

**THE 8 KINDS OF LINEN IN
THE OLD TESTAMENT -
HEBREW BASED IMAGINING
AND BETTER
UNDERSTANDING**

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Eight different words are used to denote *linen* in the Old Testament

I. שֵׁשׁ [šeš]

II. בּוּץ [butz]

III. בְּדִים [badim]

IV. פְּשֵׁתִים [pištìim]

V. כְּתֹנֶת [ketònet]

VI. סְדִין [sadìn]

VII. אֵטֹן [etùn]

VIII. חֹר כַּרְפָּס [hur karpàs]

HEBREW BASED IMAGINING

- Hebrew is a sacral language developed from Aramaic
- The imagining based on Hebrew root semantics is much more logical than visual
- The richness of the Hebrew root semantics (the ambiguity) makes it close to the visual imagining
- The logical relations and the associations evolve from word's root semantics are a tool for commenting the meaning
- The context of the uses of a word is a tool for commenting its meanings

BASIC FEATURES OF THE HEBREW BASED IMAGINING

Hebrew based imagining is a language kind of imagining

Hebrew based imagining is much more logical one

The sacral motivation of the richness of the root semantics stresses on the logic kind of imagining but it has something to do with mathematics and visual kind of imagining

HEBREW BASED IMAGINING & UNDERSTANDING

1. The root semantics

The richness of the Hebrew root semantics (the ambiguity) serves the Judaic doctrine that the letters of the Hebrew alphabet, “which shine in the appropriate Color”, are the first thing created by God. That is why word formative facts in Hebrew and their spelling bear the feature of divine relations, traces and instructions for their interpretation by man.

2. The context of uses

3. Culture factors – “the robe of the light”

HEBREW BASED IMAGINING & UNDERSTANDING

Every Hebrew root marks a cosmological and creative territory given by God – God created the universe and the world of man from the letters, “which shone in the proper colors”.

Every one of the 8 roots presents a single notion for the linen.

HEBREW BASED IMAGINING & UNDERSTANDING

The Semitic-Hamitic paradigm of the roots cannot be preserved in an Indo-European language.

Exploring the Hebrew root semantics means to reveal the real, the lost in translation, Hebrew message. Therefore it means to understand better the text of the Old Testament.

HEBREW BASED IMAGINING & UNDERSTANDING

Extended semantics of the root

The extended semantics of a root includes all derivatives.

Words derived from one root have one or few common semantic feature/s which give the logic of the derivation.

CULTURE FACTORS – Linen as “the robe of the light”

In the ancient rituals the linen clothes are known as “the robe of light”.

The strategy to equip with (in monotheism, in polytheism, and in folklore rituals of transition) the “robe of light” is motivated of an accepting the white cloth as an necessary and sufficient “armor” at least because of three reasons:

CULTURE FACTORS – Linen as “the robe of the light”

- 1. Wearing white/linen clothes is **the right way to present the initiated person to the gods/God**. Piece of white cloth is the most suitable votive gift to the gods.**
- 2. By the “robe of light” one **pretends to have purity** – physical and spiritual – the purity of one free from contamination with the body – that is moral purity.**
- 3. The white cloth has **protecting powers** against the killing strength of God’s energy but also against bad powers or the power of death (wedding, funeral), and one takes sides against Death and darkness.**

LINEN I. שש [šeš]

ROOT AND CONTEXT SEMANTICS

The word [šeš] means *six* in Modern and in Biblical Hebrew. The Biblical meanings are ‘six’, ‘fine linen’ and ‘marble’. ‘Fine linen’ and ‘marble’ are used by Moses.

The naming of the robe of the light with the word [šeš] gets the linen cloth of the Levites in the paradigm ‘six-white marble-linen’, because these are the meanings of the word [šeš] in Biblical Hebrew.

Moses includes the Egyptian loaned word [šeš] for fine linen into the Hebrew meaning of the same word for *six*. In such way he gives a name by proposition making the string ‘six-white marble-linen’.

