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ABSTRACT

“CLOTHES MAKE THE (ONE LIKE A SON OF) MAN”:
DRESS IMAGERY IN REVELATION 1 AS AN
INDICATOR OF HIGH PRIESTLY STATUS

by

Ross E. Winkle

Adviser: Jon Paulien

ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Dissertation

Andrews University

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

Title: “CLOTHES MAKE THE (ONE LIKE A SON OF) MAN”: DRESS IMAGERY
IN REVELATION 1 AS AN INDICATOR OF HIGH PRIESTLY STATUS

Name of researcher: Ross E. Winkle

Name and degree of faculty adviser: Jon Paulien, PhD

Date completed: July 2012

Problem

The Epistle to the Hebrews is the only document in the New Testament that explicitly describes Jesus as a high priest. The purpose of this dissertation is to ascertain whether or not the book of Revelation, in particular, in John’s description of the “one like a son of man” in his inaugural vision (1:12-16), implicitly presents Jesus as having a high priestly status.

Method

This study focuses on Revelation since it is the work closest to Hebrews in terms of its rich cultic imagery, and it analyzes Revelation’s first chapter since that is the part of Revelation where one finds the most contested arena of scholarly debate over Jesus’

high priestly status. In order to delimit the approach, this dissertation concentrates on dress imagery in Rev 1 as a potential indicator of role-related high priestly status.

Chapter 1 of this dissertation states the problem and samples the various interpretations of the dress of the “one like a son of man” in Rev 1, ranging from strenuous denials to strong advocacy of high priestly imagery and identity for Jesus. This chapter also notes the exegetical methodology to be employed in later chapters and presents the study’s delimitations. Chapter 2 examines the contemporary understanding of dress in terms of its ability to communicate meaning in general, to communicate identity in particular, and to more specifically communicate role-related identity. Here obstacles to the perception of identity via dress are also noted. Chapter 3 surveys descriptions of dress in literature from the Ancient Near East to the book of Revelation that communicate various identities, in particular, role-related identity. Chapter 4 surveys the dress of the Israelite high priest worn both on a daily and a yearly basis, taking into consideration data from the Hebrew Bible and extrabiblical Jewish and Christian sources up to ca. 150 CE. It also takes note of overlooked or ignored elements of the high priest’s dress. Based on that information, chapter 5 investigates and exegetes sartorial images for the “one like a son of man” in Rev 1 that possibly communicate high priestly status: his foot-length robe (ποδήρη [1:13]); (2) his golden belt/sash (ζώνην χρυσᾶν [1:13]); and (3) his bare feet, described in terms of the enigmatic term χαλκολιβάνω (1:15). Chapter 6 presents the results of this study, their implications, and possible directions for future research.

Results

Contemporary scholars of dress have concluded that the concept of dress includes not only clothes but also ornaments, cosmetics, devices, treatments, equipment, and tools, and they have repeatedly maintained that dress communicates various types of identity. This understanding is useful in analyzing the communicative properties of dress in the Bible. Copious evidence from the ANE to the Roman world and from the OT to the NT illustrates that dress was not only understood to be an important necessity but also a means of communicating much critical information to others.

The dress of the high priest was powerful in identifying his status and role within the Israelite cultus. This is true despite questions about and difficulty in cataloging, describing, and interpreting the specific ritual dress elements of the high priest. Fluidity in sartorial descriptions of the high priest suggests that metonymy and synecdoche were in play in some of the texts. In addition, this study suggests that high priestly dress should include such elements as bare feet, the censer, and incense, since bare feet are an example of negative dress, a censer can be classified as a dress tool, and incense can be viewed as a dress cosmetic.

Conclusions

This dissertation consequently concludes that the sartorial reference to the ποδήρης that the “one like a son of man” wears in Rev 1, when seen in combination with the reference to him in the midst of the seven golden lampstands (1:12-13), communicates a high priestly identity. The other dress elements (the ζώνην χρυσῶν and the feet like χαλκολιβάνω), while contributing in varying degrees to the plausibility

of the high priestly imagery in this passage, combine with the ποδήρης to substantiate a sartorial ensemble impressively communicative of Jesus' high priestly identity in John's inaugural vision in Revelation.

The results of this study suggest at least four important implications for interpreting Revelation and the NT as a whole. First, the electric impact of the dress of the high priest on observers in the Second Temple period is mirrored by the prominent position it holds in John's inaugural vision in Rev 1. Second, dress imagery implicitly provides profound christological information in Revelation, and christological titles for Jesus in Revelation must not inappropriately shape or restrict the meaning of dress imagery there. Third, high priestly imagery for Jesus in the NT cannot be restricted to the Epistle to the Hebrews. And fourth, the overall dress imagery, which is so prevalent throughout Revelation, indicates that it bears more weight for John than many commentators have typically granted it.

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DRESS IMAGERY IN REVELATION 1 AS AN
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A Dissertation
Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

by
Ross E. Winkle

July 2012

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For Darla

γυναῖκα ἀνδρείαν τίς εὐρήσει τιμιωτέρα δέ ἐστιν λίθων πολυτελῶν ἢ τοιαύτη
(LXX Proverbs 31:10)

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AB	Anchor Bible
ABD	<i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i> . Edited by D. N. Freedman. 6 vols. New York, 1992
ANE	Ancient Near East(ern)
AUSS	<i>Andrews University Seminary Studies</i>
BDAG	Danker, F. W., W. Bauer, W. F. Arndt, and F. W. Gingrich. <i>A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature</i> . 3 rd ed. Chicago, 2000
BDB	Brown, F., S. R. Driver, and C. A. Briggs. <i>A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> . Oxford, 1907
BDF	Blass, F., A. Debrunner, and R. Funk. <i>A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> . Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961
BDR	Blass, Friedrich, and Albert Debrunner. <i>Grammatik des neutestamentlichen Griechisch</i> . 14 th ed. Edited by Friedrich Rehkopf. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1976
<i>Bib</i>	<i>Biblica</i>
<i>BI</i>	<i>Biblical Interpretation</i>
BIS	Biblical Interpretation Series
<i>CBQ</i>	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CEB	Common English Bible
CEV	Contemporary English Version
DBC	Dress, Body, Culture

<i>DNTB</i>	<i>Dictionary of New Testament Background</i> . Edited by Craig A. Evans and Stanley E. Porter. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2000
DSS	Dead Sea Scrolls
<i>EncJud</i>	<i>Encyclopaedia Judaica</i> . 2d ed. Edited by Fred Skolnik. 22 vols. Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA; Jerusalem: Keter, 2007
<i>ExpTim</i>	<i>Expository Times</i>
FAT	Forschungen zum Alten Testament
<i>FN</i>	<i>Filología Neotestamentaria</i>
GNB	Good News Bible
<i>HALOT</i>	Koehler, L., W. Baumgartner, and J. J. Stamm. <i>The Hebrew and Aramaic lexicon of the Old Testament</i> . Translated and edited under the supervision of M. E. J. Richardson. 5 vols. Leiden, 1994-2000
HB	Hebrew Bible
HCHCB	Hermeneia—A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible
<i>HTR</i>	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
<i>HUCA</i>	<i>Hebrew Union College Annual</i>
ICC	International Critical Commentary
<i>IDB</i>	<i>The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible</i> . Edited by G. A. Buttrick. 4 vols. Nashville, 1962
<i>IEJ</i>	<i>Israel Exploration Journal</i>
<i>ISBE</i>	<i>International Standard Bible Encyclopedia</i> . Rev. ed. Edited by G. W. Bromiley et al. 4 vols. Grand Rapids, 1979-1988
<i>JANES</i>	<i>Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society</i>
<i>JAOS</i>	<i>Journal of the American Oriental Society</i>
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>

<i>JBQ</i>	<i>Jewish Bible Quarterly</i>
<i>JETS</i>	<i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
<i>JJS</i>	<i>Journal of Jewish Studies</i>
<i>JNES</i>	<i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i>
<i>JSHJ</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Historical Jesus</i>
<i>JSJ</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Periods</i>
<i>JSJSup</i>	Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism
<i>JSNT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
<i>JSNTSup</i>	Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series
<i>JSOT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i>
<i>JSOTSup</i>	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series
<i>JSP</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha</i>
<i>JSPSup</i>	Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha Supplement Series
<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
<i>HALOT</i>	Koehler, L., W. Baumgartner, and J. J. Stamm, <i>The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> . Translated and edited under the supervision of M. E. J. Richardson. 4 vols. Leiden, 1994-1999
<i>LCL</i>	Loeb Classical Library
<i>LEH</i>	J. Lust, E. Eynikel, and K. Hauspie, comp. <i>A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint</i> . Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1996
<i>LSJ</i>	Liddell, H. G., R. Scott, and H. S. Jones. <i>A Greek-English Lexicon</i> . 9 th ed. with revised supplement. Oxford, 1996
<i>LXX</i>	Septuagint (the Greek Jewish Scriptures). The edition used is <i>Septuaginta</i> , ed. Alfred Rahlfs (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1979)

MT	Masoretic text of the Hebrew Bible
NA ²⁷	<i>Novum Testamentum Graece</i> . 27th rev. ed. Edited by E. Nestle, K. Barbara Aland et al. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1993
NASB	New American Standard Bible
NICNT	New International Commentary on the New Testament
NICOT	New International Commentary on the Old Testament
NIGTC	New International Greek Testament Commentary
NIV	New International Version
NIVAC	NIV Application Commentary
NJB	New Jerusalem Bible
NLT	New Living Translation
<i>NovT</i>	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
NovTSup	Supplements to Novum Testamentum
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
NT	New Testament
NTAbh	Neutestamentliche Abhandlungen
<i>NTS</i>	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
OG	Old Greek
OT	Old Testament
OTL	Old Testament Library
<i>OTP</i>	<i>Old Testament Pseudepigrapha</i> . Edited by J. H. Charlesworth. 2 vols. New York, 1983-85
<i>PWPL</i>	<i>Patras Working Papers in Linguistics</i>

<i>RAC</i>	<i>Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum</i> . Edited by T. Kluser et al. Stuttgart, 1950-
<i>RSR</i>	<i>Recherches de science religieuse</i>
SBG	Studies in Biblical Greek
SBLSCSS	Society of Biblical Literature Septuagint and Cognate Studies Series
SNTMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
<i>SPhilo</i>	<i>Studia Philonica</i>
SSEJC	Studies in Scripture in Early Judaism and Christianity
STDJ	Studies in the Texts of the Desert of Judah
<i>TDNT</i>	<i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i> . Edited by Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich. Translated and edited by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. 10 vols. Grand Rapids, 1964-1976
<i>TDOT</i>	<i>Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament</i> . Edited by G. Johannes Botterweck, Helmer Ringgren, and Heinz-Josef Fabry. Translated by John T. Willis, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, David E. Green, and Douglas W. Stott. 15 vols. Grand Rapids, 1974-2006
<i>UBS</i> ⁴	<i>The Greek New Testament</i> . 4 th rev. ed. Edited by Barbara Aland et al. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1994
<i>VT</i>	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
VTSup	Supplements to <i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Problem

The only NT document that explicitly attempts to explicate the priesthood and priestly ministry of Jesus Christ is the Epistle to the Hebrews.¹ More remarkably, Hebrews is also the only NT document that explicitly calls Jesus Christ a high priest

¹Hebrews implies that Jesus is priest (ὁ ἱερεύς [7:11, 15, 21; 8:4]), quotes Ps 110:4 (LXX 109:4) to prove it (5:6; 7:17, 21), and describes the king-priest Melchizedek with the same terminology as a type of Christ (7:1, 3). That the use of this quotation is meant to refer to Jesus' high priesthood can be seen from Heb 6:20, where both the concept of "forever" (εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα) and the name "Melchizedek" (Μελχισέδεκ) are juxtaposed with "high priest" (ἀρχιερεύς), just as in the LXX of the psalm where the former two terms are juxtaposed with "priest" (ἱερεύς). Paul Ellingworth concludes that Hebrews does not differentiate between ἱερεύς or ἀρχιερεύς in its discussion of Christ (*The Epistle to the Hebrews: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; Carlisle: Paternoster, 1993], 183). Notice the interplay in Heb 7 between "priest" (7:1, 3, 11, 14-15, 17, 20-21, and 23) and "high priest" (7:26-28).

For the purposes of this study, I use the term "LXX" to refer to not only the Greek translation of the Pentateuch (its proper meaning) but also later translations of the HB and Apocrypha. For a recent discussion of this, see Benjamin G. Wright, "The Septuagint and Its Modern Translators," in *Die Septuaginta—Texte, Kontexte, Lebenswelten: Internationale Fachtagung veranstaltet von Septuaginta Deutsch (LXX.D), Wuppertal 20.–23. Juli 2006*, ed. Martin Karrer and Wolfgang Kraus, in collaboration with Martin Meiser, WUNT 219 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), particularly 104-105. Cf. Karen H. Jobes and Moisés Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000), 30-33; and Emanuel Tov, *The Text-Critical Use of the Septuagint in Biblical Research*, 2nd ed., Jerusalem Biblical Studies (Jerusalem: Simor, 1997), 15. In the book of Daniel, however, I do differentiate between the two Old Greek (OG) mss. (88 and 967) and all of the rest of the Greek mss., which have the translation of Theodotion (Θ).

(ἀρχιερεύς), and it does so repeatedly.² What makes its first reference to Jesus Christ as high priest in 2:17 notable is its sudden yet subdued appearance. In this verse there is no argument, defense, or polemic of any kind with reference to supporting the position that Jesus is high priest. Rather, Hebrews seemingly states this as if it were a well-known fact. This has raised questions concerning the origin of the concept of Jesus Christ as high priest, its understanding by the intended audience of the epistle, and its wider acceptance among first-century Christians.³ The fact that early Christian literature

²I use the term “high priest” throughout to refer to the one understood and recognized to be the pre-eminent priest among the Jewish priesthood. Biblical texts, however, do not consistently utilize this terminology in describing this position. Nomenclature that clearly refers to the leader of the priests includes: (1) “the priest” (e.g., Exod 35:19 [הַכֹּהֵן; LXX: τοῦ ἱερέως]); (2) “the anointed priest” (e.g., Lev 4:3 [הַכֹּהֵן הַמְּשִׁיחַ; LXX: ὁ ἀρχιερεὺς ὁ κεχρισμένος]); (3) “the great [or, high] priest” (e.g., Num 35:25 [הַכֹּהֵן הַגָּדֹל; LXX: ὁ ἱερεὺς ὁ μέγας]); and (4) “first [or, chief] priest” (e.g., 2 Kgs 25:18; [כֹּהֵן הָרִאשִׁי; LXX: ἱερέα τὸν πρῶτον]). Cf. Roland de Vaux, *Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions*, trans. John McHugh (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1961), 397-98.

Hebrews uses the Greek term for high priest (ἀρχιερεύς) to describe Jesus’ ministry (2:17; 3:1; 4:14, 15; 5:5, 10; 6:20; 7:26; 8:1; 9:11), just as it uses the same term to describe the earthly high priest (5:1; 7:27, 28; 8:3; 9:7, 25; 13:11). Hebrews also calls Jesus the “great priest” (ἱερέα μέγαν) in 10:21, the only time this term is used in the NT, yet in line with its widespread usage in the LXX (Lev 21:10; Num 35:25, 28, 32; 2 Kgs 12:11; 22:4, 8; 23:4; 1 Chr 9:31; 2 Chr 24:11; 34:9; Neh 3:1, 20; 13:28; Hag 1:1, 12, 14; 2:2, 4; Zech 3:1, 8; 6:11; Jdt 4:6, 8, 14, 15:8; 1 Macc 12:20; 14:20; 15:2; 2 Macc 14:13; Sir 50:1). The terminology of ἱερέα μέγαν in Hebrews is equivalent to the usage of ἀρχιερεύς; notice also ἀρχιερέα μέγαν in 4:14 (see the discussion in Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 183). On the origin and evolution of the Greek terms ἀρχιερεύς and ἱερεὺς μέγας for the high priest, see, e.g., Maria Brutti, *The Development of the High Priesthood During the Pre-Hasmonean Period: History, Ideology, Theology*, JSJSup 108 (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 56-71.

³For an introduction to the problem of identifying whether or not Hebrews used Christian traditions about Jesus as high priest, see William L. Lane, *Hebrews 1-8*, WBC 47A (Dallas: Word, 1991), cxl-cxli, cl. For more recent attempts to explicate the origin of Hebrews’ concept of Jesus’ high priesthood, cf. Daniel Stökl, “Yom Kippur in the Apocalyptic *Imaginaire* and the Roots of Jesus’ High Priesthood: Yom Kippur in

outside of the NT and independent of Hebrews also explicitly entitled Jesus Christ as high priest⁴ has further contributed to the question regarding the origin of the high priestly characterization of Jesus Christ.

In 1981 John W. Baigent observed that it was “generally recognized that the distinctive high priestly christology of the Epistle to the Hebrews is unique to that document amongst the NT writings.”⁵ Baigent’s assertion was a reaction to several

Zechariah 3, 1 Enoch 10, 11QMelkizedeq, Hebrews and the Apocalypse of Abraham 13,” in *Transformations of the Inner Self in Ancient Religions*, ed. Jan Assmann and Guy G. Stroumsa, *Studies in the History of Religions (Supplements to Numen)* 83 (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 349-66; and Eric F. Mason, “*You Are a Priest Forever*”: *Second Temple Jewish Messianism and the Priestly Christology of the Epistle to the Hebrews*, *STDJ* 74 (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 40-63.

Lane, in commenting on 2:17, states: “The fact that the writer can refer to Jesus as High Priest before he has provided any theological exposition of this conception (cf. 3:1; 4:14-16) strongly suggests that it was the common property of the hellenistic wing of the Church” (*Hebrews 1-8*, 65). Harold W. Attridge, in his extensively referenced discussion of the possible antecedents of the high priestly christology, concludes: “It is probable, then, that the image of Christ as a heavenly High Priest was traditional within the early Christian community addressed by Hebrews” (*The Epistle to the Hebrews*, ed. Helmut Koester, HCHCB [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1989], 97-103, here 102). Cf. Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 185-88; and Scott D. Mackie, *Eschatology and Exhortation in the Epistle to the Hebrews*, *WUNT*, 2nd ser., 223 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), 183-85.

⁴Attridge lists Ignatius *Phld.* 9.1 (cf. 8.2), *Mart. Pol.* 14.3, and Polycarp *Phil.* 12.2 (*Hebrews*, 102). David Stökl Ben Ezra also refers to 1 Clem. 36:1, 61:3, and 64, which he admits are controversial because some consider these dependent on Hebrews (*The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity: The Day of Atonement from Second Temple Judaism to the Fifth Century*, *WUNT*, 2nd ser., 163 [Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003], 194, n. 246).

⁵John W. Baigent, “Jesus as Priest: An Examination of the Claim That the Concept of Jesus as Priest May Be Found in the New Testament Outside the Epistle to the Hebrews,” *Vox evangelica* 12 (1981): 34. Cf. Ferdinand Hahn, *The Titles of Jesus in Christology: Their History in Early Christianity*, trans. Harold Knight and George Ogg (London: Lutterworth, 1969), 235.

Some christologies of Revelation include no discussion of any possible high priestly imagery; see, e.g., Sarah Alexander Edwards, “Christological Perspectives in

scholars who had attempted to uncover a priestly or high priestly christology within the NT but outside of Hebrews (particularly in the Gospels), and despite Baigent's conclusions, such investigations have continued since then.⁶ Moreover, a significant

the Book of Revelation,” in *Christological Perspectives: Essays in Honor of Harvey K. McArthur*, ed. Robert F. Berkey and Sarah A. Edwards (New York: Pilgrim, 1982), 139-54; Donald Guthrie, “The Christology of Revelation,” in *Jesus of Nazareth: Lord and Christ: Essays on the Historical Jesus and New Testament Christology*, ed. Joel B. Green and Max Turner (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; Carlisle: Paternoster, 1994), 397-409; and Charles H. Talbert, “The Christology of the Apocalypse,” in *Who Do You Say That I Am? Essays on Christology*, ed. Mark Allan Powell and David R. Bauer (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1999), 166-84.

⁶Studies investigating or discussing this topic before and after Baigent's article include John Bernard Baron, “Speaking the Word: A Historical Inquiry into the Nature of Hieratic Function” (PhD diss., Drew University, 1994), 25; Helen K. Bond, “Discarding the Seamless Robe: The High Priesthood of Jesus in John's Gospel,” in *Israel's God and Rebecca's Children: Christology and Community in Early Judaism and Christianity: Essays in Honor of Larry W. Hurtado and Alan F. Segal*, ed. David B. Capes et al (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2007), 183-94; Edwin K. Broadhead, “Christology as Polemic and Apologetic: The Priestly Portrait of Jesus in the Gospel of Mark,” *JSNT* 47 (1992): 21-34; Joseph Coppens, “Le messianisme sacerdotal dans les écrits du nouveau testament,” in *La venue du Messie: Messianisme et eschatologie*, ed. Édouard Massaux, *Recherches bibliques* 6 (Bruges: Desclée de Brouwer, 1962), 101-112; David Michael Crump, *Jesus as Intercessor: Prayer and Christology in Luke-Acts*, WUNT, 2nd ser., 49 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1992), 185-87, 195-97; Oscar Cullmann, *The Christology of the New Testament*, rev. ed., trans. Shirley C. Guthrie and Charles A. M. Hall, The New Testament Library (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1959), 104-107; Crispin H. T. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts: Angels, Christology and Soteriology*, WUNT, 2nd ser., 94 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997), 214, 248, n. 128, and 254; idem, “The Revelation of the Sacral Son of Man: The Genre, History of Religions Context and the Meaning of the Transfiguration,” in *Auferstehung—Resurrection: The Fourth Durham-Tübingen Research Symposium: Resurrection, Transfiguration and Exaltation in Old Testament, Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity (Tübingen, September, 1999)*, ed. Friedrich Avemarie and Hermann Lichtenberger, WUNT, 2nd ser., 135 (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 2001), 247-98; idem, “Jesus as the High Priestly Messiah: Part I,” *JSHJ* 4 (2006): 155-75; idem, “Jesus as the High Priestly Messiah: Part II,” *JSHJ* 5 (2007): 57-79; Gerhard Friedrich, “Beobachtungen zur messianischen Hohepriestererwartung in den Synoptikern,” *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche* 53 (1956): 265-311; Joachim Gnilka, “Die Erwartung des messianischen Hohenpriesters in den Schriften von Qumran und im Neuen Testament,” *Revue de Qumran* 2 (1960): 395-426; John Paul Heil, “Jesus as the Unique High Priest in the

number of influential scholars have seen either explicit or implicit priestly or high priestly imagery in relation to Jesus in the book of Revelation.⁷ Attempts to uncover a high priestly christology in the NT typically approach it from two perspectives: those who investigate the Gospels understandably focus on an earthly high priesthood, while those who explore the high priestly christological reality in Hebrews and its possibility in Revelation, for example, stress a heavenly high priesthood.⁸

Gospel of John,” *CBQ* 57 (1995): 729-45; Marion W. Henderson, “The Priestly Ministry of Jesus in the Gospel of John and the Epistle to the Hebrews” (ThD diss., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1965); Martin Hengel, *Studies in Early Christology* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1995), 144-48; A. J. B. Higgins, “The Priestly Messiah,” *NTS* 13 (1966-67): 234-35; Alan R. Kerr, *The Temple of Jesus’ Body: The Temple Theme in the Gospel of John*, JSNTSup 220 (London: Sheffield Academic, 2002), 314-70; Olaf Moe, “Das Priestertum Christi im NT außerhalb des Hebräerbriefs,” *Theologische Literaturzeitung* 72 (1947): cols. 335-38; C. Spicq, “L’origine johannique de la conception du Christ-prêtre dans l’Épître aux Hébreux,” in *Aux sources de la tradition chrétienne: Mélanges offerts à M. Maurice Goguel à l’occasion de son soixante-dixième anniversaire*, Bibliothèque de théologie (Neuchâtel: Delachaux & Niestlé, 1950): 258-69; Elizabeth G. Pemberton, “The Seamless Garment: A Note on John 19:23-24,” *Australian Biblical Review* 54 (2006): 50-55; and Joseph E. Zimmerman, “Jesus of Nazareth: High Priest of Israel’s Great Fall Festival—the Day of Atonement,” *Evangelical Journal* 17 (1999): 49-59.

⁷E.g., F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, rev. ed., NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 29, n. 125; Cullmann, *Christology*, 104-105; J. Massyngberde Ford, *Revelation: Introduction, Translation and Commentary*, AB 38 (New York: Doubleday, 1975), 385; Traugott Holtz, *Die Christologie der Apokalypse des Johannes*, 2nd ed., Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur 85 (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1971), 118-21; Ernst Lohmeyer, *Die Offenbarung des Johannes*, 3rd ed., Handbuch zum Neuen Testament 16 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1970), 15; and Robert H. Mounce, *The Book of Revelation*, rev. ed., NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 57-58.

