.16), but the text here and in other places was originally: ‘Three times in the year each man shall see the face of the Lord Yahweh’. This does not require any change to the letters, just different vowels. The present *yērā’eh*, a niph‘al form meaning ‘appear’, was formerly *yir’eh*, a qal form meaning ‘see’. At some stage the way of pronouncing, and thus the meaning, was changed, even though the resulting Hebrew was awkward. One Hebrew lexicon says that all these texts were changed ‘to avoid the expression “see the face of the LORD”.’²

The prophets did claim to see the LORD. Isaiah saw the Lord enthroned in the temple and said he had seen the King, the LORD of Hosts (Isa.6.1-5). This vision of a king on a throne was for him the presence of the LORD in the temple. Ezekiel saw a shining human figure on the sapphire of the chariot throne, a figure who was the ‘likeness of the glory of the LORD.’ (Ezek.1.28). He saw the enthroned figure, the presence of the LORD, leaving the temple. The oldest account of Sinai in Exodus 24 says that Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu and all the 70 elders saw the God of Israel above a sapphire pavement (Exod.24.10), but Deuteronomy denied this: ‘The LORD spoke to you out of the midst of the fire; you heard the sound of words but saw no form, *tê mûnâ*; there was only a voice’ (Deut.4.12). So too the insertion in Exodus

¹ S Levin, *The Father of Jesus/Joshiua*, New York: State University of New York Press, 1978, p.70.

² BDB, 1962 edn, pp. 816, 908. So too the infinitive construct at Deut.31.11 and Isa.1.12 has been read as a niph‘al, not qal.

33, after the account of Moses speaking with the LORD face to face, like a friend. Not so, said a later scribe, Moses did not see the face of the LORD: 'You cannot see my face; for man cannot see me and live' (Exod.33.20). Not everyone agreed on the matter of seeing the LORD, even at Sinai, even Moses himself.

It seems that the Deuteronomists and their heirs denied that the LORD had been, or could be, seen. There was no visible presence. Since their heirs also played an important role in the transmission of the Hebrew text as we have it, I suggest that this is why the older command to see the face of the LORD was later read as a command to appear before the LORD.

Before the work of the Deuteronomists, the LORD was seen in the temple. 'Seeing the LORD' was a theme in the Psalms: 'I shall see your face in righteousness... I shall be satisfied with your form,' (Ps.17.15), where 'see' is *hāzâ*, prophetic or visionary sight, and 'form' *l'mûnâ*, is precisely what the Deuteronomists denied. So too the Psalmist wrote: 'When shall I come and see, *râ'â*, the face of God?' (Ps 42.3), where the AV translates 'When shall I come and appear before God?' The Targum here has 'see' not 'appear' but avoids the difficulty of seeing the face of God by substituting 'the splendour of the Shekinah of the LORD' for 'the face of God': 'When shall I come and see the splendour of the Shekinah of the LORD?'

And, just as Ezekiel described it in his vision, the presence of the LORD shone.

Let thy face shine on thy servant, O LORD (Ps.31.16).

Out of Zion... God shines forth (Ps.50.2).

May [God] make his face shine upon us... (Ps.67.1)

Let thy face shine that we may be saved (Ps.80.3).

Even where the shining is not explicit in the Hebrew text, the Targum supplied it: 'Thy face, O LORD do I seek' (Ps.27.8), became in the Targum 'The brightness of your countenance O LORD do I seek'.

Clearest of all is the Aaronic blessing:

May the LORD bless you and keep you:

May the LORD make his face to shine on you and be gracious to you;

May the LORD lift up his face upon you and give you peace (Num.6 24-26).

Our quest, then, is twofold: why was the LORD described and remembered by some as a shining presence in the temple, and why did later scribes want to deny this shining presence.

A good example of the latter - denying the shining presence of the LORD - would be the later treatment of the Aaronic blessing. The text itself was not altered, but by the end of the second temple period it was forbidden to explain what it meant. The Mishnah says: 'The Blessing of the priests... is read out but not interpreted', meaning that it was not translated as a Targum.³ The Targum Neofiti, which is considered to be the most important and the oldest of the Palestinian Targums, reflects this ruling. It does not translate the blessing into Aramaic but leaves it as Hebrew text. Targum Pseudo-Jonathan, however, translated the text but interpreted the blessing to mean illumination of the mind.

