

## **BERESHIT**

### **“GOD’S KUTANOT INSTEAD OF MAN’S CHAGOROT”<sup>1</sup>**

I’m sure the above title makes you wonder what in the world “Kutanot” and “Chagorot” really mean.

Before I get into a detailed explanation of these very important (Hebrew) words, let me start with a very short introduction:

This week we are opening another yearly cycle of readings from the Torah. During this week we also celebrated the very last day of the feast of Tabernacles; a day known here as “Hoshana Raba” (Hebrew for, “God, please save”) and a day later we celebrated “Simchat Torah” (Literally, “The happiness / joy of the Torah”) related to the completion of the yearly Torah readings.

It is very interesting to see how the Jewish sages (who decided on when and what Torah portion Jews all around the world should read), connected both the end and the beginning of the yearly reading cycle, with the seventh and last feast on God’s calendar.

For example, during the feast of Tabernacles, we finish reading the very last chapter of the Torah (Deut. 34), which deals with Moses’ death and burial, and we immediately go on to read the very first chapter of the Torah (Gen.1), which deals with the very beginning of everything, in particular, the beginning of human history. As you can see, the Jewish sages tied together some very important events. The story of the creation, the “birth” of the very first Adam, the death of Moses (representing the end of a very significant period in Israel’s history!), and the very last feast on God’s calendar!

Those of you who know the way I usually teach the portions of the Torah, are very familiar with the comparison I make between first Adam and “the second Adam”--Yeshua! Just as a small reminder: I believe that Yeshua came to bring us back into to the Garden. In other words, Yeshua came to restore humanity to the position Adam and Eve had BEFORE they sinned in that famous Garden!

What Adam and Eve experienced in the Garden, before they disobeyed God’s word, was complete harmony and an intimate relationship with their Creator! They had whatever they needed. They lacked absolutely nothing! They had plenty of food and plenty of water. They were not ashamed of their nakedness around their Creator. They were not afraid of Him. They did not need to, nor did they wish to hide from Him!

Reading our portion carefully, we can see that the very first thing Adam and Eve did after they sinned was, “they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings”. (Gen. 3:7)

What the English translates as “Coverings” is actually “**Chagorot**” in Hebrew. Chagorot is the plural for “Chagor” (2290: “**A belt**”, “**Apron**”, “**Armor**”, “**Gird**”). It comes from “**Chagar**” (2296: “**To gird on**”, “**Be able to put on**”). For example: Joab had “a belt (Hebrew, “Chagor”) with a sword fastened in its sheath at his hips...” (2 Sam’ 20:8. See also 2 Kings 3:21).

Now, just before God drives first Adam and his wife outside of the Garden, He Himself made and clothed them with “Tunics of skin”. The Hebrew for “Tunics” is “**Kutanot**” (3801 and 3802: “**A cover**”, “**Shirt**”, “**Coat**”, “**Garment**”, “**Robe**”). One example is when Jacob makes a “tunic (“Kutonet”) full of colors” for his beloved son Joseph (Gen. 37:3).

I'm sure that by now you all get the point: While Adam and Eve sewed **"fig leaves"** (Hebrew, "Alley Te'enah", which is very close to the word "Toanah" – **"An excuse"**) into **"Chagorot" – Armors**, and were ready to use their "good excuses" and "give a good fight" in their defense, God Almighty, Merciful, True and Kind, presents them with a real covering--**"Kutanot"**--which was a true coat, **a royal garment, a royal robe!**

While Adam and his wife cover themselves with temporary armors (very thin and cold fig leaves which sooner or later would dry out!), God covers them with everlasting garments, or royal robes (warm and strong skin tunics)!

As said above, Adam and Eve did not lack anything in the Garden. They had plenty of both food and WATER (Gen. 2:8-15). In the very last day of the seventh feast, two thousand years ago, Yeshua stood in the Temple and said: "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink..." (John 7:37-39). Of course, we all know that the kind of "water" Yeshua was referring to was the Holy Spirit! This is the very "means" by which we have fellowship with our Creator and by which He dwells / tabernacles with us!

Today, God is still waiting on humanity to come to Him in repentance, put away their temporal "Chagorot", their temporal armors, belts (swords of hatred) which are pointed at Him, and instead, let Him cover them with the only true coverings, or, "Kutanot" made out of skin. As in the skin of His righteous Son, His only begotten Son—Yeshua of Nazareth!

Yes, today as it was many years ago in the Garden, and like it was two thousand years ago in Jerusalem in the very last day of the seventh feast, God is calling all of us to come back to Him, to His LIVING WATERS, and to let His "tunics of skin" cover us so we can come out of our hiding places and be free, indeed, from any shame, guilt or fear!

May all of us, this New Year, when trying again to "gaze" into God's Holy Torah every Shabbat, experience the covering touch of His "Kutanot"!

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