⁸Heb 7:14 makes a point of arguing that Jesus was “descended from Judah” (ἐξ Ἰουδα ἀνατέταλκεν) instead of Levi (cf. 7:5-13). John the Baptist’s mother Elizabeth was one of the descendants of Aaron (ἐκ τῶν θυγατέρων Ἀαρῶν), and Jesus’ mother Mary was her “relative” (συγγενίς [Luke 1:36]). Apparently some later Christians saw this as evidence that Jesus was also descended from the tribe of Levi—in spite of Heb 7:14 and the fact that priesthood derived from patrilineal and not matrilineal descent (cf.

Statement of the Problem

An understanding of Jesus Christ as high priest from a NT basis but outside of the Epistle to the Hebrews—whether as an earthly or heavenly high priest—has not gained universal support. In 1965, for instance, Sidney G. Sowers remarked that “Heb’s idea of Christ’s work as a priestly one is original and unique in the N.T.”⁹ In fact,

William Adler, “The Suda and the ‘Priesthood of Jesus,’” in *For a Later Generation: The Transformation of Tradition in Israel, Early Judaism, and Early Christianity*, ed. Randal A. Argall, Beverly A. Bow, and Rodney A. Werline [Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2000], 1-12). The concept of Jesus’ levitical heritage is also related to the Christian defense of the Hasmoneans as priest-kings or priest-rulers on the basis of their descent from not only the tribe of Levi (cf. 1 Macc 2:1) but also the tribe of Judah through Aaron’s marriage to the sister of Judah’s descendant Nahshon (Exod 6:23; cf. Num 1:7). For a thorough discussion of this tradition, see William Adler, “Exodus 6:23 and the High Priest from the Tribe of Judah,” *JTS*, n.s., 48 (1997): 24-47. Attempts to defend a levitical heritage of Jesus appear as early as the late second century (Stökl, “Yom Kippur,” 364).

At the same time, certain Jews identified Jesus as Elijah (Matt 16:14; Mark 6:15; 8:28; Luke 9:8, 19). Some Jewish literature understood the eschatological Elijah to be a priest or a high priest (cf., e.g., David George Clark, “Elijah as Eschatological High Priest: An Examination of the Elijah Tradition in Mal. 3:22-24” [PhD diss., University of Notre Dame, 1975]). While Richard A. Horsley deems none of this literature supporting this understanding to be “prior to or contemporary with the appearance of Jesus or John the Baptist” (“‘Like One of the Prophets of Old’: Two Types of Popular Prophets at the Time of Jesus,” *CBQ* 47 [1985]: 439-41, here 439), Robert Hayward (“Phinehas—The Same Is Elijah: The Origins of a Rabbinic Tradition,” *JJS* 29 [1978]: 22-34, particularly 31) and Markus Öhler (“The Expectation of Elijah and the Presence of the Kingdom of God,” *JBL* 118 [1999]: 462, n. 3) are two who explicitly disagree.

It is also important to note that James, the brother of Jesus (cf. Ἰάκωβον τὸν ἀδελφὸν τοῦ κυρίου [Gal 1:19]), was described in early Christianity both in terms of the high priest and as a high priest. See, e.g., the discussion in Adler, “The Suda,” 11; Robert Eisenman, *James the Brother of Jesus: The Key to Unlocking the Secrets of Early Christianity and the Dead Sea Scrolls* (New York: Viking, 1996), 217-408; and Stökl Ben Ezra, *Impact of Yom Kippur*, 246-50.

⁹Sidney G. Sowers, *The Hermeneutics of Philo and Hebrews: A Comparison of the Interpretation of the Old Testament in Philo Judaeus and the Epistle to the Hebrews*, Basel Studies of Theology (Zurich: EVZ-Verlag; Richmond, VA: John Knox, 1965), 119.

persistent unawareness of the discussion of a high priestly understanding of Jesus Christ outside of Hebrews—or adamant opposition to such an understanding—has marked the history of interpretation of this issue in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. In 1981 Baigent surveyed the exegetical landscape and unequivocally concluded that there is no high priestly imagery for Jesus Christ anywhere in the NT outside of Hebrews.¹⁰ A decade later Barnabas Lindars confidently asserted that the presentation of the priesthood of Jesus in Hebrews “has no echo elsewhere in the New Testament.”¹¹ That same year William L. Lane insisted that one finds the christological theme of Christ’s high priesthood “nowhere else [than Hebrews] in the NT.”¹²

Hebrews is not the only NT document that frequently uses terminology related to the tabernacle/temple cultus, of which the high priest was the chief figure and functionary. Revelation also frequently uses such terminology.¹³ Even further,

¹⁰Baigent, “Jesus as Priest,” 34-44.

¹¹Barnabas Lindars, *The Theology of the Letter to the Hebrews*, New Testament Theology (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 126.

¹²Lane, *Hebrews*, cxlii. This particular stance is often assumed rather than argued, for it is not unknown for scholarship regarding Christ as high priest to start with the book of Hebrews and go nowhere else (e.g., Gerald O’Collins, *Christology: A Biblical, Historical, and Systematic Study of Jesus Christ* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995], 31).

¹³Cf. the tent/tabernacle (ἡ σκηνή: 13:6; 21:3), tent/tabernacle of witness (τῆς σκηνῆς τοῦ μαρτυρίου: 15:5), temple (ὁ ναός: 3:12; 7:15; 11:1, 2, 19; 14:15, 17; 15:5, 6, 8; 16:1, 17; 21:22), outer court (τὴν αὐλὴν τὴν ἔξωθεν τοῦ ναοῦ: 11:2), ark of the covenant (ἡ κιβωτὸς τῆς διαθήκης: 11:19), lampstand(s) (ἡ λυχνία: 1:12, 13, 20; 2:1, 5; 11:4), lamp (ὁ λύχνος: 21:23; 22:5), altar (τὸ θυσιαστήριον: 6:9; 8:3, 5; 9:13; 11:1; 14:18; 16:7), censer (ὁ λιβανωτός: 8:3, 5), incense (ἡ θυμίαμα: 5:8; 8:3, 4), golden bowls (φιάλας χρυσᾶς: 5:8; 15:7); etc. See Robert A. Briggs, *Jewish Temple Imagery in the Book of Revelation*, Studies in Biblical Literature 10 (New York: Peter Lang, 1999).

Revelation explicitly refers to its implied readers as priests (ἱερεῖς)—and that on more than one occasion (1:6; 5:10; 20:6). Consequently, one should not be surprised if it utilized high priestly imagery in its visionary portrayals and overall rhetoric.

And it does. Two illustrations suffice to demonstrate that high priestly imagery exists within the scope of Revelation's rhetoric. First, when John, Revelation's stated author (1:1, 4, 9; 22:8), describes the New Jerusalem descending from heaven in chap. 21, his description of the city with its twelve foundation stones (21:19-20) apparently reflects the twelve stones that adorned the ephod of the high priest. Most scholars have acknowledged this relationship.¹⁴

¹⁴See, e.g., David E. Aune, *Revelation 17-22*, WBC 52C (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1998), 1165; Richard Bauckham, *The Theology of the Book of Revelation*, New Testament Theology (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 134; G. K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 1080-88; Ian Boxall, *The Revelation of Saint John*, Black's New Testament Commentaries (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson; London: Continuum, 2006), 305; Sun-Bum Choi, "The Restoration Theme in the Book of Revelation: From Creation to New Creation" (PhD diss., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2003), 281, 299; Joseph Comblin, "La liturgie de la Nouvelle Jérusalem (*Apoc.*, XXI, I-XXII, 5)," *Ephemerides theologicae lovanienses* 29 (1953): 15; J. A. Draper, "The Twelve Apostles as Foundation Stones of the Heavenly Jerusalem and the Foundation of the Qumran Community," *Neotestamentica* 22 (1988): 41-63, esp. p. 43; Jan Fekkes, "'His Bride Has Prepared Herself': Revelation 19-21 and Isaian Nuptial Imagery," *JBL* 109 (1990): 277 (repeated almost verbatim in idem, *Isaiah and Prophetic Traditions in the Book of Revelation: Visionary Antecedents and Their Development*, JSNTSup 93 [Sheffield: JSOT, 1994], 241); Ford, *Revelation*, 342; Meredith G. Kline, "Investiture with the Image of God," *Westminster Theological Journal* 40 (1977): 53-55; Pilchan Lee, *The New Jerusalem in the Book of Revelation*, WUNT, 2nd ser., 129 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 285-86; Edmondo F. Lupieri, *A Commentary on the Apocalypse of John*, trans. Maria Poggi Johnson and Adam Kamesar, Italian Texts & Studies on Religion & Society (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 344; David Mathewson, "Assessing Old Testament Allusions in the Book of Revelation," *Evangelical Quarterly* 75 (2003): 323-324; idem, *A New Heaven and a New Earth: The Meaning and Function of the Old Testament in Revelation 21.1-22.5*, JSNTSup 238 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2003), 130-49, 153-56; idem, "A Note on the Foundation Stones in Revelation 21.14, 19-20," *JSNT* 25 (2003): 495-96; Robert Mounce, *Revelation*, 393;

A second indicator that John wishes his readers to recognize high priestly imagery is even more startling with reference to the direction of this thesis: the apparent high priestly dress imagery in 17:4-5 associated with the Great Prostitute (τῆς πόρνης τῆς μεγάλης [17:1]). While not exclusively high priestly in nature,¹⁵ the language of gold (χρυσίου), purple (πορφυροῦς), scarlet (κόκκινος), and precious stone (λίθος τίμιος) typically describes the dress of the high priest in the LXX.¹⁶ This is striking,

Grant R. Osborne, *Revelation*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002), 755-58; Mathias Rissi, *The Future of the World: An Exegetical Study of Revelation 19.11-22.15*, Studies in Biblical Theology, 2nd ser., 23 (Naperville, IL: Alec R. Allenson, [1972]), 72; Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *Invitation to the Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Apocalypse with Complete Text from The Jerusalem Bible* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1981), 205; idem, *Revelation: Vision of a Just World*, Proclamation Commentaries (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 112; Stephen S. Smalley, *The Revelation to John: A Commentary on the Greek Text of the Apocalypse* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2005), 554; Ranko Stefanovic, *Revelation of Jesus Christ: Commentary on the Book of Revelation*, 2nd ed. (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2009), 595, 601; and Joseph L. Trafton, *Reading Revelation: A Literary and Theological Commentary*, Reading the New Testament (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2005), 207. Cf. William W. Reader, “The Twelve Jewels of Revelation 21:19-20: Tradition History and Modern Interpretations,” *JBL* 100 (1981): 433-57; and Wolfgang Zwickel, “Die Edelsteine im Brustschild des Hohenpriesters und beim himmlischen Jerusalem,” in *Edelsteine in der Bibel*, ed. Wolfgang Zwickel (Mainz: Philipp von Zabern, 2002), 50-70.

¹⁵Cf. Aune, *Revelation 17-22*, 934-37; Beale, *Revelation*, 854-55.

¹⁶Beale, *Revelation*, 857, 886, 912, 913. Beale lists such texts as LXX Exod 25:3-7; 28:5-9; 28:15-20; 35:6; 36:9-12; 36:15-21 (ibid., 886 and 912, n. 214). He notes (ibid., 913) that the Jewish priest-historian Josephus (37 CE - ca. 100 CE) in *J.W.* 5.232-34 utilizes the “same five terms” in Rev 17:4 and 18:16 (listed in *Revelation*, 886 and 912, n. 214: χρυσός [“gold”], πορφύρα [“purple”], κόκκινος [“scarlet”], βύσσος [“fine linen”], and λίθος [“stone”]) in his description of the high priest’s dress and then states that the same material (except the stones) also comprised the veils of the temple. But Beale has here misrepresented the evidence (as well as in ibid., 857, where he uses the phrase “identical combination of words”), since 17:4 contains χρυσίου instead of χρυσός as well as πορφυροῦς instead of πορφύρα; he does note, however, that 17:4 does not contain βύσσος at all (ibid., 886 and 912, n. 214). In any case, Josephus earlier states that the temple veils were made of Babylonian tapestries (*J.W.* 5.212-13). Beale

since high priestly dress imagery associated with prostitution seems nothing less than incongruous. Edmondo F. Lupieri notes that though the parallels are surprising, they are both “extraordinary” and “incontrovertible” evidence that John wants his readers to think about “the heart of Jewish religiosity.”¹⁷

It is not high priestly imagery per se in Revelation that is controversial, however; rather, it is high priestly imagery in relation to Jesus Christ that remains a point of contention. After all, Revelation not once explicitly entitles Jesus Christ as high priest (or even priest) as Hebrews frequently does (cf. 2:17; 3:1; 4:14-15; 5:10; 6:20; 7:26-28; 8:1; 9:11). Baigent ultimately declared that there is “no compelling reason” to view Christ as high priest there.¹⁸

In the exegetical battleground over whether or not Revelation contains high priestly imagery for Jesus Christ, Rev 1:13 has become the critical verse par excellence.

suggests that if Josephus’s understanding was widespread, it may have contributed to the association in 17:4 (*Revelation*, 913, where he mistakenly references 17:6 instead of 17:4).

Margaret Barker suggests that the name on the forehead of the prostitute is “perhaps a parody of the high priest’s diadem, in which case her clothes might indicate the robes of the high priest” (*The Revelation of Jesus Christ: Which God Gave to Him to Show to His Servants What Must Soon Take Place [Revelation 1.1]* [Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2000], 284). See also similar conclusions advocated earlier by Ford, *Revelation*, 55, 285, 287-88.

¹⁷Lupieri, *Commentary on the Apocalypse*, 254. Cf. *ibid.*, 255, 258-60. The potential priestly imagery is heightened when John describes the fate of the Great Prostitute as being burned with fire (17:16)—the same fate which would be meted out to the daughter of a priest engaged in prostitution (Lev 21:9). On the latter, see Beale (*Revelation*, 886), and cf. Barker (*Revelation*, 284), Osborne (*Revelation*, 626), Stefanovic (*Revelation*, 522, 528), and Trafton (*Reading Revelation*, 160).

¹⁸Baigent, “Jesus as Priest,” 37.

This typically springs from one's interpretation of the "foot-length" robe (ποδήρης)¹⁹ of the one "like a son of man" (ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου). Within the complex spectrum of interpretations, a few exegetes see primarily angelic,²⁰ judicial,²¹ or royal²² dress imagery here. Yet for numerous interpreters, any kind of analysis of this dress item yields priestly or high priestly meaning.²³

¹⁹The nominative masculine singular form is ποδήρης, while the accusative masculine singular form in this verse is ποδήρη.

²⁰E.g., Friedrich Büchsel, *Die Christologie der Offenbarung Johannis* (Halle: Druck von C. A. Kaemmerer, 1907), 32; Matthias Reinhard Hoffmann, *The Destroyer and the Lamb: The Relationship between Angelomorphic and Lamb Christology in the Book of Revelation*, WUNT, 2nd ser., 203 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 223-24 (who sees the possibility of priestly imagery but does not come to a firm conclusion [ibid., 224; cf. p. 198]); Robert M. Royalty, Jr., *The Streets of Heaven: The Ideology of Wealth in the Apocalypse of John* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1998), 46 and cf. 147; and Loren T. Stuckenbruck, *Angel Veneration and Christology: A Study in Early Judaism and in the Christology of the Apocalypse of John*, WUNT, 2nd ser., 70 (Tübingen: Mohr [Siebeck], 1995), 209-228, particularly 226-28 and 228, n. 63.

²¹E.g., Frederick David Mazzaferri, *The Genre of the Book of Revelation from a Source-Critical Perspective*, Beiheft zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche 54 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1989), 245 and 320-21.

²²E.g., W. Hendrickson, *More Than Conquerors: An Interpretation of the Book of Revelation* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1939), 71; Martin Kiddle, *The Revelation of St. John*, Moffatt New Testament Commentary 17 (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1940), 15; and Bruce M. Metzger, *Breaking the Code: Understanding the Book of Revelation* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1993), 27.

²³E.g., P. E.-B. Allo, *Saint Jean: L'Apocalypse*, 3rd ed., Études bibliques (Paris: J. Gabalda et Cie, 1933), 12; Louis A. Brighton, *Revelation*, Concordia Commentary: A Theological Exposition of Sacred Scripture (Saint Louis, MO: Concordia, 1999), 49; Bruce, *Hebrews*, 29, n. 125; G. B. Caird, *A Commentary on the Revelation of St. John the Divine*, Harper's New Testament Commentaries (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), 25; Joseph Comblin, *Le Christ dans l'Apocalypse*, Bibliothèque de théologie: Théologie biblique: Série III, 6 (Paris: Desclée, 1965), 188-89; Cullmann, *Christology*, 104-105; Ford, *Revelation*, 385; Gnllka, "Die Erwartung," 425; Holtz, *Christologie*, 118-21; Alan David Hultberg, "Messianic Exegesis in the Apocalypse: The Significance of the Old

Baigent is not, however, the lone maverick in his adverse assessment of high priestly dress imagery for Jesus in Rev 1:13 (or even the entire book), and such opposition—while a minority viewpoint—is noteworthy.²⁴ In 1919 Isbon T. Beckwith,

Testament for the Christology of Revelation” (PhD diss., Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, 2001), 128-32; Craig S. Keener, *Revelation*, NIVAC (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 94-95; Simon J. Kistemaker, *Exposition of the Book of Revelation*, New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001), 95; Gerhard A. Krodel, *Revelation*, Augsburg Commentaries on the New Testament (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1989), 95-96; William R. G. Loader, *Sohn und Hoherpriester: Eine traditionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung zur Christologie des Hebräerbriefes*, Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament 53 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1981), 233-36; Lohmeyer, *Die Offenbarung*, 15; Robert Mounce, *Revelation*, 57-58; Dietmar Neufeld, “Sumptuous Clothing and Ornamentation in the Apocalypse,” *Hervormde Teologiese Studies* 58 (2002): 677; Jon Paulien, “The Role of the Hebrew Cultus, Sanctuary, and Temple in the Plot and Structure of the Book of Revelation,” *AUSS* 33 (1995): 249; William Riley, “Temple Imagery and the Book of Revelation: Ancient Near Eastern Temple Ideology and Cultic Resonances in the Apocalypse,” *Proceedings of the Irish Biblical Association* 6 (1982): 91; Rissi, *Future of the World*, 14; Smalley, *The Revelation to John*, 54 (with caveats); Spicq, “L’origine johannique,” 261; Ugo Vanni, *L’Apocalisse: ermeneutica, esegesi, teologia*, Revista bíblica Supplement Series 17 (Bologna: Edizioni Dehoniane Bologna, 1988), 126-28; Alfred Wikenhauser, *Die Offenbarung des Johannes*, 3rd ed., Regensburger Neues Testament 9 (Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet, 1959), 33 (although he does indicate some royal background to the belt/sash, he concludes that it and the robe are high priestly); and Christian Wolff, “Die Gemeinde des Christus in der Apokalypse des Johannes,” *NTS* 27 (1980-1981): 189.

²⁴E.g., G. R. Beasley-Murray, *The Book of Revelation*, rev. ed., New Century Bible (1978; repr., Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1981), 66-67; Dwight Marion Beck, “The Christology of the Apocalypse of John,” in *New Testament Essays: Critical Essays in New Testament Interpretation, with Special Reference to the Meaning and Worth of Jesus*, ed. Edwin Prince Booth (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1942), 258; Peter R. Carrell, *Jesus and the Angels: Angelology and the Christology of the Apocalypse of John*, Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series 95 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 160, n. 38; Heinz Giesen, *Die Offenbarung des Johannes*, Regensburger Neues Testament (Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet, 1997), 87-88; R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. John’s Revelation* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1963), 65; Osborne, *Revelation*, 89; Pierre Prigent, *Commentary on the Apocalypse of St. John*, trans. Wendy Pradels (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 136-37; Jürgen Roloff, *The Revelation of John: A Continental Commentary*, trans. John E. Alsup (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 36; Akira Satake, *Die*

for instance, categorically denied that the office of (high) priest was mentioned or even represented in Revelation.²⁵ A year later R. H. Charles doubted that priestly imagery was in view and concluded that the robe “is used here simply as an Oriental mark of dignity.”²⁶ Not long afterwards James Moffatt asserted that John failed to reach the idea of the heavenly high priest.²⁷

Such denials of high priestly imagery in Rev 1 have continued. In 1979 Homer Hailey argued: “In considering the dress of the high priest of the Old Covenant (Exod. 28:39), one is unable to find indication of priestliness in the dress described here [Rev 1:13].”²⁸ Albert Vanhoye later represented this perspective by insisting that “it seems then improbable that John [in Revelation] intended to represent the Son of Man as a priest.”²⁹ More blanket denials continued, including Leon Morris’s succinct, negative

Offenbarung des Johannes, ed. Thomas Witulski, *Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament 16* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2008), 142; Merrill C. Tenney, *Interpreting Revelation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1957), 54; Robert L. Thomas, *Revelation 1-7: An Exegetical Commentary* (Chicago: Moody, 1992), 98-100; and Albert Vanhoye, “L’Apocalisse e la lettera agli Ebrei,” in *Apokalypsis: Percorsi nell’Apocalisse in onore di Ugo Vanni*, ed. Elena Bosetti and Angelo Colacrai (Assisi: Cittadella, 2005), 262-64.

²⁵Isbon T. Beckwith, *The Apocalypse of John: Studies in Introduction with a Critical and Exegetical Commentary* (1919; repr., Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979), 438.

²⁶R. H. Charles, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Revelation of St. John*, ICC (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1920), 1:27-28.

²⁷James Moffatt, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews*, ICC (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1924), xlvii.

²⁸Homer Hailey, *Revelation: An Introduction and Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979), 109.

²⁹Albert Vanhoye, *Old Testament Priests and the New Priest: According to the New Testament*, trans. J. Bernard Orchard, *Studies in Scripture* (Petersham, MA: St. Bede’s Publications, 1986), 281.

conclusion that “[John] does not refer to Christ’s priestly office throughout his book.”³⁰ In 1989 Frederick David Mazzaferri recognized the “persistent claims” of those who advocated high priestly imagery but argued that “not even in 1:13 is Christ portrayed as High Priest.”³¹ Frederick J. Murphy firmly claimed in 1998 that “Christ nowhere appears as high priest in Revelation,”³² and in 2001 Richard Bauckham that the clothing imagery in Rev 1:13 “is not sufficiently distinctive of priests to indicate that Christ is portrayed in a priestly role.”³³

David E. Aune has arguably written the most potent and substantial offense against the view that one can detect (high) priestly imagery for Jesus in Rev 1:13.³⁴ He states: “One common, but unfounded, view is that Christ is presented in priestly garments.”³⁵ On the basis of his detailed, terminological analysis, he concludes: “There is therefore no clear intention on the part of the author to conceptualize the appearance of the exalted Christ in priestly terms.”³⁶

³⁰Leon Morris, *The Book of Revelation: An Introduction and Commentary*, rev. ed., Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Leicester, UK: Inter-Varsity; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 54.

³¹Mazzaferri, *Genre*, 320. Cf. *ibid.*, 243, 303, n. 315, 320-21.

³²Frederick J. Murphy, *Fallen Is Babylon: The Revelation to John*, New Testament in Context (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1998), 90.

³³Bauckham, “Revelation,” *The Oxford Bible Commentary*, ed. John Barton and John Muddiman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 1291.

³⁴After making this independent assessment, I discovered that Stökl Ben Ezra agrees that Aune “has made the strongest case against a priestly influence on Rev 1:13 (*Impact of Yom Kippur*, 196, n. 254).

³⁵David E. Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, WBC 52A (Dallas: Word, 1997), 93.

³⁶*Ibid.*, 94.

Proponents of the presence of high priestly imagery for Jesus in Revelation have, nevertheless, advanced equally clear and unequivocal statements to buttress their position. For example, in 1965 Joseph Comblin triumphantly (but mistakenly, as it was) declared that because the garment mentioned in 1:13 was the same as that worn by the high priest, “Tous les commentateurs disent, pour cette raison, que Jésus est aussi prêtre, en même temps que roi” (“All the commentators say, for this reason, that Jesus is also a priest, while at the same time king”).³⁷ In another mistaken exaggeration, Daniel Stökl concluded in 1999 that Rev 1:13 is “the *only* New Testament verse apart from *Hebrews* which is universally accepted as referring to the high priesthood of Jesus.”³⁸ That same year Robert A. Briggs claimed—without exaggerating interpretive support—that “there can be little doubt” that no matter how Christ is portrayed elsewhere in Rev 1, “Christ is a priest there, certainly a high priest in light of His person.”³⁹ According to Briggs, Jesus is “the great High Priest tending seven menorot (1:12-13).”⁴⁰

³⁷Comblin, *Le Christ dans l'Apocalypse*, 188:

³⁸Stökl, “Yom Kippur,” 365; cf. *ibid.*, nn. 61 and 62. Despite the passage of more than 30 years between these two statements, both overexaggerated the scholarly acceptance of high priestly imagery in Revelation. A more reasonable and representative conclusion is that of Osborne, who admits that “scholars are divided” over the interpretation of 1:13 (*Revelation*, 89). A year later Stökl modified his earlier assertion, stating that Rev 1:13 “has the widest support” among other NT texts “alluding” to Jesus Christ’s high priesthood (Stökl Ben Ezra, *Impact of Yom Kippur*, 196).