³ Mishnah *Megillah* 4.10.

May the LORD make the graciousness of his countenance shine upon you in the study of Torah and reveal to you obscure things and protect you.

May the LORD show the graciousness of his countenance to you in your prayer and give you peace...

The Qumran Community Rule is similar:

May he illuminate your heart with the wisdom of life, and grant you knowledge of eternal things,

May he show the presence of his mercy to you for eternal peace.⁴

The same list of prohibited readings includes Ezekiel's vision of the chariot throne and the shining human form enthroned.

Sensitivity about literal understanding may have been to avoid anthropomorphism, but I suspect there were other reasons why the 'presence of the LORD' texts were neither explained nor given their obvious meaning. One may be that the Christians still understood the texts literally and used them as proof texts for the Incarnation. They restored or perhaps retained the pre-Deuteronomic beliefs. Thus Jesus taught that the pure in heart would see God (Matt.5.8); and John claimed of the incarnate LORD: 'We have seen his glory' (John 1.14),

But why was the LORD described as a shining presence? One suggestion is that this referred to the great equinox festivals in Solomon's temple, when the rising sun shone directly through the eastern doors of the temple and into the holy of holies, illuminating the golden throne of the LORD. This theory was proposed by Julian Morgenstern in 1964, when he argued that in Solomon's temple, Yahweh had been a solar deity. At the equinox festivals, his glory was seen to shine over the whole creation. This is what Isaiah meant when he saw the LORD enthroned and exclaimed that the whole earth was full of his glory⁵. With the new post-exilic ways, however, the old solar calendar and the cult of the monarchy were abandoned. Although Morgenstern did not mention this, rejecting the solar calendar and cult was emphasised each year at Tabernacles, when the procession of priests declared: 'Our fathers when they were in this place turned with their backs towards the temple of the LORD and worshipped the sun towards the east.'⁶

There are problems, however, with this proposal, not least that the sun deity in the first temple had been the Lady, the Mother of the LORD. The Christians remembered her as the woman clothed with the sun, and her male child was set on the throne of God in heaven (Rev.12.1-5). The Chronicler also remembered that the king had sat on the throne of the LORD: 'Solomon sat on the throne of the LORD as king, and all the assembled people blessed and worshipped the LORD, the King' (1 Chron. 20-23). The customary English translations are not accurate and so conceal this vital information about the Davidic kings: the king 'was' the LORD enthroned in the temple. The usual translation: 'They worshipped the LORD and did obeisance to the king' implies that the two were actions to two distinct objects; but they were not distinct. Solomon sat on the throne of the LORD as king. He *was* the presence of the LORD in the temple. The

⁴ 1QS II.3-4.

⁵ J Morgenstern, 'The "Cultic Setting" of the Enthronement Psalms', Hebrew Union College Annual 35 (1964), pp.1-42, p. 11-14.

⁶ Mishnah *Sukkah* 5.4.

early Christians knew this too. In the Book of Revelation the human figure, the Servant/Lamb was set on the throne of God, and then God-and-the-Lamb were considered one being. 'The throne of God and of the Lamb shall [be there], and they shall see *his* face and *his* name shall be on their foreheads (Rev.22.3-4). God and the Lamb, divine and human, were one, with one Name which was also on the foreheads of the faithful. This sign of the Name was the diagonal cross of baptism - the old Hebrew letter *tau* - and this was the sign of the Name of the LORD.

The king was the visible Presence of the LORD in the temple. There were psalms of invocation such as Psalm 38 and Psalm 70 which have the title: 'for the memorial offering', *l'hazkîr.*, but 'for an invocation' is a better translation here. Both psalms call on the LORD to come: 'Make haste to help me, O Lord, my salvation' (Ps.38.22); and 'O LORD make haste to help me!... O LORD do not tarry!' (Ps.70.1, 5). There are several instances where this verb *zākar* seems to mean 'invoke' rather than 'remember', and so Moses was told 'This is my name for ever, and thus I am to be *invoked* throughout all generations' (Exod.3.15); and the Levites were appointed by David to *invoke*, to thank and to praise the LORD before the ark (1 Chron.16.4). Moshe Idel, in his study of the roots of Kabbalah concluded: 'We can seriously consider the possibility that the Temple service was conceived as inducing the presence of the Shekhinah in the Holy of Holies; and thus the service can be seen as a theurgical activity'.⁷ WE recall that the first Christians also prayed 'Come, LORD', *Maranatha*.