ROOT AND CONTEXT SEMANTICS

Mosses choose [šeš] to build the sacral four color sign in the Tabernacle – *blue, purple, scarlet / crimson and fine linen*. Four comes from the sacral textures *blue, purple, scarlet / crimson and fine linen*.

Mosses used [šeš] for *linen* not because in Hebrew at that time there was no word for *linen* but to build a prophetic terminology including the numerical relation 6 – 4.

By the paradigm ‘six - white marble - linen’ Mosses situate [šeš] in a mystical sign string:

‘The white of the robe of light and the marble’ is six (as arithmetic) — ‘four color sign (square as geometry)’ — ‘six as stereometry’ (the cube of the Kaabah - the cube of Kaabah is built by Abraham, the cube has six walls, every wall is a square, made of stone)

The linen type-[šeš] puts stress on a string of synonyms revealing features and relations between the matters in the created world ‘arithmetic- geometry- stereometry - white color’.

ROOT AND CONTEXT SEMANTICS

Thus the word [šeš] is not just borrowed from Egypt. It is inscribed in the system of Hebrew Language and it becomes an element of the sophisticated monotheistic, sacral instruments used by the prophets to communicate with God.

They use this instrument to distribute, to govern and to communicate in the human space with the relation 6 — 4, with the paradigm ‘square-cube’.

The robe of the light named by the term [šeš] could not, and should not be separated from the person of Moses.

CONCLUSIONS

The linen type-[šeš] names, covers and may govern through the white power of „ the robe of light” the cubic shape, the square and the arithmetic proportion 6-4 that are related to the hardness of marble.

In the times of Mosses and the Tabernacle the place of fine linen is occupied by the word [šeš]. In 2 Chronicles 3:13-14 [butz] is at the place of [šeš] and become a sign for sacral place but also for wealth and creative abilities. Thus at the Temple of Solomon the “Seal of Mosses” is replaced. What is for sure is that the relation 4 — 6 carried by the lexeme [šeš] is not here because the word for *fine lien* is [butz] now.

LINEN II. בּוּץ [butz]

The word [butz] is used for the first time in 1 Chronicles 4:21, which means that it is not part of the Pentateuch linguistic evidence and Moses's plan.

Usually the term [butz] refers to expensive, fine, white linen, manufactured in Egypt. But Gesenius states that the root of the word is Semitic and penetrates Hebrew through Aramaic, and the lexeme [butz] in the earlier layers of Biblical Hebrew refers to Syrian fine linen (Ezekiel 27:16), while the linen from Egypt is called [šeš].

ROOT AND CONTEXT SEMANTICS

Gessenius specifies that the Semitic root *Beth-Vav-Tzadi* is unused in Hebrew; in Arabic it means “to become white”, “to be white”.

Thus in Hebrew we have the words *linen* [butz] and *egg* [beitzà], derived from this root.

**This clears up the possibility to perscribe to the linen type-[butz] the following semantic features:
‘round object’, ‘round white object’,
‘round white volumetric object’, ‘preserved life’, ‘preserved life, which needs warmness and cares to become real life’,
‘food’.**

CONCLUSIONS

For the understanding of the text the spelling and the oral features are crucial.

Thus from the widened semantics of the linen type- type-[šeš] becomes clear that Mosses names, covers, and may be, governs by the white robe of light the cubeness, the squareness and the algebra and arithmetic relations between the numbers 6 and 4.

Solomon made a different choice – with the help of the linen type-[butz] to name, to cover, and may be to govern by the white robe of light the oval shapes (mysticaly and realistically), the roundness – both connected to the different forms of life, with different kinds of food, as well as with the careness and the ability to give life.

CONCLUSIONS

Essential in this white naming of the forms of the Universe and the Earth (cubeness and roundness) is that for the Tabernacle Mosses use only the white, marble, six-multiple cubeness of the linen type-[šeš].

The white roundness of the linen type-[butz] Mosses leaves to other times, occasions, and finally – to other persons.

Thus by linguistic analysis I can enter the inner sides of the text of the Old Testament, avoiding any mystical meditations.

Hypothesis

May be the material forms of cubeness and roundness are understood as elements of the darkness and blackness.