³⁹Briggs, *Jewish Temple Imagery*, 53-54. He notes that the setting of the seven menorahs supports this identity, since it was the role of the high priest to set and take care of them (*ibid.*).

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, 221, n. 14.

Similarly forceful assertions supporting a high priestly identity, derived from dress imagery and other data, have continued into the twenty-first century. In 2003 John Ben-Daniel and Gloria Ben-Daniel, in one of their many statements supporting a recognition of high priestly imagery for Jesus in Revelation, concluded that the figure in Rev 1:13 “represents no ordinary priest in the service of the heavenly Sanctuary, but rather the one with the greatest authority: the high priest.”⁴¹ And in 2006 Ian Boxall, in his discussion of 1:13, proposed: “The juxtaposition of the seven menorahs, evoking Temple worship, and the description of Christ’s clothing strongly suggests that John sees the son of man figure as High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary.”⁴² In his later discussion of 21:19-21, he was even more forceful: “the Lamb . . . has already appeared to John in the guise of the heavenly high priest.”⁴³ And he further noted the potential significance of this understanding: “We know from Hebrews that the understanding of Christ as High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary was able to emerge within New Testament Christianity; Rev 1 suggests that Hebrews might not be as unique in its christology as is sometimes assumed.”⁴⁴

Margaret Barker has been the most vocal proponent in recent years of seeing

⁴¹John Ben-Daniel and Gloria Ben-Daniel, *The Apocalypse in the Light of the Temple: A New Approach to the Book of Revelation* (Jerusalem: Beit-Yochanan, 2003), 25; cf. also their explicit identification of Jesus as high priest in Revelation on pp. 26-27, 31-32, 44-45, and 71.

⁴²Boxall, *Revelation of Saint John*, 42.

⁴³*Ibid.*, 305.

⁴⁴*Ibid.* He also notes the setting of the menorahs and states that Christ’s stance in their middle “may evoke the high-priestly role of mediator and intercessor (e.g., Heb. 7:25)” (*ibid.*, 42-43).

high priestly imagery for Jesus Christ in Revelation.⁴⁵ She radically differs from the negative assessment regarding high priestly imagery both broadly in the NT as well as more narrowly in Revelation. In her commentary on Revelation, Barker states: “*The picture of Jesus as the great high priest in all his roles and aspects appears throughout the New Testament and is the key to understanding all early Christian teaching about him.*”⁴⁶ Moreover, she boldly asserts that Revelation is “steeped in the imagery of high priesthood”⁴⁷ and, more remarkably, “the high priest is the key figure in the book of Revelation.”⁴⁸ Her sweeping, positive assessment, in comparison with the negative, absolutist positions mentioned above, demonstrates both that there is a broad spectrum of belief with regard to this issue and that this broad spectrum represents a scholarly standoff.⁴⁹

Purpose of the Research

The question to answer in my proposed research is not, however, How much

⁴⁵Cf. Barker, *The Risen Lord: The Jesus of History as the Christ of Faith* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1996), 50-53, 74-75, 110, 136; idem, *Revelation*, 11, 40-41, 66, 84-90, 102, 105, 109, 266, 306-308; idem, *The Great High Priest: The Temple Roots of Christian Liturgy* (London: T & T Clark, 2003), 105, 114; idem, *The Hidden Tradition of the Kingdom of God* (London: SPCK, 2007), 84-85, 91, 100; and idem, *Creation: A Biblical Vision for the Environment* (London: T & T Clark, 2010), 98-99, 126.

⁴⁶Barker, *Revelation*, 4; cf. idem, *Great High Priest*, 139.

⁴⁷Barker, *Revelation*, 40-41.

⁴⁸Ibid., 35. For example, she sees Rev 1 depicting Jesus as the high priest (ibid., 84-85, 102; idem, *Great High Priest*, 105) and Rev 19 portraying Jesus as the warrior high priest (*Revelation*, 303-315; idem, *Great High Priest*, 114).

⁴⁹Again, notice Osborne’s assessment that “scholars are divided” over the interpretation of Rev 1:13 (*Revelation*, 89).

high priestly imagery with regard to Jesus Christ is present in Revelation? Rather, because of the sometimes strident disagreements among interpreters of Revelation, the more basic question is, Does high priestly imagery with regard to Jesus appear at all in Revelation? Further, if high priestly imagery in reference to Jesus does appear in Revelation, does it denote or portray a functional high priestly christology?⁵⁰ In other words, if high priestly imagery in reference to Jesus does appear in Revelation, is it more than visually descriptive? And again, if it does appear in Revelation, does it signify that Jesus has a high priestly role or function and engages in high priestly activity?

Baigent utilized four evidentiary criteria to determine whether supposed NT evidence supported a possible high priestly portrayal of Christ outside of Hebrews: (1) distinctive high priestly functions; (2) place of such functions; (3) distinctive clothing; and/or (4) genealogical qualifications.⁵¹ These appear to be reasonable criteria for one to utilize in searching for such imagery. Criterion number four is not applicable to Revelation since it contains no genealogies. As a way of helping to resolve the impasse over the question of the presence or absence of high priestly imagery with regard to Jesus in Revelation, I have chosen to limit my research in Revelation to an investigation of just one of the remaining three criteria: distinctive clothing or dress.

Here it is important to note that I qualify “distinctive” not as a reference to

⁵⁰Cf. Deborah W. Rooke, “Kingship as Priesthood: The Relationship between the High Priesthood and the Monarchy,” in *King and Messiah in Israel and the Ancient Near East: Proceedings of the Oxford Old Testament Seminar*, ed. John Day, JSOTSup 270 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1998), 188-90.

⁵¹Baigent, “Jesus as Priest,” 34.

something unique, but rather to what may help one to identify the person wearing such dress. While the headgear and type of fabric utilized by the priests distinguished them from the ordinary people,⁵² it was not unique to them, since the high priest also wore similar dress. The high priest's dress was both the same as and different from that of the ordinary priests. Elements that were the same as the ordinary priests, however, could contribute to an understanding of his high priestly role when seen in combination with other elements.

In his recent study of dress in Revelation, Dietmar Neufeld noted the adage that "what you wear is what you are."⁵³ The high priest's dress was a key indicator of his identity and status in Israelite society: Leviticus, for instance, describes the (high) priest as the one who has been consecrated to wear the garments (21:10), while Numbers provides the only biblical example of the transfer of authority between one high priest and a new one by narrating Moses stripping Aaron of his high priestly dress and vesting Aaron's son Eleazar with it (20:23-28).⁵⁴ Analysis of high priestly dress imagery thus

⁵²E. P. Sanders similarly concludes that the dress of the common priests was "distinctive" (*Judaism: Practice and Belief: 63 BCE - 66 CE* [London: SCM; Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1992; second impression with corrections, 1994], 96). Reasons for their distinctive nature included the lack of headgear and the rare use of linen in the dress of the common person, and so forth (*ibid.*). On the "distinctive" dress that the high priest wears, see, e.g., Fletcher-Louis, "Messiah: Part II," 59.

⁵³Neufeld, "Under the Cover of Clothing: Scripted Clothing Performances in the Apocalypse of John," *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 35 (2005): 67.

⁵⁴See the discussion in Deborah W. Rooke, "The Day of Atonement as a Ritual of Validation for the High Priest," in *Temple and Worship in Biblical Israel*, ed. John Day, Library of Hebrew Bible / Old Testament Studies 422 (London: T & T Clark, 2005), 348, n. 18, and 350. In later tradition the high priest who wore the high priestly garments was differentiated from the high priest who was anointed, since the anointing

presents itself as an important indicator not only of identity but also of the role and functions of the one thus identified, particularly when texts do not explicitly describe the one so identified as high priest.⁵⁵

Scholarly analysis of dress for information regarding either priestly or high priestly depiction, identity, role, and/or function has yielded both positive and negative conclusions with regard to the dress of a number of figures outside of the book of Revelation. These dress analyses have focused on such figures as: Adam in Sirach, *Jubilees*, and later Jewish literature⁵⁶ as well as in the Syriac tradition;⁵⁷ Abel in the

oil was believed to have been hidden during the time of King Josiah and no longer available (*m. Hor.* 3:4; *b. Hor.* 12a; *b. Ker.* 5b; cf. the discussion in Barker, *Great High Priest*, 78).

⁵⁵Neufeld, “Under the Cover,” 70; cf. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts*, 123. Notice the perceptive comments of John R. Yeatts, who asserted with reference to Rev 1:13: “The symbolic significance of the Son of Man’s attire aids our understanding of his role and identity” (*Revelation*, Believers Church Bible Commentary [Scottsdale, PA: Herald, 2003], 41). The scope and depth of Yeatts’s discussion, however, is restricted by the general nature of his commentary.

⁵⁶Cf. the discussion in C. T. R. Hayward, *The Jewish Temple: A Non-Biblical Sourcebook* (London: Routledge, 1996), 44-47; Stephen N. Lambden, “From Fig Leaves to Fingernails: Some Notes on the Garments of Adam and Eve in the Hebrew Bible and Select Early Postbiblical Jewish Writings,” in *A Walk in the Garden: Biblical, Iconographical and Literary Images of Eden*, ed. Paul Morris and Deborah Sawyer, JSOTSup 136 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992), 79-82, 89; Joel Marcus, “Son of Man as Son of Adam,” *Revue biblique* 110 (2003): 374; J. T. A. G. M. van Ruiten, *Primaeval History Interpreted: The Rewriting of Genesis 1-11 in the Book of Jubilees*, JSJSup 66 (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 88, 107; and William N. Wilder, “Illumination and Investiture: The Royal Significance of the Tree of Wisdom in Genesis 3,” *Westminster Theological Journal* 68 (2006): 57-58.

⁵⁷Sebastian Brock, “Clothing Metaphors as a Means of Theological Expression in Syriac Tradition,” in *Typus, Symbol, Allegorie bei den östlichen Vätern und ihren Parallelen im Mittelalter: Internationales Kolloquium, Eichstätt 1981*, ed. Margot Schmidt in cooperation with Carl Friedrich Geyer, Eichstätter Beiträge: Abteilung Philosophie und Theologie 4 (Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet, 1982), 11-38, particularly p. 20; and Alexander Golitzin, “‘Recovering the ‘Glory of Adam’: ‘Divine Light’

Apocalypse of Moses;⁵⁸ Enoch in *1 Enoch*;⁵⁹ Enoch-Metatron in *3 Enoch*;⁶⁰ Noah in 1QapGen 6:4 and 1Q19 13 2;⁶¹ both Joseph⁶² and the mysterious bees⁶³ in *Joseph and Aseneth*;⁶⁴ God in the book of Daniel;⁶⁵ the King of Tyre in Ezekiel;⁶⁶ the angel

Traditions and the Christian Ascetical Literature of Fourth-Century Syro-Mesopotamia,” in *The Dead Sea Scrolls as Background to Postbiblical Judaism and Early Christianity: Papers from an International Conference at St. Andrews in 2001*, ed. James R. Davila, STDJ 46 (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 283.

⁵⁸The *Apocalypse of Moses* is the Greek version of the *Life of Adam and Eve*. On the name of Abel, see S. T. Lachs, “Some Textual Observations on the Apocalypsis Mosis and the Vita Adae et Evae,” *JSJ* 13 (1982): 172-73; and Lambden, “Fig Leaves,” 80. Cf. the discussion of this in Crispin H. T. Fletcher-Louis, *All the Glory of Adam: Liturgical Anthropology in the Dead Sea Scrolls*, STDJ 42 (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 18, and the lack of discussion by Johannes Tromp, “Cain and Abel in the Greek and Armenian/Georgian Recensions of the *Life of Adam and Eve*,” in *Literature on Adam and Eve: Collected Essays*, ed. Gary A. Anderson, Michael E. Stone, and Johannes Tromp, *Studia in Veteris Testamenti pseudepigrapha* 15 (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 278-82.

⁵⁹Stökl ben Ezra, *Impact of Yom Kippur*, 82-83.

⁶⁰Martha Himmelfarb, *Ascent to Heaven in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 45.

⁶¹Fletcher-Louis, *Glory of Adam*, 44-45.

⁶²Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts*, 165; idem, *Glory of Adam*, 30; and cf. Jung Hoon Kim, *The Significance of Clothing Imagery in the Pauline Corpus*, JSNTSup 268 (London: T & T Clark, 2004), 62-63.

⁶³Gideon Bohak, *Joseph and Aseneth and the Jewish Temple in Heliopolis*, *Early Judaism and Its Literature* 10 (Atlanta: Scholars, 1996), 1-18, particularly pp. 11-12. Cf. discussion of Bohak’s controversial priestly hypothesis in John J. Collins, “*Joseph and Aseneth*: Jewish or Christian?” *JSP* 14 (2005): 110-11; Fletcher-Louis, *Glory of Adam*, 30; Edith M. Humphrey, *Joseph and Aseneth*, *Guides to Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha* (Sheffield: Academic, 2000), 97-98; idem, “On Bees and Best Guesses: The Problem of *Sitz im Leben* from Internal Evidence as Illustrated by *Joseph and Aseneth*,” *Currents in Research: Biblical Studies* 7 (1999): 230-31; and Anthea E. Portier-Young, “Sweet Mercy Metropolis: Interpreting *Aseneth*’s Honeycomb,” *JSP* 14 (2005): 141, n. 24.

⁶⁴On Collins’s reference to the consensus dating before 100 CE, see Collins, “*Joseph and Aseneth*,” 106, 109-111; cf. Susan Docherty, “*Joseph and Aseneth*:

Iaovel/Yaovel in the *Apocalypse of Abraham*;⁶⁷ the “chiefs” in the XIIIth Song of the *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice* (4Q405 23 II and related fragments);⁶⁸ Jesus in the Gospel of Mark and the crucifixion narrative of the Gospel of John;⁶⁹ Jesus in the Epistle to the Hebrews;⁷⁰ the eschatological Jesus in *Barnabas*;⁷¹ and the apostles

Rewritten Bible or Narrative Expansion?” *JSJ* 35 (2004): 31.

⁶⁵Athalya Brenner, “On Color and the Sacred in the Hebrew Bible,” in *The Language of Color in the Mediterranean: An Anthology on Linguistic and Ethnographic Aspects of Color Terms*, ed. Alexander Borg, Acta universitatis Stockholmiensis: Stockholm Oriental Studies 16 (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1999), 204, n. 14, where Brenner remarks on God’s description in Dan 7:9, where his clothing is as white as snow and his hair like pure wool: “In fact, God in Dan. 7 is depicted as a priest.”

⁶⁶Gary A. Anderson, “Ezekiel 28, the Fall of Satan, and the Adam Books,” in *Literature on Adam and Eve*, 137-38; Daphna Arbel, “Questions About Eve’s Iniquity, Beauty, and Fall: The ‘Primal Figure’ in Ezekiel 28:11-19 and *Genesis Rabbah* Traditions of Eve,” *JBL* 124 (2005): 644, 646; Fletcher-Louis, *Glory of Adam*, 18-19; Lambden, “Fig Leaves,” 79; and Marcus, “Part II: Exegesis,” 374, n. 14.

⁶⁷Fletcher-Louis, *Glory of Adam*, 355, n. 89, and 362; Himmelfarb, *Ascent to Heaven*, 62 and 136-37, n. 54; and Christopher C. Rowland, “The Vision of the Risen Christ in Rev. i. 13ff.: The Debt of an Early Christology to an Aspect of Jewish Angelology,” *JTS*, n.s., 31 (1980): 6-7.

⁶⁸Fletcher-Louis, *Glory of Adam*, 356-91.

⁶⁹For Mark see Fletcher-Louis, “Messiah: Part II,” 66-70. For John cf., e.g., Bond, “Discarding the Seamless Robe,” 183-94; Heil, “Unique High Priest,” 729-45; Kerr, *Temple*, 319-21; and Ignace de la Potterie, “La tunique ‘non divisée’ de Jésus, symbole de l’unité messianique,” in *The New Testament Age: Essays in Honor of Bo Reicke*, ed. William C. Weinrich (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1984), 1:132-33.

⁷⁰Peter J. Leithart, “Womb of the World: Baptism and the Priesthood of the New Covenant in Hebrews 10.19-22,” *JSNT* 78 (2000): 58. Cf. Craig R. Koester, *Hebrews: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 36 (New York: Doubleday, 2001), 217.

⁷¹Stökl, “Yom Kippur,” 365. Cf. idem (as Stökl ben Ezra), *Impact of Yom Kippur*, 160.

James⁷² and John⁷³ and the disciple Mark⁷⁴ in works by later Christians. Consequently, the attractiveness and potential usefulness of an exegetical approach to Revelation utilizing dress analysis for ascertaining a high priestly identity for Jesus is not only reasonable but self-evident.

Justification for the Research

This study would be significant for at least six reasons. First, the distinctiveness of the dress of the high priest contributed to the electric influence it conveyed during the time of the Second Temple. Martha Himmelfarb observes that during the Second Temple period “the high priest’s vestments were the object of considerable interest.”⁷⁵

⁷²See the discussion of early Christian accounts of James wearing the golden ornament (πέταλον) worn on the forehead by the high priest—as well as only linen and never woolen garments—in, e.g., Richard Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses: The Gospels as Eyewitness Testimony* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 445-51; idem, “Papias and Polycrates on the Origin of the Fourth Gospel,” in *The Testimony of the Beloved Disciple: Narrative, History, and Theology in the Gospel of John* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), 33-72, particularly 39-49 (originally published in a slightly different form in *JTS*, n.s., 44 [1993]: 24-69, particularly 31-42); J. H. Bernard, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. John*, ed. A. H. McNeile, ICC (New York: Charles Scribner’s, 1929), 2:595-96; Eisenman, *James the Brother of Jesus*, 256, 310-313, 322-23, 344-47, 478-79, 565-66; John J. Gunther, “The Elder John, Author of Revelation,” *JSNT* 11 (1981): 12; and Stökl ben Ezra, *Impact of Yom Kippur*, 246-50.

⁷³John was described towards the end of the second century by Polycrates, bishop of Ephesus (Eusebius *Hist. eccl.* 3.31.3 and 5.24.3), who noted that he wore the πέταλον. See the discussion in, e.g., Bauckham, “Papias and Polycrates,” 33-37, 39-44; Bernard, *John*, 2:594-97; Gunther, “The Elder John,” 12-13; Lupieri, *Commentary on the Apocalypse*, 259; Maria-Luisa Rigato, “L’«apostolo ed evangelista Giovanni», «sacerdote» levitico,” *Revista biblica* 38 (1990): 451-83, particularly 461-64; and Stökl ben Ezra, *Impact of Yom Kippur*, 256.

⁷⁴Bernard, *John*, 2:595-96.

⁷⁵Himmelfarb, *Ascent to Heaven*, 19.

Both Ben Sira (Sir 50:5-12) and Aristeas (*Let. Aris.* 96-99), for instance, rapturously wrote of the almost overwhelming impact of the dress of the high priest on them as they observed the high priest in his cultic responsibilities. Furthermore, the dress of the high priest was such a potent force during the time of the Roman occupation of Judea that the Romans treated it as a plausibly dangerous political icon; Josephus indicates that the high priest's multicolored vestments, understood to represent the cosmos, were kept under lock and key for significant portions of time during the Roman control of Judea in the first century CE (*A.J.* 15.403-409; 18.90-95; 20.6-16).⁷⁶ This study would underscore the significant role such dress plays in Revelation.

Second, there remains no current scholarly consensus as to whether high priestly imagery with reference to Jesus Christ even exists in Revelation. Both proponents and opponents of such a position have staked out their relatively brief claims, and there appears to be no resolution in sight. Moreover, despite the sometimes heated scholarly convictions regarding the presence or absence of high priestly imagery in relation to Jesus, I am not aware of any sustained scholarly work on the topic.⁷⁷ This study could

⁷⁶See, e.g., the discussion by Miriam Pucci Ben Zeev, "La sovranità sopra i paramenti del sommo sacerdote: un capitolo nei rapporti ebraico-romani," in *Gli ebrei nell'impero romano: saggi vari: a cura di Ariel Lewin*, ed. D. Asheri, A. Lewin, and R. Volponi (Florence: Giuntina, 2001), 99-112; E. Mary Smallwood, "The Date of the Dismissal of Pontius Pilate from Judæa," *JJS* 5 (1954): 12-21; idem, *The Jews Under Roman Rule: From Pompey to Diocletian: A Study in Political Relations* (Boston: Brill, 2001), 74, 149, 172-73, 260-61; and James C. VanderKam, *From Joshua to Caiaphas: High Priests after the Exile* (Minneapolis: Fortress; Assen: Van Gorcum, 2004), 432-434.

⁷⁷One of the few who has attempted a detailed case for Christ's high priestly ministry from the book of Revelation is Mario Veloso ("The Doctrine of the Sanctuary and the Atonement as Reflected in the Book of Revelation," in *The Sanctuary and the Atonement: Biblical, Historical, and Theological Studies*, ed. Arnold V. Wallenkampf

both fill in the gap and help provide a resolution to the scholarly standoff.

Third, I am unaware of any published study that utilizes dress allusion and/or dress meaning in order to ascertain in a detailed manner the role-related identity of any character in Revelation. The dress of Jesus in Revelation has not been analyzed in order to ascertain any role-related meaning or identity for him. Such an analysis could provide answers to the question of whether Revelation portrays a high priestly identity for Jesus.⁷⁸

Fourth, this study would help further elucidate the theological relationship between the two most cultic works in the NT: the Epistle to the Hebrews, and Revelation. As mentioned earlier, some christologies of Revelation have seen no significance in any potential high priestly imagery for Jesus.⁷⁹ The results of this study would enable scholars to better relate the high priestly theology of Hebrews to high priestly imagery for Jesus in the book of Revelation.

Fifth, such a study would potentially force a re-opening of the debate regarding the origin of high priestly christology in Hebrews. The earlier one dates Revelation, the

and W. Richard Leshar [Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1981], 394-419). This work, however, does not focus on Christ's ministry as high priest. Rather, the emphasis is on the overall sanctuary symbolism in Revelation.

⁷⁸Alberto Treiyer is one who does not believe that dress analysis would help: "The symbolism of the priestly garments could not be applied to Jesus, without causing confusion in a time when people had the twisted picture of the rabbinic tradition" (*The Day of Atonement and the Heavenly Judgment: From the Pentateuch to Revelation* [Siloam Springs, AR: Creation Enterprises International, 1992], 100, n. 95).

⁷⁹E.g., Edwards, "Christological Perspectives," 139-54; Guthrie, "Christology," 397-409; and Talbert, "Christology of the Apocalypse," 166-84.

more significant this question would be.⁸⁰ In any case, exegetes would need to add the question of the origins of high priestly christological imagery in Revelation to the overall equation. But no matter what date is assigned to either Hebrews or Revelation, the relationship between Hebrews and Revelation in terms of the utilization of high priestly christological imagery would need to be addressed.

Finally, the results from this study would potentially provide a stronger exegetical basis from the book of Revelation for a broader and richer understanding of the high priestly activity and ministry of Jesus that one finds so explicit in the Epistle to the Hebrews.⁸¹ Some who see high priestly imagery for Jesus in Rev 1 go no further with this christological theme.⁸² It is also unfortunate that a number of books and

⁸⁰George H. van Kooten observes that “there seems to be a growing conviction of an early, Neronian date of Revelation” among some recent commentators (“The Year of the Four Emperors and the Revelation of John: The ‘pro-Neronian’ Emperors Otho and Vitellius, and the Images and Colossus of Nero in Rome,” *JSNT* 30 [2007]: 209, n. 9). Nevertheless, scholars typically date Revelation in the mid-60s or the mid-90s, with the consensus supporting the mid-90s. For a succinct survey of these possibilities, see Grant R. Osborne, “Recent Trends in the Study of the Apocalypse,” in *The Face of New Testament: A Survey of Recent Research*, ed. Scot McKnight and Grant R. Osborne (Grand Rapids: Baker; Leicester, UK: Apollos, 2004), 479-80, and idem, *Revelation*, 6-9. For the purposes of this study, I assume that the mid-90s is the date by which time the canonical Revelation was completed.

⁸¹Despite Veloso’s detailed description of Jesus’ high priestly ministry as described and inferred from Revelation (“Doctrine,” 402-11), he equates the angel of Rev 8:3-5 with Jesus in his high priestly ministry by flatly asserting that “no doubt it was Christ” (ibid., 404), but he provides no argument or even evidence for his assertion.

⁸²Joy D. Tetley subscribes to the possibility that Rev 1:12-16 may be attempting to portray Jesus as high priest, but then she concludes that “there is no obvious development of a sacerdotal Christology in the rest of the work” (“The Priesthood of Christ as the Controlling Theme of the Epistle to the Hebrews” [PhD diss., University of Durham, 1987], 85). Cf. the similar conclusion earlier by Holtz, *Christologie*, 119.