The LORD came to the Holy of Holies and was then present in the Davidic king. How they explained this we do not know; enigmatic texts, often damaged texts, are all that survive. Psalm 110, for example, once described the process, but the text, especially verse 3, is now opaque and beyond reading: 'From the womb of the morning like dew your youth will come to you... You are a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.' This describes how the Davidic king was 'born' as a divine being in the Holy of Holies and then bore the title Melchizedek. The corruption in this Psalm is most likely the work of the correcting scribes, especially as this psalm is one of the two most-quoted texts in the New Testament. The *Infancy Gospel of James* shows that the first Christians knew the original meaning of the text. In this way of telling of the Nativity story, the cave where Jesus was born is presented as the holy of holies, and the Child was born from a bright cloud that filled the cave.

Behold, a bright cloud overshadowed the cave... and immediately the cloud withdrew itself out of the cave and a great light appeared in the cave... and little by little the light withdrew itself until the young child appeared.⁸

This is the cloud of the glory of the LORD that filled the tabernacle when it was consecrated (Exod.40.34-35), and filled the temple when the ark was brought into the holy of holies (1 Kings 8.10-11). There had been some ritual in the Holy of Holies that transformed the Davidic king into the presence of the LORD, but the detail is now lost.

The king then spoke as the LORD. 'Thus says the LORD' occurs so frequently in the Hebrew Scriptures that we rarely ask who was authorised to speak as the LORD. The LORD spoke

⁷ M Idel, *Kabbalah. New Perspectives*, London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988, p.168.

⁸ *Infancy Gospel* 18.2.

through the prophets, but we are concerned here with the role of the shining figure in the temple who also spoke as the LORD. These are the last words of David:

The oracle of David the son of Jesse,

The oracle of the man who was raised on high [or Qumran: 'whom God raised up'] ,

The anointed of the God of Jacob,

The sweet psalmist of Israel:

The Spirit of the LORD speaks within me/ by me,

His word is upon my tongue... (2 Sam.23.1-2b).

When the king ruled justly:

He dawns on them like the morning light,

Like the sun shining forth on a cloudless morning... (2 Sam.23.4).

This is the shining king who was the presence of the LORD.

He shone because he wore a golden garment. He wore the ephod.

Golden garments were worn by the images of the gods in Mesopotamia, and sometimes by kings.⁹ The garments were decorated with small golden discs or squares, sewn on to the fabric, and many images of the garments have been found. The golden ornaments are indicated by small circles, dots or squares. In the famous graffiti of Yahweh and Ashrahtah found at Kuntillet 'Ajrud, the figures are wearing garments decorated with dots- presumably the golden garments that a person in 8th century Judah imagined deities to wear. Thin gold rosettes with holes at the centre and small bronze squares with holes at the corners have been found at Megiddo, showing that these golden garments were made in Israel.¹⁰ The golden garment was the original ephod.

The ephod of the second-temple high priest as described in Exodus was only a vestige of the original. Exodus was compiled and written early in the second temple period, and it describes the ephod as a garment worn by the high priest, a short coat with huge gemstones on the shoulders. The special fabric of the ephod was made from the red, blue, purple and white threads used for the temple curtains, the colours that represented the four elements of the creation; but the fabric of the ephod was interwoven with gold (Exod.28.5-14). Thin sheets of gold were cut into strips and worked into the cloth (Exod.39.2-4)¹¹. As with all the prescriptions for the tabernacle and the temple, there is considerable detail but no explanation of the symbolism. This has to be gleaned from other sources. At the end of the second temple period, both Philo and Josephus knew that gold represented heaven, 'the splendour by which all things are enlightened'.¹² It seems that the ephod fabric symbolised the material world enlightened with the splendour of heaven.