By specific naming and spelling Moses had given meaning to the world and to the universe from the side of the “whitness”. Thus Moses works on a declaration and obligation, fixed by the laws, for every initiated Jew to look at, to cover, and to deal with the world from the side of the robe of the light but not from the side of the robe of the darkness.

By the changes he made King Solomon pretends that the legacy of Moses is already a fact and the monotheistic culture needs the next step – to turn the roundness to the side of the light.

LINEN III. בְּדִים [badìm]

The terms for this type of linen appear many times,
from the Pentateuch to Danail, in the forms

בְּדִים [badìm]; בֶּד [bad]; בָּד [vad];

linen breeches / linen undergarments / linen trousers

מִכְנְסֵי־בָד [mihnasèi vad],

linen ephod אֶפֶוד בָּד [efòd bad].

ROOT AND CONTEXT SEMANTICS

I. white linen בַּד [bad].

This type of linen differs drastic the type-שֵׁשׁ [šeš] and
the type-בֹּיץ [butz]:

1. The linen בְּדִים [badim]; בַּד [bad]; בָּד [vad] stays constantly in use for a period of 1000 years – from Mosses to Daniel.
2. The word is hard ambiguous.

ROOT AND CONTEXT SEMANTICS

II. alone לְבַד [levàd]

This derivative is used over one hundred times, usually in the compound **l^ebad**. The core concept is "to be separate and isolated."

It can also connote the idea of dividing into parts.

One more meaning, *part*, of בַּד [bad], derivative from *alone*, is used in the earlier stages of the Old Testament – ever since Exodus 30:34.

ROOT AND CONTEXT SEMANTICS

III. poles אֵבֶן [bad].

In Exodus 25:13 BibleWorks / TWOT give for this verse the meaning *alone* which is a correct decision but so is the translation with *poles*.

We should understand that the material must be *only / alone of shittim wood / acacia wood*, and nothing else is the appropriate wood for the Tabernacle.

ROOT AND CONTEXT SEMANTICS

IV. liar (twice), lie.

In Isaiah 44:25 the word בָּדַד [bad] is used in its next meaning – *lie; liar; deceive, cheat.*

*

In Modern Hebrew the meanings of בָּדַד [bad] are the same as in Biblical Hebrew.

ROOT AND CONTEXT SEMANTICS

The linen type-בד [bad] is used in few **Noun Phrases** referring different kinds of linen clothes:

linen breeches / linen undergarments / linen trousers

מִכְנְסֵי־בַד [mihnasèi vad]

The requirements to the cozens includes to wear
linen breeches / linen undergarments / linen trousers
[mihnasèi vad].

Such an action means that they will
“cover their nakedness” (Exodus 28:42).

The expression is used systematically in the Pentateuch.

ROOT AND CONTEXT SEMANTICS

linen ephod אֵפֹד בַּד [efod bad]

It is an important element of the garments of the High priest.
David danced before the LORD with all his might girded
with a linen ephod (2 Samuel 6:14).

clothed in linen / dressed in linen

לְבוּשׁ בַּדִּים [lavùš bad]

(Ezekiel 9:2; Daniel 10:5)

CONCLUSIONS

- The linen type-בְּרִים [badim] means ‘gathering the corporeal at the expense of the spiritual’. (Exodus 28:42)
- The linen type-בְּרִים [badim] ‘signals the threat of false prophets’ (Isaiah, 44:25).
- The linen type-בְּרִים [badim] ‘connects whiteness and support in a chain so that the ark could be carried’ (e.g. Exodus, 25:13).

CONCLUSIONS

- The linen type-בְּדִים [badim] is related to ‘the mystical use of white and green (*филизи* [shoots] in Библия, 1991 or *пръчки на лоза* [vines] in Библия, 1995) symbolizing God’s power to punish and to make the Israelites last despite their sins’. (Ezekiel, 17:6).
- The linen type-בְּדִים [badim] meaning *part* denotes ‘a connection between the white colour and the ability to analyse and distinguish between the parts of things in the name of purity’.
 - The white linen garments made of the linen type-בְּדִים [badim] have a ‘protective function’ in: unclean rituals (“scapegoat”); ‘in a contact with the power of God that is beyond human capacity.’