Stuckenbruck’s solution to this apparent dilemma presupposes that John saw this imagery to be angelomorphic instead of priestly (*Angel Veneration*, 228, n. 63). On the

articles that do subscribe to a high priestly identity of Jesus in Revelation focus on and explain in detail Revelation's sanctuary architecture, furnishings, or cultic calendar rather than demonstrating a rationale for and evidence of his high priestly identity.⁸³

This study would help rectify such a deficiency.

Scope and Delimitations of the Research

In order to focus and prudently manage such a study as this, one must delimit its scope. I have, consequently, delimited three aspects of its potential scope: its methodology, its terminology, and its textual focus.

Delimitations of Methodology

Delimiting this study's methodology involves two facets of high priestly dress analysis that I will pursue. First, though a discussion of the meaning of the dress of the

meaning of angelomorphic christology, see, e.g., Charles A. Gieschen, who has identified angelomorphic christology as "the identification of Christ with angelic form and functions, either before or after the incarnation, whether or not he is specifically identified as an angel" (*Angelomorphic Christology: Antecedents and Early Evidence*, *Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums* 42 [Leiden: Brill, 1998], 28; cf. *ibid.*, 7-25). More recently, Hoffmann has defined it as "a means of portraying a figure by relating it to the angelic world without implying that it actually represents an angel" (*The Destroyer and the Lamb*, 28; cf. *ibid.*, 1-28). It was Jean Daniélou who first utilized the term translated in English as "angelomorphic christology" in 1957 ("Trinité et angéologie dans la théologie Judéo-Chrétienne" *Recherches de science religieuse* 45 [1957]: 41). See also his *Théologie du Judéo-Christianisme: Histoire des doctrines Chrétiennes avant Nicée*, Bibliothèque de théologie (Tournai: Desclée, 1958), 198. John A. Baker later translated this work into English (*The Theology of Jewish Christianity*, trans. and ed. John A. Baker [London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1964], 146).

⁸³Of the works cited near the beginning of this introductory chapter that support the high priestly identity of Jesus from the standpoint of Revelation, not one attempts a detailed examination of this theme in the book of Revelation.

high priest is a foundational part of this study, such an overview could easily overshadow or even overwhelm the rest of the research, since scholars have written detailed works on both the general dress of the high priest⁸⁴ as well as more narrowly focused studies on various aspects of such dress.⁸⁵ For this reason my discussion here is not an exhaustive analysis of all aspects of the high priest's dress but rather a more generalized survey or overview.

And second, primary texts I survey focus mostly on those that do not date beyond 100 CE, a somewhat arbitrary *terminus ad quem* that generally agrees with the scholarly consensus regarding the date of the Revelation.⁸⁶ Thus, primary sources here

⁸⁴E.g., Christine Elizabeth Palmer's 196-page thesis, "Garments of Glory: The High Priestly Reflection of Yahweh" (M.A. thesis, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, 1997).

⁸⁵E.g., ranging from Cornelis Houtman's "On the Pomegranates and the Golden Bells of the High Priest's Mantle" (*VetT* 40 [1990]: 223-29) to Cornelis Van Dam's 296-page monograph, *The Urim and Thummim: A Means of Revelation in Ancient Israel* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1997).

⁸⁶I work with the assumption that the mid-90s is the date by which time the canonical Revelation was completed (the contemporary academic consensus). For recent discussion outside of the commentaries on the dating of Revelation, cf. Henk Jan de Jonge, "The Apocalypse of John and the Imperial Cult," in *Kykeon: Studies in Honour of H. S. Versnel*, ed. H. F. J. Horstmanshoff et al., Religions in the Graeco-Roman World 142 (Leiden: Brill, 2002): 127-41; Jörg Frey, "The Relevance of the Roman Imperial Cult for the Book of Revelation: Exegetical and Hermeneutical Reflections on the Relation Between the Seven Letters and the Visionary Main Part of the Book," in *The New Testament and Early Christian Literature in Greco-Roman Context: Studies in Honor of David E. Aune*, ed. John Fotopoulos, NovTSup 22 (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 233-36; Steven J. Friesen, *Imperial Cults and the Apocalypse of John: Reading Revelation in the Ruins* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 136-51; Mark L. Hitchcock, "A Defense of the Domitianic Date of the Book of Revelation" (PhD diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 2006); John W. Marshall, *Parables of War: Reading John's Jewish Apocalypse*, Studies in Christianity and Judaism / Études sur le christianisme et le judaïsme 10 (Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2001), 88-97; Floyd O. Parker, "'Our Lord and God' in Rev 4,11: Evidence for the Late Date

include germane texts from the HB and LXX, the Apocrypha, the DSS, the writings of Philo and Josephus, the NT, and selections of the Pseudepigrapha and Apostolic Fathers. Nevertheless, since later traditions (including the Gnostic corpus, Rabbinic writings, Merkabah literature, and the Avodah piyyutim) do at times contain material that scholars have traced back to earlier traditions, these are not ignored.⁸⁷

of Revelation?” *Bib* 82 (2001): 207-31; Gonzalo Rojas-Flores, “The *Book of Revelation* and the First Years of Nero’s Reign,” *Bib* 85 (2004): 375-92; Thomas B. Slater, “Dating the Apocalypse to John,” *Bib* 84 (2003): 252-58; Kooten, “Year of the Four Emperors,” 205-48; Mark Wilson, “The Early Christians in Ephesus and the Date of Revelation, Again,” *Neotestamentica* 39 (2005): 163-93; and Thomas Witulski, *Die Johannesoffenbarung und Kaiser Hadrian: Studien zur Datierung der neutestamentlichen Apokalypse*, Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neues Testaments 221 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2007).

⁸⁷On the difficulties of dating rabbinic material and their relationship to the NT, see especially Jacob Neusner, *Rabbinic Literature & the New Testament: What We Cannot Show, We Do Not Know* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1994). He contends, for instance: “I call into question errors, not of fact but of method, that render historically useless scholarship on New Testament history and exegesis that calls uncritically upon rabbinic literature. That means, of course, most scholarship that appeals to rabbinic literature at all” (ibid., x). In discussing the targumic and midrashic evidence adduced by Beale in his discussion of the “beasts of the earth” in Rev 6:8, Stephen Pattemore concludes that they “can only be used with caution, since the texts themselves are too late to constitute a cognitive environment for Revelation” (*The People of God in the Apocalypse: Discourse, Structure, and Exegesis*, SNTMS 128 [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004], 72). On the uncertainties involved in dating the targums, cf. also Martin McNamara, “Some Targum Themes,” in *The Complexities of Second Temple Judaism*, vol. 1 of *Justification and Variegated Nomism*, ed. D. A. Carson, Peter T. O’Brien, and Mark A. Seifrid, WUNT, 2nd ser., 140 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), 303-306; and idem, *Targum and Testament Revisited: Aramaic Paraphrases of the Hebrew Bible: A Light on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 129-38.

As for the historicity of the Mishnah in terms of its version of temple rituals, see Stökl Ben Ezra, *Impact of Yom Kippur*, 19-28, who compellingly concludes that its problematic references and “rabbinic inventions” sometimes stem from exegesis or ritualistic analogy rather than historical recollection (ibid., 23). Cf., however, Louis H. Feldman, “Rabbinic Sources for Historical Study,” in *Judaism and Hellenism Reconsidered*, JSJSup 107 (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 763-81 (originally published in *Judaism in Late Antiquity*, Part 3: *Where We Stand: Issues and Debates in Ancient*

Delimitation of Terminology

Is what one wears all that matters when it comes to describing and analyzing clothing? Social scientists would reply in the negative. Such terms as appearance, adornment or ornament, apparel, clothing, costume, dress, and fashion capture the spectrum of possible taxonomical approaches to use in this study.⁸⁸ At first glance use of the terminology of costume appears preferable, since costume includes dress for such things as ceremonies, festivals, and rituals,⁸⁹ and one could not deny that the dress of the

Judaism [Leiden: Brill, 1999], 213-30).

Cf. also Philip S. Alexander, "Jewish Aramaic Translations of Hebrew Scriptures," in *Mikra: Text, Translation, Reading and Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, ed. Martin Jan Mulder, *Compendia rerum iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum*, sec. 2, vol. 1 (Assen/Maastricht: Van Gorcum; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988), 238-47; Andrew Chester, *Divine Revelation and Divine Titles in the Pentateuchal Targumim*, *Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum* 14 (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1986), 252-59; idem, "Jewish Messianic Expectations and Mediatorial Figures and Pauline Christology," in *Paulus und das antike Judentum: Tübingen-Durham-Symposium in Gedenken an den 50. Todestag Adolf Schlatters (†19.Mai 1938)*, ed. Martin Hengel and Ulrich Heckel (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 2001), 40, 80-81; Bruce D. Chilton, "Rabbinic Literature: Targumim," *DNTB* (2000), 902-909; and Jacob Neusner, "Rabbinic Literature: Mishnah and Tosefta," *DNTB* (2000), 896-97.

An excellent English introduction to the Avodah piyyutim literature, which contains detailed poetic descriptions of the high priest's garments, is Michael D. Swartz and Joseph Yahalom, eds. and trans., *Avodah: An Anthology of Ancient Poetry for Yom Kippur*, The Penn State Library of Jewish Literature (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005).

⁸⁸See Mary Ellen Roach-Higgins and Joanne B. Eicher, "Dress and Identity," in *Dress and Identity*, ed. Mary Ellen Roach-Higgins, Joanne B. Eicher, and Kim K. P. Johnson (New York: Fairchild, 1995), 7-18, particularly 7-10 on the taxonomy of dress (originally published in *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal* 10 [1992]: 1-8). I refer to the reprinted essay.

⁸⁹Roach-Higgins and Eicher proposed that "costume be reserved for use in discussion of dress for the theater, folk or other festivals, ceremonies, and rituals" (*ibid.*, 10). Cf. Hilda Kuper, who earlier suggested that the term "costume" could be reserved

Jewish high priest was certainly associated with such activities.

Upon further reflection, however, such terminological usage is not appropriate in describing the dress of the high priest. Rather, contemporary social scientists and cultural historians more typically use “costume” to refer to dress by actors, attendees at science fiction conventions, dress associated with Halloween, etc.⁹⁰ These connotations effectively negate the usefulness of costume as an appropriate and comprehensive term for the high priest’s dress. Consequently, I utilize the broader term “dress” in this study.

“for clothing necessary for the effectiveness of rituals (defined as performances with a mystical or sacred quality)” (“Costume and Identity,” *Comparative Studies in History and Society* 15 [1973]: 349), and Susan B. Kaiser, who more recently defines costume as “a style of clothes belonging to a particular cultural or historical context (often used to refer to ethnic or historical clothing, as well as clothing designed for performances or rituals-drama, Halloween, etc.)” (*The Social Psychology of Clothing: Symbolic Appearances in Context*, 2nd ed. [New York: Fairchild, 1997], 4).

⁹⁰Cf. Joanne B. Eicher, “Influences of Changing Resources on Clothing, Textiles, and the Quality of Life: Dressing for Reality, Fun, and Fantasy,” in *Combined Proceedings, Eastern, Central, and Western Regional Meetings of the Association of College Professors of Textiles and Clothing* (Burke, VA: The Association, 1981), 36-41; Joanne B. Eicher and Kimberly A. Miller, “Dress and the Public, Private, and Secret Self: Revisiting a Model,” in *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the International Textiles and Apparel Association, October 19-23, 1994, Minneapolis, MN*, ed. Christine M. Ladisch (Monument, CO: International Textiles and Apparel Association, 1994), 145; Kimberly A. Miller-Spillman, “Playing Dress-Up: Childhood Memories of Dress,” in *The Meanings of Dress*, ed. Mary Lynn Damhorst, Kimberly A. Miller-Spillman, and Susan O. Michelman (New York: Fairchild, 2005), 274-75, 279-80; and Kimberly A. Miller, Cynthia R. Jasper, and Donald R. Hill, “Costume and the Perception of Identity and Role,” *Perceptual and Motor Skills* 72 (1991): 807-13.

That the high priest’s dress would not be considered costume can be seen in Nathan Joseph’s assertion that “the characteristic of a costume that differentiates it from all other forms of apparel is its open proclamation of departures in behavior” (*Uniforms and Nonuniforms: Communicating Through Clothing*, Copenhagen International Seminar 61 [New York: Greenwood, 1986], 184). He further defines this by making the following clarification: “Whereas ordinary dress and uniforms declare their wearers’ group affiliations and statuses, costume announces that the wearer is stepping out of character and into a new constellation of imaginary or unusual social relationships” (ibid.).

As such, it is more appropriate to refer to the dress of the high priest in terms of occupational or role-related dress.⁹¹ In this study I use the latter terminology to address this narrowed focus on identity via dress.⁹² An American police officer's uniform, for instance, exemplifies role-related dress, since most Americans have a generally clear picture of what she or he would wear.⁹³ Such terminology applied to high priestly dress would consequently include not only body enclosures (e.g., a robe) but also such dress items as headgear (e.g., a crown or turban) and accessories (e.g., hand-held items).⁹⁴

Delimitation of Textual Focus

The perception and interpretation of dress can aid one in establishing personal, social, and role-related identities.⁹⁵ High priestly identity is primarily a role-related

⁹¹Notice Roach-Higgins and Eicher's reference to this latter terminology in their defense of dress as a gender-neutral collective noun ("Dress and Identity," 16, n. 1).

⁹²I see role-related dress as a better fit with clerical (i.e., clergy, priests, etc.) identity than occupational dress, since occupational terminology is less neutral and has more secular connotations.

⁹³With regard to role-related dress, see Kimberly A. Miller-Spillman, "Dress in the Workplace," in *Meanings of Dress*, 221.

⁹⁴On analyzing accessories in dress interpretation, see, e.g., Neufeld, "Under the Cover," 68; Roach-Higgins and Eicher, "Dress and Identity," 7; and Grace Q. Vicary, "The Signs of Clothing," in *Cross-Cultural Perspectives in Nonverbal Communication*, ed. Fernando Poyatos (Toronto: C. J. Hogrefe, 1988), 293-94.

⁹⁵See, e.g., Marilyn J. Horn and Lois M. Gurel, *The Second Skin: An Interdisciplinary Study of Clothing*, 3rd ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1981), 30-34 and 186-204; Kaiser, *Social Psychology of Clothing*, 272, 321; Neufeld, "Under the Cover," 68; Roach-Higgins and Eicher, "Dress and Identity," 11; Jane Schneider and Annette B. Weiner, "Introduction," in *Cloth and Human Experience*, ed. Annette B. Weiner and Jane Schneider (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 1989), 1; and Penny Storm, *Functions of Dress: Tool of Culture and the Individual* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1987), 102-208.

identity. The question is thus whether dress imagery in Revelation indicates a high priestly role-related identity for Jesus Christ.

Revelation contains relatively few explicit references to “Jesus” (1:9; 12:17; 14:12; 17:6; 19:10; 20:4; 22:16, 20, 21), “Christ” or “Messiah” (11:15; 12:10; 20:4, 6), Jesus Christ (1:1, 2, 5), or “Lord” when clearly a reference to Jesus (11:8; 17:14; 19:16; 22:20, 21).⁹⁶ At the same time, the most ubiquitous title for Jesus in Revelation, “Lamb” (ἀρνίον), occurs twenty-eight out of twenty-nine times in reference to him—more than all of the previous references combined.⁹⁷ Yet Revelation contains no explicit or obvious dress imagery in relation to the Lamb.

Though it would initially appear that an investigation of possible role-related dress imagery with regard to Jesus in the book of Revelation would be a futile endeavor, this conclusion is premature. One must look more broadly than simply at textual units in which “Jesus,” “Christ,” “Messiah,” or “Lord” occur. For instance, John’s description of the visionary one described as ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου (“like a son of man”) in 1:13-16 contains clear dress imagery, and though there are no explicit

⁹⁶For other references to κύριος (“Lord”), see 1:8; 4:8, 11; 7:14; 11:4; 11:15, 17; 14:13; 15:3, 4; 16:7; 18:8; 19:6; 21:22; and 22:5, 6.

⁹⁷See 5:6, 8, 12, 13; 6:1, 16; 7:9, 10, 14, 17; 12:11; 13:8; 14:1, 4 (2x), 10; 15:3; 17:14 (2x); 19:7, 9; 21:9, 14, 22, 23, 27; and 22:1, 3. The other text in which it occurs is in 13:11, where the Land Beast has two horns “like a lamb” (ὅμοια ἀρνίω). John in this verse also mentions that the Land Beast “was speaking like a dragon” (ἐλάλει ὡς δράκων), but this alludes back to the Dragon mentioned most recently in 13:2. Consequently, one could similarly conclude that the reference to the Land Beast having horns like a lamb is also an implicit comparison and contrast to the Lamb most recently mentioned in 13:8; cf., e.g., Beale (*Revelation*, 707), Boxall (*Revelation of Saint John*, 193), and Osborne (*Revelation*, 511), who agree, with David E. Aune, *Revelation 6-16*, WBC 52B (Nashville: Nelson, 1998), 757, and Robert Mounce (*Revelation*, 255), who disagree.

identifications of this visionary being as Jesus Christ, exegetical opinion is of the consensus that it is.

The primary arena of scholarly contention regarding whether Revelation contains high priestly imagery for Jesus is Rev 1. Consequently, primary research in this study entails exegetical study and analysis of elements of this chapter that contain possible high priestly dress imagery, particularly 1:12-16.⁹⁸ In this passage John describes the one ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου as dressed in a foot-length robe (ποδήρης [1:13]),⁹⁹ wrapped around his chest with a golden belt/sash (περιεζωσμένον πρὸς τοῖς

⁹⁸Dress or appearance that one cannot specifically associate—either explicitly or implicitly—with high priestly role-related dress is not discussed in detail. This would include, for instance, the one ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου describing himself in 1:18 as having the keys of Death and Hades (cf. Jesus later being described as having the key of David [3:7]). In these latter two references, John does not visually describe Jesus as holding keys. “Key” imagery occurs only three times in the OT (Judg 3:25; 1 Chr 9:27; Isa 22:22) and explicitly appears there once in connection with the Levitical gatekeepers of the temple (1 Chr 9:27). The *Isaiah Targum* understood Isa 22:22—the allusive background to Rev 3:7—to refer to “Eliakim” being given the key of the sanctuary (Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, 235; see the discussion of the targum’s interpretation in Bruce D. Chilton, *The Isaiah Targum: Introduction, Translation, Apparatus and Notes*, The Aramaic Bible 11 [Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1987], 45). Furthermore, Beale, for one, has suggested that there may be priestly concerns associated with Isaiah’s prophecy about Eliakim (*Revelation*, 285). He notes that later Jewish tradition (*Midr. Rab. Exod. 37.1*) understood Eliakim as a high priest (*ibid.*). In a related vein, *2 Bar. 10:18* says that the priests are to take the keys of the sanctuary and cast them to heaven, and in *4 Bar. 4:4-5* Jeremiah throws the keys of the temple to the sun. Cf., e.g., *3 Bar. 11:2*; *b. Ta’an. 29a*; *Lev. Rab. 19:6*; *’Abot R. Nat. 4*. On this key motif, see, e.g., Rivka Ulmer, “Construction, Destruction, and Reconstruction: The Temple in *Pesiqta Rabbati*,” in *The Temple of Jerusalem: From Moses to the Messiah: In Honor of Professor Louis H. Feldman*, ed. Steven Fine, Brill Reference Library of Judaism 29 (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 116; Steven Weitzman, *Surviving Sacrilege: Cultural Persistence in Jewish Antiquity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005), 138 and 185, n. 1. Despite these intriguing possibilities, I will not discuss these texts further because Revelation does not visually portray keys as dress imagery.

⁹⁹On the ποδήρης, see LXX Exod 25:7; 28:4, 31; 29:5; 35:9; Zech 3:4; Sir 45:8; Wis 18:24.

μαστοῖς ζώνην χρυσᾶν [1:13]),¹⁰⁰ barefoot (1:15),¹⁰¹ and with feet like χαλκολιβάνω (1:15).¹⁰² Determining whether or not dress imagery here yields a role-related, high priestly identity for Jesus would potentially indicate whether it would be fruitful to look elsewhere for high priestly dress imagery for him.

Methodology of the Research

Throughout the entire dissertation, primary and secondary sources are the basis for my examination. The approach that I follow in this study is primarily exegetical. This exegetical approach includes such aspects as the examination of words (e.g., semantics, morphology, syntax), figures of speech, literary structures, contextual indicators, and background concepts and issues. I utilize all of these exegetical aspects

¹⁰⁰On the belt/sash, see Barker, who cites Josephus (*A.J.* 3.159) as proof that only the high priest wore a sash interwoven with gold (*Revelation*, 84-85). Cf. Rev 15:5, in which John describes the seven plague angels wearing golden sashes around the chest/breast (περιεζωσμένοι περὶ τὰ στήθη ζώνας χρυσᾶς) similar to the one ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου in 1:13.

¹⁰¹Since the feet (οἱ πόδες) of him can be seen, he is barefoot. Priests walked barefoot in the tabernacle and temple. See the discussion in Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar, “Bare Feet and Holy Ground: Excursive Remarks on Exodus 3:5 and Its Reception,” in *The Revelation of the Name YHWH to Moses: Perspectives from Judaism, the Pagan Graeco-Roman World, and Early Christianity*, ed. George H. van Kooten, Themes in Biblical Narrative: Jewish and Christian Traditions 9 (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 17-36.

¹⁰²This term, unique in the NT and absent from extant Greek literature before that time, is typically understood to have a meaning ranging from “brass” (GNB) and “fine brass” (KJV) to “bronze” (CEV, NIV, NLT) or “burnished bronze” (NASB, NJB, NRSV). Fletcher-Louis claims that it “attests to the enduring association of the high priesthood with incense” (*Glory of Adam*, 365). In chap. 5 I devote considerable space to investigating this unusual word.

As for the sword extending from the mouth of the one ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου and the seven stars in his right hand, these could be classified as metaphorical dress accessories, but they are not distinctive of high priestly identity.

in order to draw from the text its intended meaning.¹⁰³

In chap. 2 I review the contemporary scholarly discussion of dress, primarily in the fields of anthropology and sociology. This includes a discussion of the widespread and repeated contemporary recognition that dress can communicate vast amounts of information to the observer. Here I also illustrate how contemporary scholars overwhelmingly understand dress not only to communicate, but to communicate identity and, more specifically, role-related identity. A survey of this understanding is crucial for the topic at hand, since it demonstrates that it is not only possible but reasonable to perceive the role-related identity of Jesus in the book of Revelation via descriptions of his clothing.

But what do contemporary understandings of dress have to do with the ancient world? In chap. 3 I survey examples from the ancient world in order to demonstrate that such contemporary discussion regarding the interrelationship of dress and identity resonates with ancient understandings of the same. By providing a number of examples from the ANE, the OT, Jewish extrabiblical writings up to 100 CE, the Roman world, and the NT,¹⁰⁴ I demonstrate: (1) how contemporary understandings of dress are, in many ways, applicable to ancient understandings of dress in regard to personal, social, and role-related identities; and (2) how pervasive the relationship between dress and identity was in the ancient world.

¹⁰³In this study I attempt to isolate the intended dress code meaning (i.e., authorial intent) as opposed to one's immediate translation of that dress code, irrespective of original context or contexts (i.e., reader-response).

¹⁰⁴While I discuss ANE and Greco-Roman backgrounds, they do not constitute a major portion of this study.

In chap. 4 I survey primary texts that explicitly discuss the dress of the high priest. Here I make no attempt to either provide a comprehensive, in-depth study of each element of his dress or focus on their theological meaning. Rather, this survey is necessary in order to detect what could be reasonably understood to be background references to high priestly dress items in Revelation. Texts outside of Revelation in which some have suggested high priestly dress imagery is in view—but where the text itself is not discussing the high priest’s dress—are not the focus of this preliminary survey. The specific goal in this chapter is rather to lay a broad and clear foundation upon which to compare dress imagery in Revelation.

The focus of chap. 5 is the exegesis of selected verses in Rev 1:12-16 where dress imagery suggests the dress of the high priest. It is in this passage that the case for or against high priestly dress imagery for Jesus in Revelation is either confirmed or denied. In this chapter I take into consideration matters of grammar, syntax, text-critical issues, literary and theological contexts, and Jewish backgrounds.¹⁰⁵ My primary intent here is to exegetically determine whether one can detect in this textual passage role-related dress imagery distinctive of the high priest. Any positive results here will allow an exploration of possible high priestly activity or functionality within the broader context of this passage.

Finally, I summarize the exegetical conclusions and contributions of this study, note its wider implications, and suggest areas in need of further study.

¹⁰⁵Since the focus of this study is on high priestly dress imagery, I focus on Jewish instead of Greco-Roman backgrounds.