The ephod was closed at the front by the breastplate set with the twelve gemstones to represent the twelve tribes, and the breastplate also held Urim and Thummim, the two oracle stones. The

⁹ A L Oppenheim, 'The Golden Garments of the Gods', *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 8 (1949), pp.172-193, p.175.

¹⁰ Oppenheim, p.188.

¹¹ This is not in the Lxx and may be a later addition.

¹² Josephus *Antiquities* 3.7.7, also Philo *Questions on Exodus* II.73 and *Moses* II.122.

ephod was *bound* onto the high priest – there is great emphasis on binding - and it seems that the word ‘ephod’ implied being bound: ‘And Moses put the ephod on Aaron and he bound him with the *ḥēśebh* of the ephod and he ephoded him with it (Lev.8.7. translating literally).

The Bible describes the ephod as a garment of golden fabric holding oracle stones, bound onto the shoulders of the high priest, but Ben Sira, writing just after 200 BCE, still knew what the ephod represented. He counselled his son, meaning his disciple, to accept Wisdom like an ephod (Ben Sira 6.18-31). The translation of Ben Sira in the English Bible is based on the Greek text, which gives some idea of his ephod imagery; but in the Hebrew text of this section, the imagery is much clearer. The ephod was a symbolic yoke, indicating the role of the high priest as the servant of Wisdom. Even the Greek-based English has ‘Put your neck under her collar, put your shoulder under her and carry her, do not fret under her bonds’. ‘Her yoke is a golden ornament’. The Hebrew is very clear and still has the wordplay characteristic of temple wisdom texts. :

- Wisdom will be on a man like a heavy burden/ oracle, word play on the Hebrew *maśśā*’.
- Hold out your shoulder and lift her/ wear her, wordplay on the Hebrew *nāśā*’.
- She will bind you/ give birth to you with garments of gold, wordplay on the Hebrew *ḥābal* (c.f. Hos.13.13).

Ben Sira remembered a heavy golden garment used for oracles that was worn by the children of Wisdom.

Five centuries after Ben Sira, the Christians were using a wisdom text *The Teaching of Silvanus*. Nobody knows when or where it was written, but it was found among the Nag Hamadi texts in 1945. It describes Wisdom as the divine Mother clothing her child, and the image is the ancient ephod.

Return, my son, to your first Father, God, and to Wisdom your Mother...

Wisdom summons you in her goodness saying ‘Come to me, all of you, O foolish ones, that you may receive a gift, the understanding which is good and excellent. I am giving you a high priestly garment that is woven from every wisdom...

Clothe yourself with wisdom like a robe, put knowledge upon you like a crown, and be seated upon a throne of perception. From now on, my son, return to your divine nature...

Here is the ancient imagery: the high priestly garment and the king with his throne; but it is linked to birth from Wisdom, as ben Sira implied, and to becoming divine. *The Teaching of Silvanus* also knew that the person who wore the garment gave teaching from the LORD, that is, gave oracles

The Life of heaven wishes to renew all, so that he may cast out what is weak and every dark form, that everyone may shine forth with great brilliance in heavenly garments in order to make manifest the command of the Father...¹³

Several centuries separate ben Sira and Silvanus, but they use the same imagery. This is a reminder to us that not everything that every ancient writer knew is included in the texts that

¹³ CG VII.4.106, 113.

happen to survive for our studies today. When Jesus spoke of the children of Wisdom (e.g. Luke 7.35), how did he imagine them? Accepting the heavy yoke of her teaching and restored to their divine nature?

It is often observed that in the Hebrew Scriptures the word ephod has two meanings: it was the high priestly garment described in Exodus, but it was also, apparently, an idolatrous object used in the time of the Judges and the early monarchy. In common with the later ephod, the idolatrous object was used for oracles, but that, apparently, was where the similarity ended.

I suggest that the ephod of the earlier period was the golden garment worn by the king after he was 'born' in the holy of holies and was the presence of the LORD.