LINEN IV. פְּשֵׁתִים [pištìm]

The linen type-[pištìm] appears for the first time in Leviticus 13:4. This means that Moses could use it but he preferred [šeš]:

KJV Leviticus 13:47 The garment also that the plague of leprosy is in, *whether it be* a woollen garment, or a **linen** garment;

NAU Leviticus 13:47 "When a garment has a mark of leprosy in it, whether it is a wool garment or a **linen** garment,

“Estir” Ако заразата на проказата бъде в дреха, във вълнена дреха или в **ленена** дреха,

RST Leviticus 13:47 Если язва проказы будет на одежде, на одежде шерстяной, или на одежде **льняной**,

ROOT AND CONTEXT SEMANTICS

The root of פְּשֵׁתָּהּ [fištà], pl. פְּשֵׁתִים [fištìm] is *Pe-Shin-Tav* פֶּשֶׁת. The word denotes linen, and has no other meanings. Thus it is possible, in a hypothetical manner, an association based on the pronunciation but not of the spelling – ‘spreading the whiteness, radiating from the “robe of light”’.

It seems that Jeremiah 13 gives full decoding of the linen type-פְּשֵׁתִים [pištìm] and the term אֵזוֹר פְּשֵׁתִים [ezòr pištìm]. It is interesting that different English versions use different word for אֵזוֹר [ezòr]:

ROOT AND CONTEXT SEMANTICS

KJV Jeremiah 13:1 Thus saith the LORD unto me, Go and get thee a **linen girdle**, and put it upon thy loins, and put it not in water.

NAU Jeremiah 13:1 Thus the LORD said to me, "Go and buy yourself a **linen waistband** and put it around your waist, but do not put it in water."

“Estir” Така ми рече Господ: Иди та си купи **ленен пояс**, и опаши го на кръста си, но във вода не го туряй.

Jeremiah 13:11 KJV Jeremiah 13:11 For as the **girdle** cleaveth to the loins of a man, so have I caused to cleave unto me the whole house of Israel and the whole house of Judah, saith the LORD; that they might be unto me for a people, and for a name, and for a praise, and for a glory: but they would not hear.

NAU Jeremiah 13:11 'For as the **waistband** clings to the waist of a man, so I made the whole household of Israel and the whole household of Judah cling to Me,' declares the LORD, 'that they might be for Me a people, for renown, for praise and for glory; but they did not listen.'

“Estir” Защото като **пояс**, който прилепва за кръста на човека, Аз прилепих при Себе Си целия Израилев дом И целия Юдов дом, казва Господ, За да Ми бъдат люде и име, Хвала и слава; но не послушаха.

ROOT AND CONTEXT SEMANTICS

R. Peter-Contesse and J. Ellngton [Peter-Contesse, Ellngton, 1994] claim the same as Rowland, 1985 that man in linen is an angel, but for the so called “Revelation of Jeremiah” (Jeremiah, 3-4).

Possibly they rise their point on Jeremiah, 13:1 on the word פְּשִׁתִּים [pištìm] in the Noun Phrase *linen girdle / linen waistband / linen loincloth / linen sash* אֵזוֹר פְּשִׁתִּים [ezòr pištìm].

The context of Jeremiah 13 puts equivalence between God and the *linen girdle / linen waistband / linen loincloth / linen sash* אֵזוֹר פְּשִׁתִּים [ezòr pištìm]. It is a mark of the symbolism of the linen in the Old Testament – a sign of ‘pureness’, ‘immaculateness’.