CHAPTER 2

DRESS AND IDENTITY IN CONTEMPORARY DISCUSSION

Introduction

It is clear that Revelation frequently utilizes imagery from the Jewish tabernacle and temple cult. But while John explicitly refers to contemporary believers as priests (1:6; 5:10; 20:6), it appears anomalous that John does not identify anyone as high priest, particularly when the Epistle to the Hebrews repeatedly refers to Jesus as high priest. Why would John explicitly mention not only the tabernacle and temple structures themselves, but also the outer court, ark, lampstands, altar(s), censer, and incense—and even the cultic personnel of the priests—but not the high priest?¹

In order to pursue the possibility of an implicit identification of Jesus as high priest, I have focused my research on one of Baigent's four evidentiary criteria for ascertaining high priestly identity: distinctive clothing or dress.² But what does one

¹Cf. tent/tabernacle (ἡ σκηνή: 13:6; 21:3), tent/tabernacle of witness (τῆς σκηνῆς τοῦ μαρτυρίου: 15:5), temple (ὁ ναός: 3:12; 7:15; 11:1, 2, 19; 14:15, 17; 15:5, 6, 8; 16:1, 17; 21:22), outer court (11:2: τὴν αὐλὴν τὴν ἔξωθεν τοῦ ναοῦ), ark of the covenant (ἡ κιβωτὸς τῆς διαθήκης: 11:19), lampstand(s) (ἡ λυχνία: 1:12, 13, 20; 2:1, 5; 11:4), altar (τὸ θυσιαστήριον: 6:9; 8:3, 5; 9:13; 11:1; 14:18; 16:7), censer (ὁ λιβανωτός: 8:3, 5), incense (ἡ θυμίαμα: 5:8; 8:3, 4), and priests (ὁ ἱερεὺς: 1:6; 5:10; 20:6). For discussion as to whether there is one altar or two distinct altars mentioned in Revelation, see the commentaries.

²For his four criteria, see Baigent, "Jesus as Priest," 34.

mean when one speaks of clothing or dress? Furthermore, what light can contemporary academics and specialists in the study of dress shed on dress and its significance? And how might texts in Revelation with dress imagery that may communicate role-related information about Jesus be better understood and appreciated through the lens of such contemporary discussions on dress?

One does not have to look far to recognize that academic discussions of dress make it clear that the nexus between distinctive dress and sacral, role-related identity remains an investigative imperative. This is illustrated well by Angelika Berlejung's assertion: "Clothing increases the complexity of the optical appearance of its wearer. It visualizes and makes more precise the wearer's characteristics, hierarchical position, social, religious, political, or ethnic identity, gender, and social function."³ Thus, in ancient Israel one did not function as high priest (or even priest) without distinctive dress, as Heather A. McKay has astutely observed: "In the cult where divine power is channeled through cultic officials all the transactions are facilitated by special robes and insignia."⁴ Consequently, it is important at this juncture to survey what academics are saying about dress and, in particular, what dress means and what it communicates.

I will begin by noting the literary field's longstanding interest in both dress in

³Angelika Berlejung, "Clothing and Vestments: Religious Studies," *Religion Past & Present: Encyclopedia of Theology and Religion*, ed. Hans Dieter Betz et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 3:252-53.

⁴Heather A. McKay, "Gendering the Body: Clothes Maketh the (Wo)man," in *Theology and the Body: Gender, Text and Ideology*, ed. Robert Hannaford and J'annine Jobling, Canterbury Books (Leominster, UK: Gracewing, 1999), 99. Cf. idem, "Gendering the Discourse of Display in the Hebrew Bible," in *On Reading Prophetic Texts: Gender-Specific and Related Studies in Memory of Fokkelien van Dijk-Hemmes*, ed. Bob Becking and Meindert Dijkstra, BIS 18 (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 185-89, 196-98.

general as well as the linkage between dress and identity in particular. Then I will survey the more recent study of dress in academia, primarily noting contemporary academic interest in the ability of dress to communicate identity and, more specifically, role-related identity. Finally, I will point out some potential obstacles to the correct perception of identity via dress about which scholars have expressed caution, as well as note some of their suggested solutions to overcoming those obstacles.

Dress, Communication, and Identity

Literature has had much more of an interest in dress and its meaning than such academic fields as anthropology, psychology, or sociology, in part because of the sheer sweep of its extensive history.⁵ Valentine Cunningham summarizes literature's longstanding fascination with dress and its meaning by noting that clothing and dress

have been thought of as pervasive markers of personality through all of the history of story-telling. This is a faith in clothes as signifiers of the human which comes to a peak with the western realist novel. But the deployment of clothing as sign throughout the whole history of literature manifests writing's unending investment in, its perpetual gamble on, the knowability of persons. By their suits shall ye know them.⁶

⁵On studies of dress in literature, cf., e.g., Rosy Aindow, *Dress and Identity in British Literary Culture, 1870-1914* (Surrey, UK: Ashgate, 2010); Claire Hughes, *Dressed in Fiction* (Oxford: Berg, 2005); Cynthia Kuhn and Cindy Carlson, eds., *Styling Texts: Dress and Fashion in Literature* (Youngstown, NY: Cambria, 2007); Peter McNeil, Vicki Karaminas, and Catherine Cole, eds., *Fashion in Fiction: Text and Clothing in Literature, Film, and Television* (Oxford: Berg, 2009); and Lou Taylor, *The Study of Dress History*, *Studies in Design* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), 90-114.

⁶Valentine Cunningham, "If the Cap Fits: Figuring the Space of the Human," in *The Anthropological Turn in Literary Studies*, ed. Jürgen Schläeger, vol. 12 of *REAL: Yearbook of Research in English and American Literature*, ed. Winfried Fluck et al. (Tübingen: Gunter Narr, 1996), 45-46.

Writing about the uncanny ability of the hat as a piece of dress headgear to express and underscore more than the expected about what is truly human, Cunningham notes that “it’s no surprise that hats are commonly offered to readers of literature as key authenticating markers, central evidence in literature’s business of identifying and knowing persons, in its great anthropological project.”⁷ He illustrates his contention with reference to such literary works as Charles Dickens’s *Oliver Twist* and *Dombey and Son*, Gustave Flaubert’s *Madame Bovary*, George Eliot’s *Adam Bede* and *Middlemarch*, Joseph Conrad’s “The Secret Sharer,” Virginia Woolf’s *Mrs. Dalloway*, and Samuel Beckett’s *Waiting for Godot*.⁸

One literary example surveyed by Cunningham that illustrates the intricate relationship between identity and dress is particularly striking. In 1978 the Czechoslovakian writer Milan Kundera finished his work *Kniha smíchu a zapomnění*, and after a French translation in 1979, it was translated into English (*The Book of Laughter and Forgetting*) in 1980 and again in 1996.⁹ Kundera begins this work with

⁷Ibid., 52.

⁸Ibid., 49-57.

⁹Milan Kundera, *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting*, trans. Aaron Asher (New York: HarperCollins, 1996). It was originally published as *Le livre du rire et de l'oubli*, trans. François Kérel (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1979). It was later translated from the Czech into English (*The Book of Laughter and Forgetting*, trans. Michael Henry Heim [New York: Knopf, 1980]) and later published in Czech (*Kniha smíchu a zapomnění* [Toronto: Sixty-Eight Publishers, 1981]). After a revised French version (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1985) for better accuracy, the new English translation by Asher from the French revised version was published. I have used the translation by Asher, since Kundera stated regarding Asher’s newer translation: “At last I recognized my book” (HarperCollins edition, vii).

what Cunningham aptly calls “the little parable”:¹⁰

In February 1948, the Communist leader Klement Gottwald stepped out on the balcony of a Baroque palace in Prague to harrangue hundreds of thousands of citizens massed in Old Town Square. That was a great turning point in the history of Bohemia. A fateful moment of the kind that occurs only once or twice a millennium.

Gottwald was flanked by his comrades, with [Vladimir] Clementis standing close to him. It was snowing and cold, and Gottwald was bareheaded. Bursting with solicitude, Clementis took off his fur hat and set it on Gottwald’s head.

The propaganda section made hundreds of thousands of copies of the photograph taken on the balcony where Gottwald, in a fur hat and surrounded by his comrades, spoke to the people. On that balcony the history of Communist Bohemia began. Every child knew that photograph, from seeing it on posters and in schoolbooks and museums.

Four years later, Clementis was charged with treason and hanged. The propaganda section immediately made him vanish from history and, of course, from all photographs. Ever since, Gottwald has been alone on the balcony. Where Clementis stood, there is only the bare palace wall. Nothing remains of Clementis but the fur hat on Gottwald’s head.¹¹

Cunningham emphasizes the ability of the hat in Kundera’s story to be an extension of Clementis himself, but ironically not to be able to transform Gottwald into a new Clementis:

This material object (the fur cap), transformed into text (the photograph), marks the place, the site, figures the space, of the actual person whom time and history have conspired to remove. “He, being dead, yet speaketh”: the hat, the sign, the mark, of Clementis’s absence is also, and most irkingly for all regimes whether political or merely critical and theoretical, the awkward sign of an awkwardly persistent presence. And there’s more, much more, that’s pertinent here. For instance, the hat fits its new owner, more or less. But it does not turn Gottwald into Clementis. That’s a great part of the story’s ironic point.¹²

Cunningham’s analysis is just a brief indication of the power of literature over more

¹⁰Cunningham, “If the Cap Fits,” 47.

¹¹Kundera, *Laughter and Forgetting*, 3. Cunningham wrongly quotes the date of the event in Kundera’s story as taking place in 1949.

¹²Cunningham, “If the Cap Fits,” 48.

than a millennium to convey the intriguing and complex relationship between dress and identity.

The Rise of the Academic Study of Dress

In comparison to literature, the modern academic study of dress is relatively recent. French cultural critic Roland Barthes lamented in 1959 that bibliographic indicators alone led one to the conclusion that the study of dress was a disappointing subject and that it had been “never truly an object of sociological inquiry.”¹³ In 1969 Herbert Blumer, having concluded that only a handful of sociologists had studied fashion with anything more than cursory concern, urged sociologists to study it more earnestly.¹⁴ In discussing the impact Blumer’s essay made, Kimberly A. Miller and Scott A. Hunt indicated that his call to action suggested that one of the misperceptions that perhaps impeded the study of fashion was that it was “trivial both substantively and theoretically.”¹⁵

The sociological landscape has changed since Blumer raised his concerns. Now

¹³Roland Barthes, “Language and Clothing,” in *The Language of Fashion*, trans. Andy Stafford, ed. Andy Stafford and Michael Carter (Oxford: Berg, 2006), 20. This essay was originally published in *Critique* 142 (March 1959): 243-52. Barthes stated that true scientific research on dress began around 1860 (“History and Sociology of Clothing: Some Methodological Observations,” in *Language of Fashion*, 3; this article was originally published in *Annales* 3 [July-September 1957]: 430-41).

¹⁴Herbert Blumer, “Fashion: From Class Differentiation to Collective Selection,” *Sociological Quarterly* 10 (1969): 275-91, particularly 275.

¹⁵Kimberly A. Miller and Scott A. Hunt, “Cultures, Identities, and Dress: A Renewed Sociological Interest,” *Sociological Inquiry* 67 (1997): 321 (see also p. 320). Miller and Hunt briefly discuss the history of sociological interest in dress in the twentieth century.

no one needs to urge sociologists to study dress, and dress studies have rightfully taken their place within academia. Miller and Hunt, for example, admit that “the sociology of dress is a vibrant field, exploring intriguing theoretical, methodological, and empirical domains.”¹⁶

Definition, Nomenclature, and Taxonomy

Although social scientists and historians of clothing have refined their understanding of the definition, nomenclature, and taxonomy of clothing and related terms over the last few decades, significant differences still exist.¹⁷ Nevertheless, the work that has become foundational on this subject was written by Mary Ellen Roach-Higgins and Joanne B. Eicher in 1992.¹⁸ They differentiated between dress, appearance,

¹⁶Ibid., 321. Nevertheless, Miller and Hunt, in reaction to a series of recent articles on dress and appearance, suggest that dress “could be incorporated into a variety of sociological subfields, such as the sociology of culture, gender, deviance and crime, social problems, identity, collective behavior, race and ethnicity, social movements, formal organizations, body, and sexuality” (ibid., 322).

¹⁷So Kim K. P. Johnson, Nancy A. Schofield, and Jennifer Yurchisin, “Appearance and Dress as a Source of Information: A Qualitative Approach to Data Collection,” *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal* 20 (2002): 125, n. 1. For a discussion of the difficulty in providing a “final or rigid definition” of these and related terms, see Malcolm Barnard, *Fashion as Communication*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2002), 10-11.

¹⁸See Roach-Higgins and Eicher, “Dress and Identity,” 7-18, particularly 7-10 on the taxonomy of dress (originally published in *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal* 10 [1992]: 1-8). I refer to the reprinted essay.

Many scholars have accepted this research as the standard in the field. See, e.g., Mary Lynn Damhorst, “In Search of a Common Thread: Classification of Information Communicated Through Dress,” *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal* 8, no. 2 (Winter 1990): 1; Joanne B. Eicher, Sandra Lee Evenson, and Hazel A. Lutz, *The Visible Self: Global Perspectives on Dress, Culture, and Society*, 3rd ed. (New York: Fairchild, 2008), 5-6; Kim K. P. Johnson and Sharron J. Lennon, “Introduction: Appearance and Social Power,” in *Appearance and Power*, ed. Kim K. P. Johnson and

adornment or ornament, clothing, apparel, costume, and fashion, and they favored the term “dress” over all other related terms because they believed that none of the other terms was as accurate or as comprehensive in nature.¹⁹

As for their definition of dress, Roach-Higgins and Eicher favored a definition that was “unambiguous, free of personal or social valuing or bias, usable in descriptions across national and cultural boundaries, and inclusive of all phenomena that can

Sharron J. Lennon, DBC (Oxford: Berg, 1999), 1; Nancy Lindisfarne-Tapper and Bruce Ingham, “Approaches to the Study of Dress in the Middle East,” in *Languages of Dress in the Middle East*, ed. Nancy Lindisfarne-Tapper and Bruce Ingham (Surrey, UK: Curzon, 1997), 3; Johnson, Schofield, and Yurchisin, “Appearance and Dress,” 125, n. 1; George B. Sproles and Leslie Davis Burns, *Changing Appearances: Understanding Dress in Contemporary Society* (New York: Fairchild, 1994), 7; and Mai Yamani, “Changing the Habits of a Lifetime: The Adaptation of Hejazi Dress to the New Social Order,” in *Languages of Dress*, 55.

Their work, however, is not without criticism. Barnard critiques Roach-Higgins and Eicher’s influential study because of its lack of any stand-alone definition, for their definitions must be distinguished from a host of other related words (*Fashion as Communication*, 11). He suggests that these terms may well be both resistant to singular definition and difficult to clearly separate from one another (*ibid.*, 11-12).

For other definitions of clothing, dress, and related terms, see Barnard’s brief summary (*ibid.*), as well as: Fred Davis, *Fashion, Culture, and Identity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 25, n. 4, who distinguishes between clothing (the garments themselves) and dress (“the distinctive properties of particular assemblages of garments, i.e., the practices and expectations regarding their combination and wearing venues”); Robert Hillestad, who subsumes dress and the body under the overarching concept of appearance and further divides dress into articles of clothing and articles of adornment (“The Underlying Structure of Appearance,” *Dress* 6 [1980]: 117-25); Rebecca H. Holman, “Apparel as Communication,” in *Symbolic Consumer Behavior: Proceedings of the Conference on Consumer Esthetics and Symbolic Consumption*, ed. Elizabeth C. Hirschman and Morris B. Holbrook (Ann Arbor, MI: Association for Consumer Research, 1980), 7-9; and Kaiser, *Social Psychology of Clothing*, 3-11.

¹⁹Roach-Higgins and Eicher, “Dress and Identity,” 9. See their comparison and contrast of the term “dress” with “adornment” or “ornament,” “apparel,” “appearance,” “clothing,” “costume,” and “fashion” in *ibid.*, 9-10.

accurately be designated as dress.”²⁰ Their resultant definition, while simple, was yet broad in what it included: “an assemblage of modifications of the body and/or supplements to the body.”²¹ This definition consequently included not only garments, jewelry, and accessories, but also such body modifications as hair treatments, colored skin, body piercings, and fragrances and scents applied to the body.²²

A few years before Roach-Higgins and Eicher set forth what came to be their foundational understanding of dress, Grace Q. Vicary wrote that

the term “clothing” includes any artefactual addition to the body which changes its appearance. These additions can be *garments* (dress, costume, apparel, including headwear, footwear, underwear, designed for work, play, or formal occasions in a variety of environments); *ornaments* (beads, gems, chains, straps, buttons, metal bands, buckles, feathers, ribbons, laces, furs); *cosmetics* (dyes, paints, powders, oils, perfumes); *devices* (wigs, corsets, braces, padding, dentures, plastic fingernails); *treatments* (mutilations, massage, tattoos, hair dyeing, thinning, removing, straightening, curling); *equipment* (eyeglasses, watches, ice skates, pocketbooks, cameras, pipes, backpacks, masks, handkerchiefs, gloves, crutches); and *tools* (knives, combs, mirrors, scissors, pens, toothpicks, fans).²³

Though there were differences in nomenclature and a different bias in foundational definitions, Roach-Higgins and Eicher remained generally in line with Vicary’s overall, expansive approach. What constitutes “dress” is thus very broad, much more

²⁰Ibid., 7.

²¹Ibid. That their definition is very wide, cf. Lindisfarne-Tapper and Ingham, “Study of Dress,” 3.

²²Roach-Higgins and Eicher, “Dress and Identity,” 7. Kuper, in the introduction to her research article on Swazi dress in Swaziland, observes that clothing “can be described as part of the total structure of personal appearance which includes hairstyles, ornaments, masks, decorations and mutilations” (“Costume and Identity,” 348). For a full discussion of Roach-Higgins and Eicher’s categorization of dress, see Eicher, Evenson, and Lutz, *Visible Self*, 3-29.

²³Vicary, “Signs of Clothing,” 293-94.

comprehensive than what one typically thinks of when one views a coat, dress, hat, pair of pants, pair of shoes, or shirt that another is wearing.²⁴

Dress Communicates

Academicians of dress frequently stress that dress communicates.²⁵ First impressions of people, for instance, typically include the “reading” of dress. Vicary notes that “in random public encounters, clothing is usually perceived before voice can be heard or gestures and facial expressions seen. Thus clothing and adornment, as they modify appearance, become a universal, primary, nonverbal communication system.”²⁶

²⁴For an excellent discussion of the problems one encounters in attempting to formally study dress, see *ibid.*, 294-305.

²⁵This assertion is virtually universal. Cf. Linda Baumgarten, *What Clothes Reveal: The Language of Clothing in Colonial and Federal America: The Colonial Williamsburg Collection*, Williamsburg Decorative Arts Series (Williamsburg, VA: The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation; in association with Yale University [New Haven, CT], 2002), 54; Patrizia Calefato, *The Clothed Body*, trans. Lisa Adams, DBC (Oxford: Berg, 2004), 5-13; Davis, *Fashion, Culture, and Identity*, 3-4, 191; Eicher, Evenson, and Lutz, *Visible Self*, 28; Johnson, Schofield, and Yurchisin, “Appearance and Dress,” 125; Alison Lurie, *The Language of Clothes*, rev. ed. (London: Bloomsbury, 1992), 3; Suzanne G. Marshall et al., *Individuality in Clothing Selection and Personal Appearance* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson / Prentice Hill, 2004), 102-115; John Norton, “Faith and Fashion in Turkey,” in *Languages of Dress*, 149-77, especially pp. 149-51; Robert Ross, *Clothing: A Global History: Or, The Imperialists’ New Clothes* (Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2008), 6-7; Sproles and Burns, *Changing Appearances*, 5 and 218-24; and Storm, *Functions of Dress*, 102.

²⁶Vicary, “Signs of Clothing,” 292. Vicary further notes that such communication is not typically ambiguous, since dress communication is “as complex, and precise, as most verbal language” (*ibid.*, 293).

Not all agree, however, that dress should be compared to a language. For a study that discusses the problems with comparing dress to language, see Grant McCracken, “Clothing as Language: An Object Lesson in the Study of the Expressive Properties of Material Culture,” in *Material Anthropology: Contemporary Approaches to Material Culture*, ed. Barrie Reynolds and Margaret A. Stott (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1987), 103-28, particularly 113-14 and 117. McCracken

Novelist Alison Lurie also highlighted the priority of dress over verbal language:

For thousands of years human beings have communicated with one another first in the language of dress. Long before I am near enough to talk to you on the street, in a meeting, or at a party, you announce your sex, age and class to me through what you are wearing—and very possibly give me important information (or misinformation) as to your occupation, origin, personality, opinions, tastes, sexual desires and current mood. I may not be able to put what I observe into words, but I register the information unconsciously; and you simultaneously do the same for me. By the time we meet and converse we have already spoken to each other in an older and more universal tongue.²⁷

In Nathan Joseph's work *Uniforms and Nonuniforms*,²⁸ he contends that dress communicates through signs—things that stand for something else. He further distinguishes between two types of signs: signals (“a simple cognitive link between things”)²⁹ and symbols (“a more complex and abstract sign that conveys information about values, beliefs, and emotions”).³⁰ He notes that while a red light orders us to stop and is thus a signal, a swastika is a symbol, since it conjures up not only emotions but is based on certain understandings of values derived from past history. Dress thus communicates via signals and symbols, and elements of dress can incorporate one or

does state, however, that dress “is apparently possessed of semiotic advantages that make it more appropriate than language for certain communicative purposes” (ibid., 122). While declaring that “it is inappropriate or misleading to speak of ‘clothing as language,’” Kaiser nevertheless notes that “it is useful to *compare* clothing and appearance to language” (*Social Psychology of Clothing*, 239).

²⁷Lurie, *Language of Clothes*, 3.

²⁸Nathan Joseph, *Uniforms and Nonuniforms: Communicating Through Clothing*, Contributions in Sociology 61 (New York: Greenwood, 1986).

²⁹Ibid., 9.

³⁰Ibid.

both of them, or it may shift from one to another.³¹

While some assert that dress cannot “say” much,³² most agree that the quantity of information conveyed nonverbally³³ by dress is impressive. Notice Stephanie Paulsell’s personal observations on the communicative power of dress in her high school:

Clothing can yield up a surprising amount of information; ask any teenager. In my high school, brand names, style of clothes and certain color combinations distinguished preppies from potheads from jocks. How important it was to us all to dress in a way that identified us with the security of a particular group, even those who considered themselves least bound by the requirements of fashion. Preppies dressed in relentlessly cheerful pastel pinks and greens that spoke of satisfaction with the way things were. Potheads (and other kids on the margins) wore flannel shirts and jeans, dark colors and dark makeup.³⁴

Neufeld, in his social-scientific discussion of clothing in the book of Revelation, is even more specific and detailed regarding the expansive scope of information that can be transmitted:

Attire and adornment have a vocabulary because of their inherent symbolism. Consider the scope of information possible: one’s sex, age, group, nationality, religious affiliation, means of livelihood, social, economic, and marital status, political or military rank, personal achievements, loyalties, beliefs, and values, family connections, and trade or profession (red fingernails, rompers, lederhosen,

³¹Ibid., 10.

³²See, e.g., Ross, *Clothing: A Global History*, 6: “It forms a language, if a restricted one. There are relatively few things that can be ‘said’ through clothes, but they are very important things.”

³³Other nonverbal forms of communication include: facial expressions, kinetics (physical movement and actions), proxemics (the physical distance people keep away from others), paralinguistics (how the voice sounds during verbal communication), and hand gestures (Mary Lynn Damhorst, “Dress as Nonverbal Communication,” in *Meanings of Dress*, 79). Cf. Vicary, “Signs of Clothing,” 292-93.

³⁴Stephanie Paulsell, *Honoring the Body* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004), 61-62.

fireman's helmet, sports headgear, club tie, sable coat, wedding ring, judge's robes, sergeant's stripes, cap and gown, political buttons, the tartan kilt, veil, sun glasses, miter, etc.).³⁵

Despite the "phenomenal amount of information" that dress communicates, Mary Lynn Damhorst affirms that information overload is not necessarily a danger, since "human beings have an amazing capacity to make sense of a substantial amount of detail in a very short time."³⁶

Dress Communicates Identity

While dress communicates specific pieces of information, what is important for this study is that dress can communicate identity.³⁷ Diana Crane, for instance, begins

³⁵Neufeld, "Under the Cover," 68. Cf. Calefato, *Clothed Body*, 15-25; Davis, *Fashion, Culture, and Identity*, 191; Horn and Gurel, *The Second Skin*, 30-34 and 186-204; Johnson and Lennon, "Introduction," 2; Kaiser, *Social Psychology of Clothing*, 272, 321; Roach-Higgins and Eicher, "Dress and Identity," 11; Schneider and Weiner, "Introduction," 1; and Storm, *Functions of Dress*, 102-208.

³⁶Damhorst, "Dress as Nonverbal Communication," 67. Cf. Douglas J. Davies's study on the multivocal nature of Mormon dress in his "*Gestus Manifests Habitus: Dress and the Morman*," in *Dressed to Impress: Looking the Part*, ed. William J. F. Keenan, DBC (Oxford: Berg, 2001), 129-30.