In the book of Judges, there is a story about Micah and his family shrine. No matter when the story was written down, this is how that early period was remembered. There were some objects in the shrine: the graven image and the ephod, and the teraphim and the molten image (Judg.18.17, 18). I suggest that these were not four objects but two, each with two names: the graven image, *pesel*, was the *ṯrāphim*, and the molten image, *massēkhâ*, was the ephod. Graven image, *pesel*, means something cut out or hewn, so that meaning is clear; but molten image, *massēkhâ*, can mean either something molten or something woven. The verb *nāsakh* mean both to pour and to weave. In Micah's shrine I suggest that the graven image was one of the large *ṯrāphim*, like the one put in David's bed to deceive Saul's men when they were hunting for him (1 Sam.19.13). The small *ṯrāphim*, such as Rachel hid in her camel's saddle bag (Gen.31.34), were the small figurines of the Lady that have been found in great numbers. One object in Micah's shrine, then, was an image of the Lady.

The other object was the ephod, a woven object, in this case silver, that was heavy enough to stand on its own. It was worn by the priest when he gave oracles and he became the voice of the LORD. Other stories set in this period show how the ephod was used and imply that there was an ephod in every shrine. When Abiathar, the son of the priest at the shrine of Nob, fled to join David, he brought the ephod with him, and so David was able to consult the LORD (1 Sam.23.6-14; 30.7-8). The duties of the priest at Shiloh were listed: 'I chose him to be my priest, to make offering on my altar, to burn incense, and to wear an ephod before me' (1 Sam.2.28, my translation; c.f.1 Sam.14.3). 'To wear an ephod before me' is one way to read the words; another is 'to wear an ephod *as my presence*', giving the sense: 'I chose him *as my priest.... as my presence*'.¹⁴The inscriptions at Kuntillet 'Ajrud imply that there was a Yahweh in each of the shrines: 'Yahweh of Samaria, Yahweh of Teman', indicating that there were ephods in these places so that the LORD could be consulted.

Hosea shows how the ephod was a vital part of the royal cult. This text may be a later addition to the book, but the ideas are those of the earlier period.

For the children of Israel shall dwell many days without a king and without a prince, without sacrifice and without pillar, and without ephod and *ṯrāphim*. Afterwards, the

¹⁴ Thus too the menorah was a lamp before the Lord, Exod.27.21; Lev. 24.3, but it was remembered as a sign of the Lord's presence in the temple, and so was a lamp 'as the Lord'. B Menahot 98b.

children of Israel shall return [or repent] and seek the LORD their God and David their king... (Hos.3.4-5).¹⁵

The repentant people would seek the LORD and David their king, which could imply that they sought the LORD as David their king. The construction is like 1 Chronicles 29.20: the people worshipped the LORD and the king. For 'Hosea', losing the king, the ephod and *ṯrāphim* was a punishment for apostasy, and when the people repented, the royal cult would be restored.

The Deuteronomists' ideals that prompted Josiah's purge of the temple condemned the pillars and the *ṯrāphim* (2 Kings 23.14, 24), and a list of their prohibitions now appears as Moses' curses on Mount Ebal (Deut.27.15-126). The first concerns the graven image and the woven image, the ephod: 'Cursed be the man who makes a graven image, *pesel*, or a woven image, *massēkhâ*, an abomination of Yahweh... and sets it up in secret'. Presumably that is what the older believers had to do after Josiah's purges. 'Abomination' is used in the account of Josiah's purges, and this gives a clue as to what it means here in the list of curses. Josiah defiled the shrines of Ashtoreth the *abomination* of the Sidonians, of Chemosh the *abomination* of Moab and of Milcom the *abomination* of the Ammonites (2 Kings 23.13). 'Abomination' was the Deuteronomists' word for an image of the god, and since such editing required the 'abomination' to resemble the word it replaced, the occupant of the shrine was probably the 'likeness', *tabhnîṯ*, of the god, a word that looks very similar¹⁶ and which the Deuteronomists used to describe forbidden idols (Deut 4.16-18). The satire on idolatry in Isaiah 44 described the 'figure', *tabhnîṯ* of a man, carved from wood (Isa.44.13).