ROOT AND CONTEXT SEMANTICS

May be we should consider this fact as an indication of the incompetance of the remained of the Levites to wear four colors, including the linen type-שֵׁשׁ [šeš]. It is because “the Levites who went far from me, going astray from me after their idols when Israel went astray, shall bear their punishment.” (Leviticus 44:10)

ROOT AND CONTEXT SEMANTICS

The word play could continue with another Hebrew lexeme for the English verb *extend* – פָּשַׁתָּהּ [pasà]. In singular feminine this verb sounds פָּשַׁתְּהָ [pastà]. In this case in relation to mutual spelling without Nikud (the diacritics for the vowels and points for distinguishing *Shin* שׁ from *Sin* שׁ, *Pe* פּ from *Fe* פּ) פָּשַׁתְּהָ [pištà] (פָּשַׁתְּהָ — פָּשַׁתְּהָ) – the only semantisation should be ‘extending of the white linen’.

ROOT AND CONTEXT SEMANTICS

The *girdle / waistband / loincloth / sash* is a symbol by itself. In the Old Testament usually the prophets or mystical characters are honoured with the special act of put girdle around his waist or “Gird up his loins” (see 2 Kings 9:1; 2 Kings 1:8; Job 40:7; Ezekiel 9:2).

Jeremiah 13:16 we can say that the *linen girdle* אֵזוֹר פְּשִׁתִּים [ezòr pištìim] is a closeness to God, spiritual light, morality that Israelites should hold up, use in practice in their life by keeping the 613 commandments. The macro meaning of *linen girdle* אֵזוֹר פְּשִׁתִּים [ezòr pištìim] is equal to spiritual light, i.e. one more linguistic Transformation of the idea for Light.

ROOT AND CONTEXT SEMANTICS

This meaning is an antonym to the homophone *get off garments* פִּשַׁט [pašàt]. From this point the linen type-פִּשְׁתִּים [pištìm] is an obligation to wear Light but not to get it off. To wear the Light of this type means to “Give glory to the LORD your God”.

Such explanation of the linen type פִּשְׁתִּים [fištìm] seems to be the actual good news at the time of Ezekiel. It explains why Ezekiel replaced the sacral four color unite of Mosses with one colored linen garments type-פִּשְׁתִּים [fištìm] of the Levites (see Ezekiel, 44:17-18).

ROOT AND CONTEXT SEMANTICS

The linen type-פְּשֵׁתִים [pištìm] marks a crucial change at the sacral symbolism of the Old Testament – Ezekiel replaced the sacral four color unite of Mosses with one colored linen garments type-פְּשֵׁתִים [fištìm] of the Levites (see Ezekiel, 44:17-18).

It is indicative that the priests in the Tabernacle and in The First Temple have four colored sacral garments (*blue* תְּכֵלֶת [tehèlet], *purple* אֲרָגְמָן [argemàn], *scarlet / crimson* תּוֹלַעַת שָׁנִי [tolàat šani] + linen type-שֵׁשׁ [šeš]).

In the Second Temple the priests should use garment made only of linen. The word used about this linen is פְּשֵׁתִים [fištìm] (Ezekiel, 44:17-18).

CONCLUSIONS

- The linen type-פְּשֵׁתִים [pištīm] marks a crucial change in the sacral symbolism of the Old Testament – Ezekiel replaced the sacral four color unite of Mosses with one colored linen garments type-פְּשֵׁתִים [fištīm] of the Levites (see Ezekiel, 44:17-18). May be we should consider this fact as an indication of the incompetance of the remained of the Levites to wear four colors, including the linen type-שֵׁשׁ [šeš]. It is because “the Levites who went far from me, going astray from me after their idols when Israel went astray, shall bear their punishment.” (Ezekiel 44:10)

CONCLUSIONS

- The presence of linen type-פְּשֵׁתִים [pištìm] may be regarded as a signal to the reader not to seek a hidden meaning in or interpretation of a passage.
 - Indirect meanings for the linen type-פְּשֵׁתִים [pištìm] based on pronunciation (homophony) but not spelling (*to get off garments* פָּשַׁט [pašàt], *to extend* – פָּשָׂה [pasà]), include ‘spreading the whiteness exuded by the robe of light’, but also ‘stripping the whiteness of the robe of light’.
- The linen type-פְּשֵׁתִים [pištìm] in the phrase *linen girdle* אֵזוֹר פְּשֵׁתִים [ezòr pištìm] carries the macromeaning ‘spiritual light’ + ‘understanding that spiritual light is not simple; on the contrary, it is complex and difficult’.
- ‘Girding up with a *linen girdle* אֵזוֹר פְּשֵׁתִים [ezòr pištìm] means that man should make a conscious effort to choose the spiritual in both his thoughts and his behaviours’.