³⁷Cf. Barbara Burman and Carole Turbin, "Introduction: Material Strategies Engendered," *Gender & History* 14 (2002): 371-81; Davis, *Fashion, Culture, and Identity*, 25; Sandra Lee Evenson, "Dress and Identity," in *Global Perspectives*, ed. Joanne B. Eicher, vol. 10 of *Encyclopedia of World Dress and Fashion*, ed. Joanne B. Eicher (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 52, 54-55, 57; Bruce Ingham, "Mens [*sic*] Dress in the Arabian Peninsula: Historical and Present Perspectives," in *Languages of Dress*, 40-42; Kuper, "Costume and Identity," 365-66; Lindisfarne-Tapper and Ingham, "Study of Dress," 4-5; Lurie, *Language of Clothes*, 27; Marshall et al., *Individuality in Clothing Selection*, 72, 76, 91; and Jane Schneider, "The Anthropology of Cloth," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 16 (1987): 412. For surveys of anthropological studies that include several underscoring the identifying powers of dress, cf. Joanne B. Eicher, "The Anthropology of Dress," *Dress* 27 (2000): 59-70; and Karen Tranberg Hansen, "The World in Dress: Anthropological Perspectives on Clothing, Fashion, and Culture," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 33 (2004): 369-92.

her work on fashion by declaring that clothing “performs a major role in the social construction of identity.”³⁸ And Phyllis Culham, in her discussion of ancient dress, concluded: “There is surely no other item which identifies a person so immediately in so many ways as clothing.”³⁹ More specifically, Peter Corrigan, in describing the primary nature of the sense of sight in making distinctions and providing meaning with regard to clothing, observed: “The social order is a dressed order: occupation, class, age group, sexuality, gender, region, religious affiliation, activity, sub-group membership and so forth are all announceable and readable through appearance.”⁴⁰

What one wears can thus very well identify *who* one is.⁴¹ One can often identify, for instance, whether or not two people are twins simply by the identical dress they wear.⁴² And over forty years ago Gregory P. Stone mused about how the names of

³⁸Diana Crane, *Fashion and Its Social Agendas: Class, Gender, and Identity in Clothing* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 1 (see also pp. 1-4). Notice also the relationship between clothing and identity in Stella Bruzzi, *Undressing Cinema: Clothing and Identity in the Movies* (London: Routledge, 1997), 14, 69-70, 102-103, 142-43, and 199.

³⁹Phyllis Culham, “Again, What Meaning Lies in Colour!” *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 64 (1986): 244. Roach-Higgins and Eicher also note that dress has “a certain priority over discourse in the establishing of identity” because it can be seen before one says (or, writes) anything (“Dress and Identity,” 12 [see also p. 13]). Cf. Gregory P. Stone, who writes about the different kinds of responses that clothing mobilizes: “identities are placed, values appraised, moods appreciated, and attitudes anticipated” (“Appearance and the Self,” in *Human Behavior and Social Processes: An Interactionist Approach*, ed. Arnold M. Rose, International Library of Sociology and Social Reconstruction [Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1962], 101).

⁴⁰Peter Corrigan, *The Dressed Society: Clothing, the Body and Some Meanings of the World, Theory, Culture & Society* (London: SAGE, 2008), 5.

⁴¹Paulsell, *Honoring the Body*, 62. Paulsell observes that “not only do we have clothes, we are, in some sense, defined by our clothes” (ibid., 60).

⁴²As noted by Roach-Higgins and Eicher, “Dress and Identity,” 13.

famous politicians had been established by—and consequently associated with—various articles of dress: Teddy Roosevelt and his pince-nez, Franklin Delano Roosevelt and his cigarette holder, and Thomas Dewey and his moustache.⁴³ And thus Hilda Kuper concludes that “it is no wonder that persons should view their clothing almost as an extension of themselves.”⁴⁴

Dress has such a powerful communicative effect that it can alter or completely change the observer’s perception of another’s identity from what it really is. People can change their perceived personal identity by cloaking or disguising themselves. People can also alter their perceived social identity by changing their dress.

One of the more glaring cases of the consequences that develop when one attempts to change one’s social identity via clothing took place in 1999, when vice president (and then presidential candidate) Al Gore tried to offer his “authentic identity” to the American public “by throwing off drab Washington duds for snazzier suits (if sans Mylar) as well as chinos and polo shirts.”⁴⁵ Gore’s adoption of various “costumes” in his attempt to “buff his image” met with widespread derision and political sneering.⁴⁶ His ill-fated attempt at identity transformation ended up being perceived by many

⁴³Stone, “Appearance and the Self,” 95.

⁴⁴Kuper, “Costume and Identity,” 366.

⁴⁵Frank Rich, “Send in More Clowns,” *New York Times*, October 23, 1999, late edition, sec. A, p. 17.

⁴⁶*Ibid.* Cf. Godfrey Sperling, “A Campaign Briefing,” *Christian Science Monitor*, November 16, 1999, Opinion sec., p. 9., and the discussion in Ruth P. Rubinstein, *Dress Codes: Meanings and Messages in American Culture*, 2nd ed. (Boulder, CO: Westview, 2001), 4-5.

observers as a bald attempt at identity fabrication.⁴⁷

Another case of an attempt to use dress to promote a certain social identity involved the brouhaha over presidential candidate John McCain's selection of Sarah Palin as his running mate in 2008. The revelation that the Republicans had spent about \$150,000 on a dress makeover for Palin generated a flurry of comment. For instance, Eric Wilson noted that her look "has not changed dramatically from a 'Working Girl' formula of authoritative jackets paired with feminine skirts that seem calculated to suggest that she is ready to go to work on Day 1."⁴⁸ While Wilson indicated that it was not clear at that point in the campaign "what message her clothes were meant to broadcast," he later revealed what he had already read about her identity from her "awkward-yet-efficient, zip-close jackets": "nothing says maverick like red leather."⁴⁹ Nevertheless, Cathy Horyn observed that Palin was "whacked for being a pretender in plushy clothes, and for not having the presence of mind to tell the McCain campaign handlers to buzz off. She may have needed some new clothes, and an update to her beehive, but Ms. Palin already looked great—a babe in jeans, a pro in a suit."⁵⁰ As

⁴⁷On the phenomena of identity fabrication via dress, in particular, with occupational identity (e.g., with physicians, police officers, and the clergy), see Rubinstein, *Dress Codes*, 57-59. On the omnipresence of image-makers in public life, see Calefato, *Clothed Body*, 23.

⁴⁸Eric Wilson, "Look Is the Same; the Labels Have Changed," *New York Times*, October 23, 2008, late edition, sec. A, p. 22.

⁴⁹*Ibid.*

⁵⁰Cathy Horyn, "Wrapped in Their Identities," *New York Times*, December 27, 2009, late edition, sec. ST, p. 1.

Horyn concluded in her comparison of the fashion sense of Palin and First Lady Michelle Obama, dress communicates powerful social cues: “Fashion is message. Do I look rich? Do I look available? Do I look like I get it?”⁵¹

Another more recent example of the power of dress to communicate social identity was the reaction among some observers to the sweater vests worn by presidential candidate Rick Santorum during the 2012 Republican primaries. In an article in *The Washington Times*, Samantha Sault commented that “Rick Santorum is known primarily for two things: his social conservatism and his sweater vests.”⁵² Julia Felsenthal observed in the online magazine *Slate*, however, that the sweater vest “seems riddled with contradiction” since the look it produces “is both boyish and grandfatherly, sporty and fusty, conservative and eccentric, old-fashioned and hip.”⁵³ She suggested that its use by Santorum appeared to be sending mixed signals since “the range of responses to Santorum’s knitwear has been wide.”⁵⁴ Sault, noting that dress communicates such things as confidence and power, warned that the sweater-vest sends the wrong message for a presidential candidate, since it is, among other things, “the

⁵¹Ibid.

⁵²Samantha Sault, “Seriously, Santorum: Di-vest Now: A Man of the People Still Needs to Look Presidential,” *The Washington Times*, March 4, 2004, <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2012/mar/4/seriously-santorum-di-vest-now/> (accessed March 8, 2012).

⁵³Julia Felsenthal, “Go Vest, Young Man: What Does It Mean That Rick Santorum Wears a Sweater Vest?” *Slate.com*, February 10, 2012, http://www.slate.com/articles/arts/fashion/2012/02/santorum_s_sweater_vest_what_does_it_mean_that_the_gop_candidate_always_wears_one_.single.html (accessed March 8, 2012).

⁵⁴Ibid.

dress-up attire of little boys and the uniform of the consummate preppy. It's the choice of football coaches and golfers, who seem to think it hides the middle-age gut but really emphasizes it."⁵⁵ Sault ultimately concluded that "the sweater vest evokes a number of images, but 'president' is not one of them."⁵⁶

As the preceding brief discussion makes apparent, the ability of dress to communicate identity is thus a double-edged sword: it can inform, but it can also misinform. Furthermore, it can even deceive, as noted by Vicary, who strikingly observed that it is our primary means of lying about ourselves.⁵⁷ Nevertheless, its power to communicate is fundamental and does not take place on the periphery. No wonder one is apt to say, as another tries on an article of dress, "It's you!"⁵⁸

Dress Communicates Role-Related Identity

But beyond dress indicating one's personal identity (i.e., "That silhouette belongs to none other than Sherlock Holmes!"), or one's social identity (i.e., "Only a wealthy person can wear clothes like that!"), dress can communicate information about other identities (e.g., one's ethnic, national, and political identity).⁵⁹ Of interest here is

⁵⁵Sault, "Seriously, Santorum."

⁵⁶Ibid.

⁵⁷Vicary, "Signs of Clothing," 296.

⁵⁸Cf. Cunningham, "If the Cap Fits," 51.

⁵⁹On dress in regard to ethnic and national identity, see Taylor (*Study of Dress History*, 209-28). On political identity, see Roach-Higgins and Eicher ("Dress and Identity," 14), who observed that the ritual wearing of robes, crowns, and scepters by modern monarchical figures reveals their public identities as political representatives of

role-related identity.⁶⁰ Robert Ross simplified the matter this way: “Essentially, people use clothes to make two basic statements: first, this is the sort of person I am; and secondly, this is what I am doing.”⁶¹ Illustrative of this is the comment made by a painter to Gregory P. Stone during an interview: “I dress the same as anybody does in their profession. People see me, and they know I’m a painter.”⁶² Similarly, it is improbable that at first glance one would doubt that an individual wearing the dress of an astronaut or a police officer truly was an astronaut or a police officer.⁶³ As Richard Wentz observes, “The little boy is given toy soldiers and astronauts for his birthday. He knows those persons by their clothing. The professor wears a shapeless herringbone jacket with tan cotton twill pants, shoes with thick rubber soles—for comfort, he tells us. He *looks* like a professor.”⁶⁴

their countries and has a similar function to the public dress of those in the judiciary and military, in that the latter also assert their political identity as representatives of the state.

⁶⁰Role-related dress is similar to what others term “occupational dress”: dress that communicates one’s occupation or work responsibilities. I prefer to use the terminology of role-related dress. On this type of identity, see, e.g., Jennifer Craik, *Uniforms Exposed: From Conformity to Transgression*, DBC (Oxford: Berg, 2005), 119-21, 131-38; Holman, “Apparel as Communication,” 8; Johnson, Schofield, and Yurchisin, “Appearance and Dress,” 135; Joseph, *Uniforms and Nonuniforms*, passim; Kaiser, *Social Psychology of Clothing*, 240; Miller-Spillman, “Dress in the Workplace,” 221; and Gregory P. Stone, “Clothing and Social Relations: A Study of Appearance in the Context of Community Life” (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 1959), 291-92.

⁶¹Ross, *Clothing: A Global History*, 6-7.

⁶²Stone, “Clothing and Social Relations,” 292.

⁶³Cf. Richard Wentz, “Clothed in the Beauty of Possibility,” *Parabola* 19 (Fall 1994): 80.

⁶⁴*Ibid.*

The use of dress by the Ottoman Turks is a classic example of the ability of dress to distinguish an immense assortment of role-related identities. Not too long after the capture of Constantinople in 1453, Sultan Mehmed II decreed that the civil and military hierarchies were to be distinguished by their dress. According to Raphaela Lewis, these sumptuary laws were closely followed—with only minimal variation—until 1826.⁶⁵ She describes the kaleidoscope of color and style that signified not only role-related identity but also social class in this way:

Thus, the upper ranks had turbans of various colours wound round tall felt caps; members of the ulema had lengths of dazzling white muslim [*sic*] bound round gold-embroidered skull-caps, which gave the completed turban a much flatter shape. These snowy turbans and the sombre black gowns of the religious dignitaries and medrese students, the rich caftans and head-dresses of the aghas, the naval officers and Arsenal guards with knives in their belts, the dervishes in homespun, the street scavengers in red leather smocks, with brooms and wooden shovels, the gipsies with their dancing bears, all contributed to the vivid scene.⁶⁶

The variegated types of headgear worn (including turban, skull-cap, busby, helmet, and fez) numbered more than one hundred, causing one observer to rhapsodize that this exotic plumage looked “like so many parrots of Nepal, Bengalees, the blue magpies of the Himalayas, birds of paradise, blue-headed parakeets, pennant parakeets of Australia. The whole of Turkey seemed an ornithological department spread over this immense zoological garden of the world.”⁶⁷ John Norton observes that this complex spectrum of

⁶⁵Raphaela Lewis, *Everyday Life in Ottoman Turkey* (London: Batsford; New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1971), 88.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*

⁶⁷Luigi Olivero, *Turkey Without Harems*, trans. Ivy Warren (London: Macdonald, 1952), 111-12. Cf. Norton, “Faith and Fashion,” 150.

dress distinctions nevertheless provided “instant identification” of civil, religious, and military roles and occupations, sometimes striking fear and terror among the common citizens, and unfortunately leading too often to violent clashes between various social groups.⁶⁸

But it was not only the Ottoman Empire in which headgear communicated critical information. Notice Cunningham’s trenchant observation on the ability of hats as dress items to communicate status and identity:

Of course, class, profession, social role, religion, gender are all of them distinctly markable and remarkable by this or that hat. Soldiers, kings, queens, chieftains, maids, railway porters, postmen, policemen, dons, cardinals, Quakers, members of the Salvation Army, horse-riders, American Football players, boxers’ sparring partners, archbishops, rabbis, and so on and on: their hats do indeed place, categorize, rank them.⁶⁹

At times dress has become unusually successful at providing an indication of one’s role-related identity. As a result, the name of a piece of dress has evolved into the name of a person’s role or occupation. And as such, the particular feature of dress becomes a synecdoche, describing not just that particular article of dress but the whole person in order to convey identity: “bobby-soxer, zoot-suiter, redcoat, brown shirt, hard hat, blue-collar worker, blue stocking, man of the cloth, sans-culotte.”⁷⁰

In another vein, a particular sartorial element may stand for the entire set in the

⁶⁸Norton, “Faith and Fashion,” 150. See also his description of how identification of dress and appearance with regard to various political and religious affiliations and convictions also later contributed to violent reactions in the latter part of the twentieth century (ibid., 165-66).

⁶⁹Cunningham, “If the Cap Fits,” 56.

⁷⁰Calum M. Carmichael, “Forbidden Mixtures,” *VetT* 32 (1982): 406.

construction of one's role-related identity. For instance, a crown may symbolize the king and even the whole institution of the monarchy. This rhetorical use of metonymy consequently organizes the remaining elements of the sartorial set into foreground and background, "thereby obviating the need to examine every item of an individual's attire in minute detail to place him socially."⁷¹ In the illustration just mentioned, the crown is usually enough to provide identification of the whole, while a scepter and other sartorial elements of royalty fade into the background. Here the crown as a "working symbol" in the foreground becomes what is known as a key or salient symbol.⁷²

The use of salient symbols is important to this study, since dress tools and equipment are frequently working symbols in the foreground and thus salient symbols. A medical intern's prominently displayed stethoscope is both a tool and a working symbol in the sartorial foreground which greatly helps one decode and interpret her or his role-related identity. Tools and equipment, however, are not always thought of as being part of one's dress.⁷³ Nevertheless, Vicary's categorization of dress into garments, ornaments, cosmetics, devices, treatments, equipment, and tools is critical to keep in mind here.⁷⁴

⁷¹Joseph, *Uniforms and Nonuniforms*, 20.

⁷²*Ibid.*, 21. Other salient symbols include a police officer's badge, a military person's insignia, or a mace, staff, or wand carried by the faculty marshal at college and university graduation services.

⁷³For instance, I have never seen tools or equipment referred to as part of the Jewish high priest's dress—despite the fact that such tools or equipment were used (cf. Lev 16:12; Num 16:37-39, 46).

⁷⁴Vicary, "Signs of Clothing," 293-94.

The transference of salient symbols from one person to another during rites of passage symbolizes changes in upward—or downward—social and role-related mobility. The transference of insignia of status and rank for officers, daggers for SS recruits in Nazi Germany, and bullets for new police force officers are modern examples of upward mobility cited by Joseph.⁷⁵ On the other hand, the removal or destruction of parts of a uniform during degradation or demotion ceremonies—such as military cashiering by ripping off epaulettes from one’s shoulders, stripping one of badges or insignia, or breaking one’s sword⁷⁶—is a sure sign of downward mobility.⁷⁷

Joseph divides occupational or role-related dress into two broad categories: uniforms and nonuniforms. According to Joseph, the formal uniform has four characteristics: (1) it is an emblem indicative of membership in a group; (2) it reveals and conceals status position; (3) it is a certificate of legitimacy (typically by a government); and (4) it suppresses individuality.⁷⁸ The dress of military and police officers are classic examples of formal uniforms. With regard to nonuniforms, Joseph differentiates between four sub-categories: nonbureaucratic dress, occupational dress,

⁷⁵Joseph, *Uniforms and Nonuniforms*, 24.

⁷⁶See an example of this with regard to François Achille Bazaine, Marshal of France, during the French Third Republic as detailed in Michael Knox Beran, *Forge of Empires: 1861-1871: Three Revolutionary Statesmen and the World They Made* (New York: Free Press, 2007), 365. Marshal Bazaine was tried for treason and sentenced to such military degradation (which also included the firing squad).

⁷⁷See the discussion of salient symbols in rites of passage in Joseph, *Uniforms and Nonuniforms*, 24.

⁷⁸*Ibid.*, 66-68.

leisure dress, and costumes. Since the topic of my research, the dress of the high priest, appears closest to a kind of uniform, and since Joseph observes that uniforms are easily confused with the nonuniform sub-category of occupational/role-related dress,⁷⁹ I will ignore his discussion of nonbureaucratic dress, leisure dress, and costumes.

Joseph categorizes the nonuniform sub-category of occupational dress into four further sub-categories:⁸⁰ quasi-uniforms, standardized dress, career apparel, and dress codes. With regard to the first sub-category, Joseph states that quasi-uniforms are similar to uniforms, except that they do not have the legitimating emblemization of a government authority but instead are typically associated with private bureaucracies; Joseph suggests that examples here include nurses, nuns,⁸¹ merchant marine officers, and airline and railroad personnel.⁸²

Joseph's second nonuniform sub-category of occupational dress is "a pattern of dress arising among members of an organization, or family of occupations, partly

⁷⁹Ibid., 144: "Occupational clothing is dress that indicates participation in a specific type or general category of jobs." Cf. the summary of organization dress, differentiated between uniforms and occupational dress, in Sproles and Burns (*Changing Appearances*, 156-57), who appear to do exactly what Joseph warns against: confusing the uniform with the nonuniform of occupational dress.

⁸⁰Joseph, *Uniforms and Nonuniforms*, 143-44. Other schematizations have been suggested. Cf., e.g., the discussion in Craik, *Uniforms Exposed*, 17, 104, and 126-28.

⁸¹Craik deems ecclesiastical garb, "not usually defined as uniforms," as a uniform: "It is clear that the precise codification and elaboration of types of garments, choice of fabric, ornamentation, colour and difference from lay dress means that ecclesiastical dress conforms to the definition of uniforms—albeit ones concerned with spiritual well-being" (ibid., 16; cf. 106-108).

⁸²Joseph, *Uniforms and Nonuniforms*, 143, 149.

because they share similar social and physical conditions.”⁸³ Examples here would include the dress of bakers and chefs, cowboys, firefighters, and mechanics.

His third sub-category, career apparel, “is an adaptation of sports or informal clothing, often designer made, for corporate use.”⁸⁴ Joseph notes that within this category companies “furnish clothing similar in color, fabric, or style to white-collar employees, especially those in contact with the public,” and the allowance for mixing and matching dress elements retains freedom of choice and some individuality.⁸⁵

Finally, Joseph’s last nonuniform sub-category of occupational dress comprises “the most unstructured form” of role-related dress in that such dress codes set generalized limits of acceptable dress that are comprised of “ordinary or conventional clothing.”⁸⁶ As we will see, while the role-related dress of a Jewish priest would be considered a uniform in Joseph’s classification scheme (despite it being ecclesiastical),⁸⁷ the role-related dress of the Jewish high priest fits completely into none of Joseph’s categories, while it mirrors elements of some of them.

Uniform or not, ecclesiastical dress typically provides an adept way of communicating role-related identity. Roach-Higgins and Eicher note that “religious

⁸³Ibid., 144.

⁸⁴Ibid.

⁸⁵Ibid.

⁸⁶Ibid.

⁸⁷Cf. Craik’s contrary contention that ecclesiastical dress is a uniform (*Uniforms Exposed*, 16).

groups may include requirements for dress that clearly distinguish religious leaders from followers.”⁸⁸ As we will see, the religious leaders in Judaism associated with the Mosaic tabernacle and the Solomonic temple and its successors certainly had religious dress—including robes and a crown—that differentiated them from the average adherent of Judaism.⁸⁹

Obstacles to the Perception of Identity via Dress

The relationship between dress and identity is neither automatic nor always correct. Despite blanket assertions that identifying people’s role-related identity via dress can be “easily made,”⁹⁰ or that dress items communicate “a clear message,”⁹¹ the potential for one to misread the “text” of dress is real and all too common: identification via dress is not always a “slam dunk.” In the understated yet stark words of Joseph, “Complications ensue.”⁹² There are numerous obstacles that impede the decoding of

⁸⁸Roach-Higgins and Eicher, “Dress and Identity,” 14.

⁸⁹On the importance of dress in the identification of religious or ecclesiastical specialists, see Eicher, Evenson, and Lutz, *Visible Self*, 250-52.

⁹⁰McKay, “Gendering the Body, 91: “The identification of people’s roles, functions and activities is easily made from the *observer’s perspective*.” This is not always the case, and so this generalization is faulty.

⁹¹Jopie Siebert-Hommes, “Without words they [items of dress] give a clear message to the reader” (““On the Third Day Esther Put On Her Queen’s Robes’ [Esther 5:1]: The Symbolic Function of Clothing in the Book of Esther,” *lectio difficilior* 3, no. 1 [2002], par. 2, http://www.lectio.unibe.ch/02_1/inhalt_e.htm [accessed March 8, 2012]). Here she is specifically referring to literary messages communicated to the reader via dress descriptions.

⁹²Joseph, *Uniforms and Nonuniforms*, 152. Note his observation with regard to occupational dress: “Clothing as a means of communication works only when the

dress indicators, but here I will touch on only eight in order to illustrate both the potential problems facing the interpreter of dress and possible ways of overcoming these obstacles.⁹³

Dress Ambiguity

One source of interpretive distortion is the complex nature of dress itself. Both the individual elements of dress as well as the overall combination of the various components of dress may not automatically or through labored effort yield an overall clear identity.⁹⁴ Damhorst cautions that because of the nonsequentiality and nonlinearity of dress messages, they

resist precise cataloging and identification of single cues which trigger the inferences. In other words the whole of a message sent through dress is greater than the simple sum of the physical, visible parts of dress.

The intricate structure or form of dress makes the study of dress meanings a complex endeavor. Simply adding up the messages transmitted by separate components presented in a single appearance does not always yield the overall meaning. The interaction of component parts is crucial to determination of the message.⁹⁵

This particular problem is compounded because of the multivocality of

public can recognize occupational dress and the wearer can predict the response of the public. When one or the other of these conditions is not met, sartorial communication breaks down” (ibid., 163). Cf. Ross, *Clothing: A Global History*, 7.

⁹³The obstacles selected overlap in places, illustrating again the complexity and multifaceted nature of dress analysis.

⁹⁴Cf. McCracken (“Clothing as Language,” 116-17) and Schneider (“Anthropology of Cloth,” 414).