Ezekiel shows an earlier use of the word *tabhnîṯ*, and since he was a priest, this would have been the word in its temple context. He composed a lamentation over the king of Tyre, who was almost certainly the king of Zion in the original (Ezek.28.12-19). The entire text is opaque and possibly corrupted. The king had abused his position and so was thrown from Eden. Ezekiel said the king had been 'stamped as the likeness, *tabhnîṯ*,'¹⁷ full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. He wore a garment of gold and jewels, and the jewels were those of the high priest's breastplate.¹⁸ The words describing the golden garment are not known elsewhere, and English translations range from 'tabrets and pipes' (AV) to 'jingling beads and spangles' (NEB). They were probably the ornaments used by the Babylonians to create their golden garments. Ezekiel, I suggest, was describing a king in his ephod, the likeness, *tabhnîṯ*, of the LORD, which the Deuteronomists changed to 'the abomination' of the LORD.

Just two more examples: first Psalm 2

I have *set* my king on Zion...

I will tell you of a decree of the LORD:

He said to me, 'You are my son,

today I have begotten you.' (Ps.2.6a, 7).

The word 'set' here is the word for weaving, *nāsakh*, which it is found only here and in Proverbs 8.23. In both places it is translated 'set up', but in Proverbs it actually describes

¹⁵ The Greek translates ephod and *ṯrāphim* as 'priesthood and lots'.

¹⁶ *Tw'bh*, *tô'abhâ*, abomination; *tbnyt*, *tabhnîṯ*, likeness

¹⁷ The word could also be *tokhnîṯh*, proportion.

¹⁸ The Hebrew text has most of the jewels, but Lxx has the complete list as in Exod.28.17-20.

Wisdom weaving the whole creation: ‘In the beginning I was weaving...; and in Psalm 2 it describes the king being robed in his woven garment when he is born as the ‘son’ of the LORD. The sense is:

I have clothed my king on Zion...
I will tell you of a decree of the LORD:
He said to me, ‘You are my son,
today I have begotten you.’ (Ps.2.6a, 7).

The second example is from Psalm 110, another text about the clothing and birth of the king. This psalm is notoriously difficult to translate because of the corrupted state of the Hebrew. I suggest it once described the heavenly Mother of the king clothing her son in his garment of glory on the day he was ritually born as the likeness of the LORD. This is the RSV version of the lines in question, which is based on an altered Hebrew text.

Your people will offer themselves freely
On the day you lead your host
Upon the holy mountains. (Ps.110.3a).

If one letter is changed in ‘your people’, it becomes ‘your mother’,¹⁹ and then the lines become:

Your mother graciously offers you
On the day of your birth,
The glorious garments of holiness [or ‘of a holy one’]

These difficult, and in most cases, damaged texts show how people saw the Presence of the LORD in the temple. It was as the Davidic king, robed in his glorious garment. He was compared to the sunrise when he appeared wearing the golden ephod which his Mother had given him.

This imagery was still known to the early Christians: Luke had Zechariah sing of the imminent birth of Jesus as the day dawning from on high (Luke 1.78); Luke had Mary wrap her Son around and set him in a *manger* (Luke 2.7), which in Hebrew wordplay sounds like the old name for Jerusalem²⁰; John knew that the Woman clothed with the sun gave birth to a male child who sat on the throne of God (Rev.12.1-5); and Silvanus, an otherwise unknown early Christian writer, knew that Wisdom wrapped each of her children in a beautiful garment:

Return, my son, to your first Father, God, and to Wisdom your Mother...
Wisdom summons you in her goodness saying ‘Come to me, all of you, O foolish ones, that you may receive a gift, the understanding which is good and excellent. I am giving you a high priestly garment that is woven from every wisdom...
Clothe yourself with wisdom like a robe, put knowledge upon you like a crown, and be seated upon a throne of perception. From now on, my son, return to your divine nature...’

¹⁹ As in 1QIsa^a 7.11.

²⁰ Manger is *’ēbhûs*, Jerusalem, Jebus, is *y^ebhûs*,

When pilgrims to the temple saw the Presence of the Lord, they saw the king in his golden garment. After the demise of the monarchy and the Melchizedek priesthood, the Aaronite priests in the second temple kept a vestige of the older ways when they wore the ephod interwoven with gold. People such as Ben Sira remembered the older symbolism, and Silvanus shows that it was also known to the early Christians.