LINEN V. כְּתָנִית [ketònet]

The word is used at about 30 times, and it appears in three phonetic variants in the Old Testament – כְּתָנִית [kutònet];

כְּתָנִית [ketònet]; כְּתָנוֹת [katònet]. Most of the uses are with the meaning *tunic, principal ordinary garment of man and woman, worn next to the person*. I should mention that

in Hebrew the ordinary word for *garment, cloth* is בְּגָד [vèged]. On more word, derivative from Hebrew *to dress*, is used for cloth לְבוּשָׁה [levuš].

ROOT AND CONTEXT SEMANTICS

The first appearance is in the very early stages of the Old Testament in Genesis 3:21 כְּתָנוּת עוֹר [katònet or].

KJV Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make **coats of skins**, and clothed them.

NAU The LORD God made **garments of skin** for Adam and his wife, and clothed them.

NRS And the LORD God made **garments of skins** for the man and for his wife, and clothed them.

NKJ Also for Adam and his wife the LORD God made **tunics of skin**, and clothed them.

It is a mark for the dividion between God and Primeordial men and woman – they are punished and instead of paradise connectoin to God by *light* אֹר [or] they are devided by the garments of *skin* עוֹר [or].

ROOT AND CONTEXT SEMANTICS

The second use is also very remarkable because **כְּתֹנֶת פַּסִּים** [ketònet pasìm] is a sign of the special love of the patriarch Jacob/Israel to his most beloved son Joseph (Genesis 37:3). Here the sense of **כְּתֹנֶת** [ketònet] is also *coat, tunic, robe*. Now the tunic is *varicolored, of many colors, with sleeves* but not of *skin*.

ROOT AND CONTEXT SEMANTICS

There is another Noun Phrase where one of the constituents is our word - *priestly robe /priestly garments*

כְּתֹנֶת כֹּהֲנִים [ketònet kohànìm]. in Nehemiah 7:69 / 70

כְּתֹנֶת כֹּהֲנִים [ketònet kohànìm] should remind to the reader that the clothes of the priest consist of four sacral colors (blue, purple, scarlet/crimson, and fine linen) as it is formulated in Exodus. The word is used by the greatest master of Hebrew – Job (Job 30:18). It is possible to our word to appear in a Noun Phrase together with the typical word for *linen* – בֵּד [bad], which keeps the meaning for *linen*, and [ketònet] denotes *coat, tunic* כְּתֹנֶת-בֵּד [ketònet bad]

ROOT AND CONTEXT SEMANTICS

כַּתָּן (ktn) Assumed root of the following.

כַּתְּוֹנֶת (kuttōnet) **tunic, a long shirtlike garment, usually of linen** (Gen 37:3; 2Sam 15:32; Isa 22:21).

Adam's was made of fur (Gen 3:21). Also worn by women (2Sam 13:18; Song 5:3). Worn especially by priests (Exo 28:4; Exo 29:5; Exo 39:27; Lev 8:7; Lev 10:5; Ezz 2:69; Neh 7:69).

Akkadian kitinnu or kitintu, a linen garment made from kitū linen; the Aramaic kittûnā' is the same as the Hebrew.

The word was borrowed by the Greek hiton χιτῶν.

CONCLUSION

The linen type-כְּתֹנֶת [ketònet] signals
‘the unity of the „robe of light” with
„the first cloth (tunic) of the primordial man
which divided him from God” +
„the colored robe as mark of love” +
„the priest's robe”’

LINEN VI. סָדִין [sadìn]

ROOT AND CONTEXT SEMANTICS

The word is used only once in singular סָדִין [sadìn] (Proverbs 31) and three times in plural סָדִינִים [sedinìm] forms (Judges 14:12-13; Isaiah 3:23). TWOT gives two meanings: 1) linen wrapper; cloak; 1a) rectangular piece of fine linen worn as outer, or at night, as a sole garment. Whittaker's Revised DBD adds "*wrapper* or rectangular piece of fine *linen*, worn as outer, or (at night) as sole garment, in list of women's finery, made and sold by the capable woman." According Gesenius, 1996 the root is *Sameh-Dalet-Nun* סָדַן, and the verb סָדַן [sadàn] means *to loosen, to let one's garment hang loose*.