⁹⁵Damhorst, “Common Thread,” 2. Cf. Eicher, Evenson, and Lutz, *Visible Self*, 28.

dress—the multiple meanings different articles of dress may have.⁹⁶ Thus Susan B. Kaiser asserts that “seldom is only one meaning associated with an appearance message.”⁹⁷ She suggests that the recognition by one of another’s role-related identity as a police officer via dress indicators occurs not because any one of the components of the police officer’s uniform (e.g., hat, shirt, badge, belt, pants, shoes, tools, weapons) is overwhelmingly distinctive as to the police officer’s role and occupation; rather, “the effect [the police officer’s uniform] has on our perception is derived from the whole ensemble.”⁹⁸ Kaiser consequently concludes that in order to understand what one’s appearance means, one must do three things: (1) take apart the appearance into its constituent parts and analyze the meaning of each one; (2) identify how different elements associate (e.g., compare and contrast) with each other; and (3) compare the meaning of the resultant “whole” appearance with other “whole” appearances.⁹⁹

In his reflections on Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s literary creation Sherlock

⁹⁶At the same time, other studies have shown that while most people link one dress cue with one item of information, there are fewer instances when one dress cue was linked with numerous items of information (Johnson, Schofield, and Yurchisin, “Appearance and Dress,” 133). Cf. Craik (*Uniforms Exposed*, 136-38) and Sproles and Burns (*Changing Appearances*, 223-24). With regard to literary criticism, cf. Cunningham, “If the Cap Fits,” 52, 58-62.

⁹⁷Kaiser, *Social Psychology of Clothing*, 238; see also p. 241. Furthermore, because of its polysemic nature, the wearer and the observer may not agree as to all of the meanings that are possibly included in one appearance (Damhorst, “Dress as Nonverbal Communication,” 69).

⁹⁸Kaiser, *Social Psychology of Clothing*, 217. Here Kaiser apparently sees less value in the concepts of foregrounding/backgrounding and saliency than others do (e.g., Joseph, *Uniforms and Nonuniforms*, 20-21).

⁹⁹Kaiser, *Social Psychology of Clothing*, 217-18.

Holmes, George Fletcher observed that it is only “the symbols of the world’s great religions [that] are more widely known than Sherlock Holmes’s deerstalker cap, caped traveling coat, and smoking pipe.”¹⁰⁰ In this particular case, none of the three items would necessarily or clearly identify the character of Holmes by itself. Rather, it is their combination in an overall dress ensemble—the clothing of both the deerstalker’s cap and the traveling coat, and the accessory of the smoking pipe—that communicates Holmes’s personal identity to the reader.¹⁰¹

Contextual Disintegration

A second potential obstacle in the way of successfully interpreting dress relates to the context or contexts of dress.¹⁰² Possible contexts include appearance, cultural, gender, historical, locative, social, spatial, and temporal contexts.¹⁰³ Viewing items of dress—both salient and non-salient—in isolation from their context(s) may well distort one’s understanding of the information dress is conveying.

One can illustrate the critical nature of the need for contextual integration in several ways. The age of the wearer, for instance, may have a decisive role in one’s

¹⁰⁰George Fletcher, afterword to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, *The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes* (Pleasantville, NY: Reader’s Digest Association, 1988), 251.

¹⁰¹This observation on the collaborative or holistic nature of dress must be tempered, however, with the understanding that some elements of dress are more salient than others. See Joseph, *Uniforms and Nonuniforms*, 20-21.

¹⁰²Cf. Damhorst (“Dress as Nonverbal Communication,” 72-75) and Kaiser (*Social Psychology of Clothing*, 30).

¹⁰³Cf. Kaiser, *Social Psychology of Clothing*, 241, 245-46.

positive or negative evaluation of dress, even though it technically has nothing to do with dress per se. Damhorst nevertheless points out the crucial nature of the temporal context when she observes, for instance, that an ice cream stain on an infant or toddler is certainly more cute than an ice cream stain on a forty-two-year-old.¹⁰⁴ Consequently, an ice cream stain in isolation, hampered by contextual disintegration, can well lead to distortion in one's overall analysis.¹⁰⁵ Or notice how the calendar could obscure the role-related interpretation of dress if the day in which one observed such dress were on "casual" or "dress down" day (often Friday). Moreover, contextualization takes on added importance when nonuniform role-related dress comes into play. Whereas the uniform of the police officer can be decoded in virtually any context, Joseph notes that a white jacket worn in a hospital has a very different connotation than a white jacket worn in a beauty parlor.¹⁰⁶

One must consequently be cognizant of a variety of contextual indicators in relation to the observed dress, such as the occasion and place of the dress appearance and the wearer's age, culture, gender, spatial surroundings, and even moods, else one risks contextual disintegration and resultant sartorial misunderstanding.¹⁰⁷ An awareness and integration of contextual information into one's overall dress analysis

¹⁰⁴Damhorst, "Dress as Nonverbal Communication," 73.

¹⁰⁵As another example, Davis observes that a piece of black gauze in a funeral veil does not convey the same message as an identical piece of black gauze sewn into a nightgown (*Fashion, Culture, and Identity*, 8).

¹⁰⁶Joseph, *Uniforms and Nonuniforms*, 147.

¹⁰⁷Cf. Davis, *Fashion, Culture, and Identity*, 8.

can consequently limit such overall interpretive distortion.

Foreground / Background Confusion

While Kaiser's observation mentioned earlier¹⁰⁸ has merit in that one must analyze the "total package" of dress in order to correctly reach identity perception, individual dress elements may at times actually trump the composite picture. Patrizia Calefato relates a bizarre example of this one-trumps-all dynamic:

In the summer of 1994 the Italian Foreign Office refused to issue a diplomatic passport to a newly elected Euro-MP because it was thought that the photograph on it didn't correspond to the actual person. An incredible decision, since what made the photo an inadequate representation of the politician was the fact that he wasn't wearing a tie! The civil servants working in the diplomatic passports office maintained that the absence of a tie was sufficient to call the MP's personal identity into question. The tie thus assumed the role of a distinctive feature on the body, with the same status as a beard, hair colour, age, weight, glasses or plastic surgery.¹⁰⁹

Here, while Calefato stated that the (missing) tie took on the "same status" as other aspects of the MP's dress, in fact it trumped them all in the minds of the civil servants.

Roach-Higgins and Eicher emphasized that "meanings communicated by dress may emanate from its basic type, one of its properties (e.g., color, shape), or a composite of its component types and/or properties."¹¹⁰ They illustrated this by observing that "the color (a single property) of a businessman's tie may be a more important indicator of his identity than is his total ensemble of suit, shirt, tie, socks, and shoes."¹¹¹ Thus, while the

¹⁰⁸Kaiser, *Social Psychology of Clothing*, 217-18.

¹⁰⁹Calefato, *Clothed Body*, 23.

¹¹⁰Roach-Higgins and Eicher, "Dress and Identity," 11.

¹¹¹Ibid. For a revised version, cf. Eicher, Evenson, and Lutz, *Visible Self*, 28.

possibility exists that a composite dress ensemble may in its entirety be the key to decoding dress messages, on the other hand it may indeed send mixed and confusing signals; one salient element may well be the key to identity, instead of the other dress components combined.

At the same time, when dress components communicate inconsistent meaning or do not seem to “go together,” observers may be tempted to explain away the apparent inconsistencies and then focus on the most salient component of the remaining items of dress.¹¹² This indicates that salience may be the result of the process of deduction, potentially brought on by ambiguity or misunderstanding. While there is a need for balance in weighing both the dress ensemble as a unit and the individual elements themselves, this dynamic indicates that there may be no clear-cut and certain way to decode some forms of dress.

Incorrect Expectations

Misleading, unrealistic, or quixotic expectations can precipitate dress identity misperceptions. Who has not met someone and—because that person was wearing different dress than expected—been unable to recognize that person?¹¹³ Moreover, Joseph notes that when background signs clash with one’s expectations, they can usurp the proper role and function of foreground signs.¹¹⁴ This can lead not to non-recognition

¹¹²McCracken, “Clothing as Language,” 115-16.

¹¹³Cf. Calefato, *Clothed Body*, 23.

¹¹⁴Joseph, *Uniforms and Nonuniforms*, 20.

but to identity misinterpretation. Joseph illustrates this by relating the story of how an enlisted Marine wore a nonregulation pistol, custom-made boots, an ivory swagger stick, and binoculars—all background signs of an officer’s role-related dress—without the explicit foreground element of an officer’s insignia. In due course the unexpected background elements, overwhelming the observers’ ability to detect the absence of an officer’s salient foreground insignia, resulted in other enlisted men erroneously saluting him as an officer.¹¹⁵

Expectations by observers that workers should “look the part” are normal. But when expectations do not match reality, negative interrelational issues swiftly rise to the fore. Jennifer Craik observes that “we would not trust the dentist with grubby overalls and dirty nails; we would be sceptical of a legal defender in a hot pink mini and low-cut top; and we would wonder if the plumber in a polo shirt and chinos could really unblock the drains.”¹¹⁶ And Paul Fussell writes about his shock and dismay when he came into contact with a doctor dressed not in the traditional uniform but rather in a tweed jacket and khakis: “I felt both uncertain of the roles we were playing and a bit annoyed at being cheated.”¹¹⁷

Stereotypical Understandings

Stereotypical or idealized understandings of dress present another obstacle to the

¹¹⁵Ibid.

¹¹⁶Craik, *Uniforms Exposed*, 120.

¹¹⁷Paul Fussell, *Uniforms: Why We Are What We Wear* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2002), 158.

interpretation of dress. Stereotyping is highly selective and favors one role over another and, according to Joseph, results from “the homogenization of symbols which uses a single image to describe a range of uniforms and ignores the variation due to chronological change, unit distinctions, or individual nonconformity.”¹¹⁸ When the historic dress of an American Indian, for example, focuses on the Indian as a warrior in his warrior regalia, other necessary roles are not only overshadowed but in danger of being ignored entirely.

Temporal and Locative Instability

Another potential source of distortion is the temporal and locative instability of dress perception. Linda Baumgarten observes: “Most scholars agree that, although it can and does say things, clothing’s message is more subtle and unclear; it shifts with time and place and is without fixed rules of grammar like a true language.”¹¹⁹ Thus Davis notes that “the very same apparel ensemble that ‘said’ one thing last year will ‘say’ something quite different today and yet another thing next year.”¹²⁰

Since it is often difficult to recapture dress perceptions from centuries ago, the

¹¹⁸Joseph, *Uniforms and Nonuniforms*, 104.

¹¹⁹Linda Baumgarten, *What Clothes Reveal*, 54. Cf. Davis, *Fashion, Culture, and Identity*, 5. After noting that written language itself can be misunderstood, Baumgarten surprisingly concludes: “The uncoded rules that dictated what to wear for various occasions in the past, or that govern what people wear today, are almost as rigid as grammatical rules” (*What Clothes Reveal*, 54).

¹²⁰Davis, *Fashion, Culture, and Identity*, 6. Cf. Kaiser, *Social Psychology of Clothing*, 245-46. Both Davis (*Fashion, Culture, and Identity*, 9) and Holman (“Apparel as Communication,” 9) note that translators of dress from varying social systems and/or differing time periods may not agree on the meaning of the dress code.

continuing passage of time consequently makes the process of unraveling the meanings of dress in such cultures more difficult.¹²¹ Nevertheless, Damhorst acknowledges that “dress in traditional cultures tends to change slowly over time and may incorporate long-used symbols that are steeped with meanings.”¹²² This helps explain why, on the one hand, those who understand the centuries-long code of the Japanese kimono readily understand its meaning, while on the other hand, the occupational role of police and military uniforms of the United States are similarly clear in meaning, though less longstanding in usage.¹²³

Anachronistic Misinterpretations

Anachronistic interpretations of dress and its symbols may also impede meaningful dress analysis. One way this occurs is by assuming that current social dynamics, standards, and practices existed in the past. Joseph points to the fact that some have interpreted the amount of gold lace or braid on the uniforms of seventeenth century British generals as indicative of a higher rank in the military hierarchy. The reality, however, was that there were no dress regulations at that point in time, and more

¹²¹Linda Baumgarten, *What Clothes Reveal*, 56. Cf. Damhorst, “Dress as Nonverbal Communication,” 69.

¹²²Damhorst, “Dress as Nonverbal Communication,” 69. On the extended stability of fashions in the ancient world, see also Leona Glidden Running, “Garments,” *ISBE* (1982), 2:401. Notice how it is much more difficult to decode dress today, since many consumers “mix and match,” borrow dress from distant cultures, and are unafraid to break established dress codes. Cf. Damhorst, “Dress as Nonverbal Communication,” 77; and Susan B. Kaiser, “Identity, Postmodernity, and the Global Apparel Marketplace,” in *Meanings of Dress*, 89-90.

¹²³Damhorst, “Dress as Nonverbal Communication,” 69.

gold lace/braid instead indicated greater social affluence, based on greater power and wealth. The contemporary perspective thus becomes anachronistic when it attempts to impose upon the past a bureaucratized system of precise insignia for each rank.¹²⁴

In another illustration, Joseph writes that observers at the first mass celebrated by a newly ordained priest interpreted the vestments of around a dozen other celebrant priests—the same except for slight differences in embroidery—as demonstrative of the celebrant priests’ membership in several clerical orders. The truth, however, was that the vestments had accumulated over time, and the differing embroidery simply stemmed from the tastes of the original owners. The anachronistic, bureaucratic outlook—natural for a contemporary group of observers—had misinterpreted the “uniform” differences as indicative of institutional membership in various components of the organization.¹²⁵

Another type of anachronistic misinterpretation is roughly the reverse of the former dynamic: assuming what was true in the past should match present reality. Fussell writes about the “strange” experience he had when his understanding of the proper dress of nurses—correct at one time in history—was not realized:

In a hospital recently, I was struck by a memorable oddity. The nurses appeared not in their traditional uniform (white shoes and hose, white dress, all-important starched white cap, and navy blue cape for outdoors), but dressed any old way, including blue jeans, as if they were ashamed of any sign of education or distinction let alone simple identification. The impulse may have been a desire to fit in with the floor moppers and trash collectors and not be recognized as trained professionals, members of a formerly proud sorority. This novel phenomenon struck me as misguided, when, as a bed patient, I wanted to see a nurse now and then and the only

¹²⁴Joseph, *Uniforms and Nonuniforms*, 112-13.

¹²⁵*Ibid.*, 113. Cf. *ibid.*, 114-16.

caregivers I could raise looked like charladies.¹²⁶

Fussell's anachronistic expectation no longer matched current reality, and this clearly upset him, since, as he noted, patients "feel cheated when assigned a nurse visibly not qualified."¹²⁷ The nurse was qualified, though; the styles of nursing dress, however, had radically changed.

Duodirectional Communicative Purposes

Finally, while dress reveals through its communicative properties, it may also conceal.¹²⁸ What is the communicative purpose of one or more articles of dress? Does an article of dress—or the composite dress ensemble as a whole—reveal the identity of the one so dressed? Or does it mask and camouflage the identity of the one wearing it? While misreading a masking purpose for a revelatory one will not distort the intended message(s) being sent, it will nevertheless bring one to a mistaken understanding of the real identity of the one so dressed.

Summary and Conclusions

While literature over the millennia has repeatedly conveyed and discovered meaning in dress, the academic study of dress is scarcely more than a century old. Despite the popular understanding of dress, scholars in the human sciences have repeatedly concluded that dress includes more than what one wears; it can include

¹²⁶Fussell, *Uniforms*, 156.

¹²⁷*Ibid.*, 157.

¹²⁸Schneider and Weiner, "Introduction," 1, 3.

garments, ornaments, cosmetics, devices, treatments, equipment, and tools.

Furthermore, dress communicates. One of the many sociological indicators that dress communicates is identity. And while dress can communicate age, ethnic, gender, political, socioeconomic, and other identities, it can also communicate a role-related identity.

At the same time, in the perception of identity via dress, there are a number of obstacles that can potentially prevent one from a correct interpretation, including dress ambiguity, contextual disintegration, foreground and background confusion, stereotypical or idealized understandings of dress by observers, temporal and locative instability of dress, incorrect expectations on the part of dress observers, anachronistic misinterpretations by those who analyze dress, and the duodirectional communication purposes of dress. These potential obstacles underscore the need for caution and balance in the formal interpretation of dress.

Contemporary scholars of dress understand that the ability of dress to communicate is neither trivial nor insignificant. As Culham astutely notes, “It may look suspicious at first glance to attribute so much significance to mere matters of clothing and color, but, as symbols, these are really quite potent.”¹²⁹ Consequently, applying some of these conclusions of social scientists regarding dress to texts in Revelation describing dress will be potentially useful in determining whether or not high priestly imagery is present or not.

¹²⁹Culham, “What Meaning,” 244.

CHAPTER 3

DRESS AND IDENTITY IN THE BIBLICAL WORLD¹

Introduction

What do the modern cities of Milan, New York, Paris, Rome, London, Los Angeles, and Hong Kong have to do with ancient Jerusalem? In terms of dress, plenty. In a fascinating discussion of the sartorial sacred and profane, Crispin H. T. Fletcher-Louis describes his perspective on how this comparison works:

For Second Temple Jews the temple offered the nearest equivalent to the modern fashion industry. At the risk of being judged irreverent, we should compare the inner precincts of the temple to the catwalks of Paris and Milan. The awe and otherworldly regard in which our own “supermodels” are held has a socio-religious parallel in ancient Judaism. The high priest’s garments were reserved for use within the temple precincts, and the laity, women and gentiles are carefully cordoned off from the priesthood, the “fashion elite,” in much the same way that our fashion industry separates its stars physically and economically from the rest of us. Of course, the ideological superstructure of the two worlds—the ancient Jewish priesthood and the modern fashion industry—is different, but there are unmistakable commonalities between their respective social structures.²

¹For the purposes of this paper, I define the “biblical world” to include cultural artifacts and literary texts that impacted or were produced by Jewish and Judeo-Christian people up until ca. 100 CE. It would thus encompass the ANE (primarily in the Mediterranean and Mesopotamian areas), the OT (including both the MT and the LXX, and thus the Apocrypha), extrabiblical Jewish literature of the Second Temple period, the Roman world and the NT.

²Fletcher-Louis, *Glory of Adam*, 59-60. Cf. Michaël N. van der Meer, who, in his discussion of the luxury items in Isa 3:18-23, compares the literary picture to “a few leading ladies walking on the catwalks of Jerusalem and Alexandria” (“Trendy Translations in the Septuagint of Isaiah: A Study of the Vocabulary of the Greek Isaiah

While these modern cities are hundreds—if not thousands—of miles away from Jerusalem, and while they are certainly centuries beyond ancient Jerusalem, they do share some fundamental sartorial dynamics, perceptions, and reflexes.

The ability to better understand and appreciate texts containing dress imagery in Revelation via the lens of contemporary discussions on dress, communication, and role-related identity is not anomalous but rather is part of a widespread and long-standing means of communication. Consequently, in this chapter I will demonstrate how contemporary scholarly discussion regarding the relation between dress and identity provides an interpretive framework for examining and understanding dress and identity issues in the biblical world in general and, in particular, the book of Revelation. I will first survey examples from the biblical world exclusive of the book of Revelation in order to demonstrate the resonance between it and contemporary discussion regarding the interrelationship of dress and identity.³ I will then briefly survey the repeated references to dress in Revelation in order to verify its import in terms of identity issues. I will illustrate how John's rhetoric in Revelation utilizes dress imagery as one means of communicating the identity of various characters inhabiting his text.

Dress and Identity in the Biblical World

Observers today give less attention to how dress communicates—not to mention

3,18-23 in the Light of Contemporary Sources,” in *Die Septuaginta*, ed. Karrer and Kraus, 596.

³Since the purpose of this chapter is to survey the connection between dress and identity in the ancient world, the contemporary interpretations of biblical passages that I refer to here should be seen as possible interpretations illustrating such a connection and not the final word on the texts under discussion; other interpretations exist.

how it communicates identity—than those who lived in the ancient world.⁴ In contrasting ancient and contemporary society, Klaus Berger asserts that “one can certainly say that, at the time of the New Testament, clothing played an indispensable sociopsychological function, little of which remains among us today.”⁵ Part of the reason for this is that the significance and value of dress has changed so drastically over time. While two of the primary purposes of dress are to protect from the inclement elements of nature and to provide some means of personal privacy,⁶ there were many other dimensions to the purpose of dress that humans in the biblical world found to be just as important.⁷

Importance of Dress

Dress is a fundamental image in the biblical world. Sebastian Brock asserts that “the entire span of salvation history can be expressed in terms of clothing imagery.”⁸

⁴Klaus Berger observes that this function of dress to provide crucial information regarding, for example, social status, has been largely superseded by other means in contemporary society and is thus easily overlooked (*Identity and Experience in the New Testament*, trans. Charles Meuncho [Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003], 40-42).

⁵*Ibid.*, 41.

⁶See Roy R. Jeal, “Clothes Make the (Wo)man,” *Scriptura* 90 (2005): 685, where he asserts that these two purposes are at “the most obvious level.”

⁷Cf. *ibid.*; and John J. Pilch, “Clothes,” *The Cultural Dictionary of the Bible* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 1999), 20.

⁸Brock, “Clothing Metaphors,” 11. His sweeping conclusion is made in light of Syriac interpretation of biblical and extrabiblical texts, such as Gen 3:7, 21; Sir 50:11; 1 Enoch 62:15; Matt 22:12; Rom 13:14; and Gal 3:27 (*ibid.*, 12-15). Brock notes in particular clothing language used in this tradition with reference to Adam, Christ as the second Adam, individual Christians, and the eschatological kingdom (*ibid.*, 22). For an illustrative synopsis of Syriac interpretations, see *ibid.*, 23-28.

Focusing dress imagery further, with reference to the critical nature of dress as an indicator of identity, Thomas A. J. McGinn succinctly writes: “In classical antiquity, you were what you wore.”⁹ The Hebrew sage Ben Sira aphoristically noted the decisive identity-communicating properties of dress in Sir 19:30 (NRSV): “A person’s attire and hearty laughter, and the way he walks, show what he is.” This particular work illustrates the proverbial and well-known ability of dress to communicate definitive information about a person. Ben Sira later stated that there were four necessities in life: water, bread, clothing, and a house (Sir 29:21). Thus, in these two brief texts, Ben Sira epitomized the pervasive importance of dress that has continued through time and across borders.¹⁰

ANE dress, which frequently communicated metaphoric meaning¹¹ and/or

⁹Thomas A. J. McGinn, *Prostitution, Sexuality and the Law in Ancient Rome* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 162; cf. Douglas R. Edwards, “Dress and Ornamentation,” *ABD* (1992), 2:238.

¹⁰Cf. Kelly Olson, who forcefully observes that Roman fashion (in the sense of dress) shaped its wearer and actually established one’s identity (*Dress and the Roman Woman: Self-Presentation and Society* [London: Routledge, 2008], 1).

¹¹Metaphoric dress occurs when subjects are described as dressed in essentially non-dress items or concepts (i.e., a god dressed in light or glory). Ancient expressions of metaphorical dress included such concepts as Mesopotamian *melammu* (a crown-like radiance portrayed as head-gear) and *pulhu* (a supernatural radiance portrayed as a garment), both of which could describe the dress of gods, kings, and priests. On this and other metaphoric dress, cf., e.g., H. A. Brongers, “Die metaphorische Verwendung von Termini für die Kleidung von Göttern und Menschen in der Bibel und im Alten Orient,” in *Von Kanaan bis Kerala: Festschrift für Prof. Mag. Dr. J. P. M. van der Ploeg O. P. zur Vollendung des siebzigsten Lebensjahres am 4. Juli 1979: Überreicht von Kollegen, Freunden und Schülern*, ed. W. C. Delsman et al., *Alter Orient und Altes Testament* 211 (Kevelaer: Butzon & Bercker; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1982), 61-74; Elena Cassin, *La splendeur divine: Introduction à l’étude de la mentalité mésopotamienne*, *Civilisations et Sociétés* 8 (Paris: Mouton, 1968), 118; Menahem Haran, “The Shining of Moses’ Face: A Case Study in Biblical and Ancient Near

symbolic meaning,¹² had a distinctive significance. Dressing statues of the gods correctly, for instance, was of such paramount importance that ancient rulers were given that critical responsibility.¹³ But in comparing the communicative role of dress in

Eastern Iconography,” in *In the Shelter of Elyon: Essays on Ancient Palestinian Life and Literature in Honor of G. W. Ahlström*, ed. W. Boyd Barrick and John R. Spencer, JSOTSup 31 (Sheffield: JSOT, 1984), 167-68; A. Leo Oppenheim, “Akkadian *pul(u)h(t)u* and *melammu*,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 63 (1943): 31-34; Thomas Podella, *Das Lichtkleid JHWHs: Untersuchungen zur Gestalthaftigkeit Gottes im Alten Testament und seiner altorientalischen Umwelt*, FAT 15 (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1996), 4-9; Seth L. Sanders, “Old Light on Moses’ Shining Face,” *VT* 52 (2002): 404-405; Nahum M. Waldman, “A Note on Ezekiel 1:18,” *JBL* 103 (1984): 614-618; idem, “The Imagery of Clothing, Covering, and Overpowering,” *JANES* 19 (1989): 161-70, particularly 162; and Wilder, “Illumination and Investiture,” 63-64.