ROOT AND CONTEXT SEMANTICS

סַדִּין [sadìn] has a remarkable context-dependent meaning.

Chapter 31 of Proverbs presents directions to a king how he to rule in a wise manner (NKJ Proverbs 31:10 Who can find a virtuous wife? For her worth *is* far above rubies...)

The word סַדִּין [sadìn] is used in a context when the king tries to find a virtuous woman to marry her. Such being the case, then a virtuous wife is associated with the linen type-סַדִּין [sadìn], and it happened in verse 24.

ROOT AND CONTEXT SEMANTICS

NKJ Proverbs 31:24 She makes **linen garments** and sells *them*,
And supplies sashes for the merchants.

Библия, 1991 Тя работи **покривки** и *ги* продава, доставя
пояси на финикийските търговци.

If we remember that the mixture of wool and linen is Prohibited for the rank Jews (Deuteronomy, 22:11 You shall not wear a material mixed of wool and linen together) but is obligation for the clothes of the High Priest (Exodus, 28; 39) we can see that the virtuous and capable wife is equalized to the High Priest. It is because it is written “She seeks wool and flax”. It is interesting that in the commandment not to mix wool and linen (Deuteronomy 22:11) the word for linen in Hebrew is פְּשִׁיִּים [fištīm].

ROOT AND CONTEXT SEMANTICS

The word סָדֵן [sadìn] is used also in Jud 14:12-13;

Isa 3:23 in plural form סְדִינִים [sedinìm]. The meaning is *garments of fine linen*. HOL gives the meanings *undergarment, shirt*.

In Isaiah 3:23 the context is that God will punish “the daughters of Sion”. The *fine linen garments* סְדִינִים [sedinìm] are sign of the pride and luxury of “the daughters of Sion”.

CONCLUSIONS

- The linen type-סָדֵיִן [sadìn] means ‘the ability to sacrifice yourself for others’.
- The combination of linen type-סָדֵיִן [sadìn] + type-פְּשֵׁתִים [pištìim] leads to the conclusion that ‘in Judaism a virtuous wife is in a way equal to the high priest’ (Proverbs, 31:13).

LINEN VII. אֶטֶן [etùn]

ROOT AND CONTEXT SEMANTICS

According to Gesenius אֶטֶן [etùn] means *thread, yarn of linen or cotton*. Gesenius thinks that the word אֶטֶן [etùn] is Syriacism for אֶטְּן [etùn], the verb should be *to bind, to bind together* אֶטַן [atàn], but the root *Aleph-Tet-Nun* אֶטֶן is an unused root. English versions usually use the word *linen*. Bulgarian and Russian texts translate the word אֶטֶן [etùn] as *thread*.

CONCUSION

The linen type-אַטון [etùn] derives from

1. to close; 2. to tuck away safely; 3. to silence someone.

It is used only in Proverbs where its semantisation is ‘sex may be „a road to hell”, and with this type of linen the road may be closed’.

The meaning is of ‘protection and of preventing one from deviating from virtue’.

LINEN VIII. חוּר כַּרְפָּס

[hur karpàs]

ROOT AND CONTEXT SEMANTICS

The word חוּר [hur] appears twice with the meaning *white texture, white linen* – in the book of Esther 1:6; 8:15.

The root of חוּר [hur] is *Het-Vav-Reish* חוּר. From this root are the words חוּר [havar] **be, grow white, pale** (Isa 29:22, only);

חוּר [hur] **white stuff** (Est 8:15; Est 1:6);

חוּרַי [hurai] **white stuff** (Isa 19:9);

חוּרִי [hori] **white bread or cake** (Gen 40:16).

In Esther 1:6 it is used together with and unique single use of the word כַּרְפָּס [karpàs] – חוּר כַּרְפָּס [hur karpàs].

ROOT AND CONTEXT SEMANTICS

There is one more problem when NRS gives for the term כַּרְפָּס **cotton**. The meaning is uncertain and BibleWorks confirms it: כַּרְפָּס [karpàs] **cotton** or **fine linen** (Esther 1:6).

In Esther 1:6; 8 the context is a lavish king attire, that is why we have linen type-שֵׁשׁ [šeš] and type-בִּזְיָ [butz] and the color terms *blue* תְּכֵלֶת [tehèlet], *crimson* אֶרְגָּמָן [argamàn], *gold* and *precious stones*.

It is very hard to find any additional semantisation of כַּרְפָּס חוּר [hur karpàs].

ROOT AND CONTEXT SEMANTICS

Gesenius gives quite complex information. “The root *Het-Vav-Reish* חוּר very often is connected to Aramaic and other Semitic languages. Generally there are two directions of the semantic derivatives. The first one is *to be white, to become pale* (as the face) (Isaiah 29:22), figuratively *to be splendid, noble; white and fine linen*. The second one is “unused root חוּר, the meaning of which was that of hollowing, boring, as shown by the derivatives a *hole, a cavern* חוּר [hor], חוּר [hur]. Thus the word חוּר [hur] means *white and fine linen* cloths of linen or byssus (Isaiah 19:9) as well as a *hole* as that of viper (Isaiah 11:8) or *cavern* (Job 30:6; 1 Samuel 14:11; a *den* of wild beasts (Nahum 2:13).” [Gesenius, 1996].

ROOT AND CONTEXT SEMANTICS

The word כַּרְפָּס [karpàs] is mentioned by Gesenius as “a species of fine linen or flax, which is mentioned by classic writers as being produced in the East and in India, Sanscr. *karpâsa*, cotton; see Celsii Hierobot. t. ii. page 157.”

[Gesenius, 1996, p. 416].

Vulgata and Septuagint transliterate καρπάσινος, Lat. *carbasus*, and meaning is *made of fine flax*. Thus it appears that the single use of the word כַּרְפָּס [karpàs] in the Old Testament is caused by its Indo-European, Sanscritian origin.

CONCLUSIONS

- Each different word for **linen** builds its own web of meanings in the linguistic picture of the world in Hebrew.
 - Each different word for **linen** serves the monofeistic mentality in the frame of the Old Testament. That mentality involves a requirement for harmony between spiritual purity and the ritual purity obtained by wearing linen clothes.

- The monotheistic mentality, as coded in the different words for **linen** in the Old Testament, is drastically different from neighbouring peoples' polytheistic mentality and language, despite certain borrowed lexemes in Hebrew originate from these peoples' languages and cultures.

- The 8 different words for **linen** of which „the robe of light” is made **ARE SUBJECT TO A SPECIAL IDEOLOGY AND SYMBOL CHAINS**, based on worldly, moral, and abstract ritual purity, as conveyed by the notion of ‘whiteness’.

- The different words for **linen** testify to the immense variety of transformations of the notion of light in the Old Testament.
- The text of the Old Testament is a declaration and a duty for the initiated Israelite to see, cover and handle the world through the „robe of light” and not through the „robe of darkness”.

MAIN CONCLUSIONS

⌘ THE LOGIC AND ASSOCIATIONS OF A HEBREW ROOT ARE THE LINGUISTIC IMAGE OF THE EXTENDED SEMANTICS OF A WORD.

⌘ THE CONTEXT ADDS MEANING TO ROOT SEMANTICS. TOGETHER – ROOT AND CONTEXT – COMPOSE THE HEBREW MESSAGE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

MAIN CONCLUSIONS

⌘ IF WE COMPLEMENT HEBREW BASED IMAGINING WITH CULTURE INFORMATION, WE ARRIVE TO THE BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE HEBREW CONTENT OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

⌘ THE APPROACH IS A HOLISTIC AND HERMENEUTIC.

Mony Almalech

THANK YOU

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