¹²Dress with symbolic meaning is different from metaphoric dress in that the subject is described with real dress items, and these dress items (or, the actions related to these dress items) symbolize something other than the dress item itself. See Paul A. Kruger, “The Hem of the Garment in Marriage: The Meaning of the Symbolic Gesture in Ruth 3:9 and Ezek 16:8,” *Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages* 12 (1984): 79; idem, “The Symbolic Significance of the Hem (*kānāf*) in 1 Samuel 15.27,” in *Text and Context: Old Testament and Semitic Studies for F. C. Fensham*, ed. W. Claassen, JSOTSup 48 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1988), 106; Harry O. Maier, “Kleidung II (Bedeutung),” *RAC* (2006), 21:22; J. N. Postgate, “Assyrian Uniforms,” in *Veenhof Anniversary Volume: Studies Presented to Klaas R. Veenhof on the Occasion of His Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, ed. W. H. van Soldt, Uitgaven van het Nederlands Historisch-Archaeologisch Instituut te Istanbul 89 (Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 2001), 374; and Karel van der Toorn, “The Significance of the Veil in the Ancient Near East,” in *Pomegranates and Golden Bells: Studies in Biblical, Jewish, and Near Eastern Ritual, Law, and Literature in Honor of Jacob Milgrom*, ed. David P. Wright, David Noel Freedman, and Avi Hurvitz (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1995), 327-39. Cf. Wilder, “Illumination and Investiture,” 59, n. 22.

¹³Stefan Zawadzki, *Garments of the Gods: Studies on the Textile Industry and the Pantheon of Sippar According to the Texts from the Ebabbar Archive*, *Orbis biblicus et orientalis* 218 (Fribourg: Academic Press; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006), 140. The first investigation into the ritual clothing of images was made by A. Leo Oppenheim, “The Golden Garments of the Gods,” *JNES* 8 (1949): 172-93. For more recent works, see, e.g., David Lorton, “The Theology of Cult Statues in Ancient Egypt,” in *Born in Heaven, Made on Earth: The Making of the Cult Image in the Ancient Near East*, ed. Michael B. Dick (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1999), 123-

society in general with its communicative role in ANE and OT literary texts, Jopie Siebert-Hommes suggests that “the impact of clothing objects and other insignia [in literary texts] may be even more crucial [than in society in general], because authors and writers often intentionally make use of special details about dress and garments to convey certain information about the main characters.”¹⁴ The significant role of investiture in both the *Epic of Gilgamesh* and the *Tale of Adapa*,¹⁵ as well as the jewel-encrusted garments taken off and then put back on at the beginning and end of *Ištar’s Descent to the Netherworld*,¹⁶ provides famous examples of the crucial and powerful

210, particularly 138 and 144; Eiko Matsushima, “Divine Statues in Ancient Mesopotamia: Their Fashioning and Clothing and Their Interaction with the Society,” in *Official Cult and Popular Religion in the Ancient Near East: Papers of the First Colloquium on the Ancient Near East—The City and Its Life, Held at the Middle Eastern Culture Center in Japan (Mitaka, Tokyo), March 20-22, 1992*, ed. Eiko Matsushima (Heidelberg: C. Winter, 1993), 209-19; idem, “Some Remarks on the Divine Garments: *kus tu* and *nahlaptu*,” *Acta sumerologica* 17 (1995): 233-49; and Herbert Sauren, “Die Kleidung der Götter,” in *Representations of Gods*, vol. 2 of *Visible Religion*, ed. H. G. Kippenberg et al. (Leiden: Brill, 1983), 95-117.

¹⁴Siebert-Hommes, “On the Third Day,” par. 1.

¹⁵For discussion of investiture in these two texts, see Robert A. Oden, Jr., “Grace or Status? Yahweh’s Clothing of the First Humans,” in *The Bible Without Theology: The Theological Tradition and Alternatives to It*, New Voices in Biblical Theology (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987), 101-103.

¹⁶See, e.g., Simo Parpola’s discussion of the dress imagery in this ancient myth in the context of the so-called *Hymn of the Pearl* (the latter embedded in the much later *Acts of Thomas*) in his “Mesopotamian Precursors of the Hymn of the Pearl,” in *Mythology and Mythologies: Methodological Approaches to Intercultural Influences: Proceedings of the Second Annual Symposium of the Assyrian and Babylonian Intellectual Heritage Project Held in Paris, France, October 4-7, 1999*, ed. R. M. Whiting, Melammu Symposia 2 (Helsinki: The Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, 2001), 181-93, particularly pp. 182, 185, 190, and 192. For Parpola’s discussion of *Ištar’s Descent to the Netherworld*, in terms of its stripping metaphor, see his *Assyrian Prophecies*, State Archives of Assyria 9 (Helsinki: Helsinki University Press, 1997), xxxii-xxxiii, and xci, n. 112.

importance of dress motifs in the ANE literary texts.

In the OT the extensive vocabulary for dress¹⁷ and the frequent references to dress¹⁸—both literal as well as metaphoric¹⁹ and symbolic²⁰—illustrate its critical nature

¹⁷OT dress terms have been translated into the English equivalents of armlet, armor, band, belt, bracelet, breeches, chain, cloak, crescent, crown, diadem, earring, embroidery, fringes, garment, girdle, handkerchief, insignia, leather, mantle, necklace, nose ring, ornament, pendant, (finger) ring, robe, sandal, sash, seal, signet ring, tassel, tunic, turban, various precious stones, veil, etc. See Running (“Garments,” 401-407) for a detailed summary of the Hebrew and Greek terminology.

¹⁸For summary discussions of the significance of dress during both the OT and NT periods, see, e.g., Edwards, “Dress and Ornamentation,” 2:232-38; Edgar Haulotte, *Symbolique du Vêtement selon la Bible*, Théologie 65 (Paris: Aubier, 1966), 79-89; Kim, *Significance of Clothing Imagery*, particularly 10-69 and 106-223; Maier, “Kleidung II (Bedeutung),” 21:22-40; Christoph G. Müller, “Kleidung als Element der Charakterzeichnung im Neuen Testament und seiner Umwelt: Ein Streifzug durch das lukanische Erzählwerk,” *Studien zum Neuen Testament und seiner Umwelt* 28 (2003): 187-214; and Running, “Garments,” 401-407. For discussions dealing particularly with the NT world, see Jeal, “Clothes Make the (Wo)man,” 685-99; Bruce J. Malina and Jerome H. Neyrey, “Honor and Shame in Luke-Acts: Pivotal Values of the Mediterranean World,” in *The Social World of Luke-Acts: Models for Interpretation*, ed. Jerome H. Neyrey (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1991), 54-55; and Barbara E. Reid, “The Transfiguration: An Exegetical Study of Luke 9:28-36” (PhD diss., Catholic University of America, 1988), 189. Cf. Nils Alstrup Dahl, “Kleidungsmetaphern: der alte und der neue Mensch,” in *Studies in Ephesians: Introductory Questions, Text- & Edition-Critical Issues, Interpretation of Texts and Themes*, ed. David Hellholm, Vemund Blomkvist, and Tord Fornberg, WUNT 131 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000), 389-92; Nils Alstrup Dahl and David Hellholm, “Garment-Metaphors: The Old and the New Human Being,” in *Antiquity and Humanity: Essays on Ancient Religion and Philosophy Presented to Hans Dieter Betz on His 75th Birthday*, ed. Adela Yarbro Collins and Margaret M. Mitchell (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 139; and Milton L. Torres, “The Stripping of a Cloak: A *Topos* in Classical and Biblical Literature,” *Hermenêutica* 1 (2001): 53-54.

¹⁹For a brief yet detailed synopsis of the metaphorical understanding of dress in the OT, see Neufeld, “Under the Cover,” 69.

²⁰For the symbolic nature of dress, particularly in the Joseph cycle of stories in Genesis, see Nelly Furman, “His Story Versus Her Story: Male Genealogy and Female Strategy in the Jacob Cycle,” *Semeia* 46 (1989): 144, 146; and Mois A. Navon, “*Begeed* or *Simlah*—Is There a Difference?” *JBQ* 32 (2004): 266-69. Victor H. Matthews and Don C. Benjamin suggest that the message King Josiah communicated in 2 Kgs 22:11

in the more focused arena of Israelite society.²¹ Because dress communicated such important information as association with the sacred, commerce and finance, economic and political status, emotion, and honor or shame, one must not ignore or automatically downplay the numerous identity issues being communicated via various dress codes.²² At the same time, the polysemous and potentially ambiguous reality of such dress information provides a cautionary note for interpreters.²³

Examples from the writings of Luke and Josephus demonstrate the powerful and evocative nature of dress even after centuries of Israelite history.²⁴ Of the writers of the

when he tore his clothes in response to Shaphan's reading of the book of the law symbolized independence from Assyrian suzerainty (*Social World of Ancient Israel: 1250-587 BCE* [Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1993], 243), but this could more easily be seen as one of mourning, particularly in light of 22:19 (cf., e.g., Gen 37:34; 2 Sam 1:11-12; 14:2; Esth 4:1).

²¹Edwards, "Dress and Ornamentation," 2:232, 235, 238; Matthews and Benjamin, *Social World*, 147. Cf. Kim, *Significance of Clothing Imagery*, 11; and M. E. Vogelzang and W. J. van Bekkum, "Meaning and Symbolism of Clothing in Ancient Near Eastern Texts," in *Scripta Signa Vocis: Studies about Scripts, Scriptures, Scribes and Languages in the Near East, Presented to J. H. Hospers by his Pupils, Colleagues and Friends*, ed. H. L. J. Vanstiphout et al. (Groningen: Egbert Forsten, 1986), 272.

²²For a discussion of this and illustrative OT texts, see Edwards, "Dress and Ornamentation," 2:232-34, 238. Cf. Victor H. Matthews, "The Anthropology of Clothing in the Joseph Narrative," *JSOT* 65 (1995): 25, 36.

²³For example, the barefoot portrayal of a person could indicate such things as captivity or slavery (e.g., Isa 20:2-4), a state of mourning (cf. 2 Sam 15:30; Ezek 24:17, 23), or proximity to holy ground (cf. Exod 3:5; Josh 5:15). While priests wore a כְּתֹנֶת (tunic: cf. Exod 28:4; Ezra 2:69), so did such non-priestly people as Joseph (Gen 37:3), David's daughter Tamar (2 Sam 13:18-19), and Hushai the Archite (2 Sam 15:32).

²⁴For a compact survey of dress and its meaning during the Second Temple period, see Maier, "Kleidung II (Bedeutung)," 21:27-31. *Joseph and Aseneth* is one work during this period in which dress plays a critical role (e.g., 2:4; 3:6; 4:1; 5:5; 10:8-11, 14; 13:2-5; 14:9—15:2; 15:10; 16:18; 18:5-6; 20:6; 21:5; textual references are based on the longer group of mss., and on this see the discussion in C. Burchard, "Joseph and Aseneth: A New Translation and Introduction," in *OTP*, 2:178, 180-81;

NT Gospels, Luke exhibits a particularly strong interest in dress. Luke's association of dress with Jesus is so strong that Robert J. Karris has suggested that "in a sense Luke describes Jesus' life from beginning to end by means of the theme of clothing."²⁵

Furthermore, James L. Resseguie proposes that even Jesus' own dress—whether it is the clothes with which he was wrapped at birth (2:7), the clothes which gleamed white like a lightning flash at his transfiguration (9:29), the radiant robes placed on him during his mocking by the Romans (23:11), or the linen cloths cast off and left behind at his resurrection (24:12)—was fundamental to understanding him, since it disclosed his social status and/or inner nature or character during critical, transitional moments in his earthly life.²⁶

and idem, "The Text of *Joseph and Aseneth* Reconsidered," *JSP* 14 [2005]: 83-96). On the dating of this work before 100 CE, cf. George J. Brooke, "Men and Women as Angels in *Joseph and Aseneth*," *JSP* 14 (2005): 172-76; Collins, "*Joseph and Aseneth*," 106, 109-111; and Docherty, "*Joseph and Aseneth*," 31.

The NT documents written during the first century CE intersected not only with Judaism but also with the Roman world, with its particular perspectives on and understandings of dress, and thus one cannot look simply to Judaism as the background for understanding NT statements on and references to dress. Cf. Edwards, "Dress and Ornamentation," 2:235; and Lucille A. Roussin, "Costume in Roman Palestine: Archaeological Remains and the Evidence from the Mishnah," in *The World of Roman Costume*, ed. Judith Lynn Sebesta and Larissa Bonfante, Wisconsin Studies in Classics (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1994), 182-90, in which she makes the following baffling assertion: "Early Christian written sources contain only two references [Mark 9:3; 2 Tim 4:13] to Jewish costume" (p. 182). Jeri DeBrohun concludes that Roman dress was more symbolically loaded than Greek dress ("Power Dressing in Ancient Greece and Rome," *History Today* 51 [February 2001]: 20).

²⁵Robert J. Karris, *Luke: Artist and Theologian: Luke's Passion Account as Literature*, Theological Inquiries: Studies in Contemporary Biblical and Theological Problems (New York: Paulist, 1985), 86.

²⁶James L. Resseguie, "Clothing: A Map of the Spiritual Life," in *Spiritual Landscape: Images of the Spiritual Life in the Gospel of Luke* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2004), 91-94.

For Josephus dress also carried much weight, not only with regard to Jewish societal sensibilities but also within the broader Roman world.²⁷ Josephus indicates that dress could be used in an attempt to powerfully control the reactions of people. For example, in his brief narrative account about Herod Agrippa I's last speech and shocking death (also found in Acts 12:19-23),²⁸ he describes in much more detail than Luke the clothing that Agrippa wore—that it was woven completely out of silver, and that it was radiant and glittering—and that its resultant effect on Agrippa's audience was to create a sense of fear and awe in them (A.J. 19.344). Here one finds a case of dress-related impression management: Agrippa attempted to control the effect on and response of his audience via the dress he wore so that they would realize that he was not one to be treated lightly or flippantly.²⁹

Josephus's writings also give evidence that dress not only conveyed signs of

²⁷Douglas R. Edwards notes that "Josephus' literary uses of dress or costume reflect his involvement in the status-conscious, symbol-laden world of first-century Roman society and the tradition-laden Jewish world from which he came" ("The Social, Religious, and Political Aspects of Costume in Josephus," in *World of Roman Costume*, 153). Dress in the Roman world went beyond clothing to encompass "beards, hairstyles, and wigs, perfumes and cosmetics, jewellery and accessories, and colour, whether of clothing, hair dye, or skin treatments (tattoos, for example)" (DeBrohun, "Power Dressing," 18-19). Those who lived within the wider world of the NT consequently did not utilize dress merely for warmth or protection but also for making statements and affirming their identity, status, and role in society.

²⁸When the people of Tyre and Sidon made a trip to Herod's residence in Caesarea in order to ask for peace, he "put on his royal robes" (ἐνδυσάμενος ἐσθῆτα βασιλικήν [12:21]) and delivered an oration to them. But his audience shouted out that they had heard the voice of a god and not a man. Luke narrates that because Agrippa did not give God the glory, he died a horrible death (12:22-23).

²⁹So Neufeld, "Sumptuous Clothing," 669. Cf. also *ibid.*, p. 670 and *idem*, "Under the Cover," 70.

prestige and status but also political, cosmic, and spiritual gravity.³⁰ A revealing example occurs in his discussion of the attempt by the Levites to appropriate the linen robes worn by the priests and Herod Agrippa II's subsequent granting of their request. Josephus indicated that this violation of the traditional dress code was a major cause for the defeat of the Jewish nation in its conflict with Rome (*A.J.* 20.216-18). And in terms of cosmic³¹ and spiritual meaning, Josephus concludes, for example, that while the high priest's clothing symbolized the intersection of heaven and earth (cf. *A.J.* 3.181-86), it also provided an ongoing, chastening reminder of the apostasy of the nation, since for over two hundred years the providential flash of light from the high priest's ephod had not occurred (*A.J.* 3:215-17).

Dress in the biblical world is thus a goldmine of crucial information for understanding human customs and practices, aspirations and hopes, and concerns and worries. Furthermore, one cannot completely understand the character, status, and overall identity of an ancient individual if one purposefully downplays or excludes references to that individual's dress. While this is not necessarily the case today, with our global fashions, consumer orientation, "mix and match" desires, transitory fads, and so on, it was certainly much more the case in the ancient world.

³⁰It was particularly during Second Temple Judaism that the dress of the high priest was explicitly understood to have cosmic and other meanings. See Edwards's discussion in "Costume in Josephus," 155-57.

³¹Cf. also, for example, the cosmic description of the high priest's garments in *Wis* 18:24-25.

Dress Communicates Identity

As contemporary academicians have noted, dress not only communicates, but it communicates identity. In fact, it communicates many types of identity. This was also true of the biblical world. Some of the types of identity that dress signaled include personal, status, group, ethnic, and gender identities.

Dress and Personal Identity

As in contemporary society, in the ancient world one's perception of dress—even the negation of dress³²—had an extraordinary ability to help one decode the identity of another person. This could occur because dress was frequently an extension

³²Nakedness has been commonly understood to be symbolic of the loss of personal identity and thus shameful. The classic narrative on this particular theme is that of the tragic story of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden (Gen 3:6-11, 21). See Vogelzang and van Bekkum, "Meaning and Symbolism, 273. Cf., e.g., Gildas Hamel, "Poverty in Clothing," in *Poverty and Charity in Roman Palestine, First Three Centuries C.E.*, University of California Publications: Near Eastern Studies 23 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 73-75; Haulotte, *Symbolique du Vêtement*, 79-89; McKay, "Gendering the Display," 190-91, 196; Neufeld, "Sumptuous Clothing," 674-76; idem, "Under the Cover," 69; and H. Viviers, "Clothed and Unclothed in the Song of Songs," *Old Testament Essays* 12 (1999): 617-20. For other understandings of nakedness in the story of Adam and Eve, see Dietmar Neufeld, "The Rhetoric of Body, Clothing and Identity in the *Vita* and Genesis," *Scriptura* 90 (2005): 679-84, who expresses dissatisfaction that despite a number of studies on the significance of Adam and Eve's dress, no books have "dealt in a significant way with body, clothing and identity" (p. 681).

For the interpretation of nakedness as a "costume" in the ancient world, see Larissa Bonfante, "Classical Nudity in Italy and Greece," in *Ancient Italy in Its Mediterranean Setting: Studies in Honour of Ellen Macnamara*, ed. David Ridgway et al., Accordia Specialist Studies on the Mediterranean 4 (London: Accordia Research Institute, University of London, 2000), 271-93, in particular, 271-72; and idem, "Nudity as a Costume in Classical Art," *American Journal of Archaeology* 93 (1989): 543-70, in particular, p. 544. As a costume nakedness would not be a negative perspective of dress.

of one's personhood or personal identity.³³ For instance, in the ANE not only were various types of garments utilized exclusively for some of the gods and others for some of the goddesses, but certain garments were restricted to a particular god or goddess.³⁴ Dress also plays a striking role as a synecdochical extension or revealer of personal identity in the OT stories³⁵ about Joseph,³⁶ King Saul and the future King David,³⁷ and

³³Dress was so co-extensive with personal identity that it could reveal internal emotions. See Müller, "Kleidung als Element," 203-204, and cf. Åke Viberg, "Saul Exposed by Irony: A New Understanding of 1 Samuel 15:27 Based on Two Symbolic Acts," *Svensk exegetisk årsbok* 70 (2005): 307.

³⁴Zawadzki, *Garments of the Gods*, 193-98; cf. also Matsushima, "Some Remarks," 233, 234. See also Oppenheim ("Akkadian *pul(u)h(t)u* and *melammu*," 33) and Ferris J. Stephens ("The Ancient Significance of *ŠÎŠÎTH*," *JBL* 50 [1931]: 64; cf. Stephanie Dalley, "Ancient Assyrian Textiles and the Origins of Carpet Design," *Iran* 29 [1991]: 125).

³⁵Pilch, "Clothes," 19; Christine E. Palmer, "Clothes," *NDBT* (2000), 416-17. For a discussion of several examples, see Wilder, "Illumination and Investiture," 59-60.

³⁶Furman, "His Story," 143-44, 146. John R. Huddleston reinforces the observation made by others that the motif of dress "is arguably more prominent in chs. 37-39 than elsewhere in the Joseph story or Genesis" ("Divestiture, Deception, and Demotion: The Garment Motif in Genesis 37-39," *JSOT* 98 [2002]: 52).

³⁷See Ora Horn Prouser, "Suited to the Throne: The Symbolic Use of Clothing in the David and Saul Narratives," *JSOT* 71 (1996): 28-37; and idem, "Clothes Maketh the Man: Keys to Meaning in the Stories of Saul and David," *Bible Review* 14 (February 1998): 23-27. When David cut off the hem of King Saul's cloak, for example, he perceived that he had in fact harmed Saul, and that is why he immediately felt remorse (1 Sam 24:1-10). Cf. the discussion of this story in Jacob Milgrom, "Of Hems and Tassels: Rank, Authority and Holiness Were Expressed in Antiquity by Fringes on Garments," *BAR* 9 (May-June 1983): 61; Podella, *Das Lichtkleid JHWHs*, 51-53; Prouser, "Suited to the Throne," 28-29; idem, "Clothes Maketh the Man," 24; and Stephens, "Ancient Significance of *ŠÎŠÎTH*," 69-70. See also the relationship between dress and personal identity in the story of Saul and the Witch of Endor in 1 Sam 28; Prouser notes that Samuel's garment known as the מְעִיל (2:19; 15:27; 28:14) was "the only external attribute ascribed to him in the book of Samuel" ("Suited to the Throne," 29; cf. p. 33). Cf. Viberg, "Saul Exposed by Irony," 301-308.

the prophet Elijah.³⁸ The same is true for Luke's stories about both Jesus³⁹ and the apostle Paul.⁴⁰

Dress could, however, provide miscues and thus frustrate the decoding process.

One finds an example of this in Gen 38, where Judah (mis)read the dress of his (unrecognized) daughter-in-law, Tamar.⁴¹ Here it is not her revealed identity but her

³⁸See 2 Kgs 1:1-8, in which King Ahaziah is able to identify Elijah by his description as a hairy man with a leather belt around his waist.

³⁹The relationship between person and dress is explicit in the story of the woman with the flow of blood and her encounter with Jesus (Luke 8:43-48). Luke records that the woman touched the fringe of his garment, but immediately Jesus asked "Who touched me?" (τίς ὁ ἀψάμενός μου; [8:45; cf. 8:46]). Touching the fringe of Jesus' garment was equivalent to touching him. See, e.g., the discussion in Reid, "Transfiguration," 191-92. The fringe (κράσπεδον) that the woman touched (Luke 8:44; see also Matt 9:20; cf. Matt 14:36; 23:5; Mark 6:56) was the same as the "fringe" (e.g., KJV, NRSV) or "tassel" (e.g., NASB, NIV) mentioned in LXX Num 15:38-39 and Deut 22:12 (κράσπεδον).

⁴⁰According to Acts 19:12, handkerchiefs or aprons (σουδάρια ἢ σιμικίνθια) that had touched Paul's skin (χρωτὸς) were taken to the sick and, as extensions of Paul's personal identity, were instrumental in their healing from disease and deliverance from evil spirits. Richard Strelan discusses these terms and concludes that the *sudarium*, worn around the neck, "was part of the uniform of an orator and was worn and used for effect as much as it was for practical purposes" of mopping up the sweat from one's brow ("Acts 19:12: Paul's 'Aprons' Again," *JTS*, n.s., 51 [2003]: 155). The *semicinctium* was apparently a girdle or belt worn around the area of the stomach and the genitals (ibid., 155-156). Paul, debating in the lecture hall of Tyrannus in Ephesus (Acts 19:9), had worn these clothes because they were the accepted dress of an orator (Strelan, "Acts 19:12," 156-57). Cf. idem, *Strange Acts: Studies in the Cultural World of the Acts of the Apostles*, Beiheft zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche 126 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2004), 195-98.

⁴¹Note that she puts on her different wardrobe after she has removed her "garments of widowhood" (אַלְמָנוּתָהּ בְּגָדֶי [Gen 38:14]).

veiled identity that is crucial to the narrative plot.⁴² While some scholars assert that the dress associated with Tamar clearly identified her as a prostitute, others disagree and compellingly argue that the issue is not really one of identification but rather concealment or disguise, the flip side of identification.⁴³ Thus Tamar's dress in this story concealed her personal identity, a necessary component of her strategy of deception.⁴⁴

⁴²Phyllis A. Bird is one who notes that the narrator does not state that she was dressed as a harlot, prostitute, or whore, instead leaving the inference up to Judah ("The Harlot as Heroine: Narrative Art and Social Presupposition in Three Old Testament Texts," *Semeia* 46 [1989]: 123). On Tamar's disguise and the difference between a courtesan, a harlot, a whore, one who engages in illicit sex, and/or a ritual prostitute in this story, cf. *ibid.*, 124-25; Mieke Bal, *Lethal Love: Feminist Literary Readings of Biblical Love Stories*, Indiana Studies in Biblical Literature (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1987); Furman, "His Story," 144-45; and Huddleston, "Divestiture," 47-62.

⁴³See, e.g., Carmichael, who observed that Tamar's dress was "no minor element in the story" and continued by suggesting that "any reader, ancient or modern, is aware that a prostitute's clothing declares who she is. As an anonymous person she is known by her garb; it is the means by which she communicates her [role-related] identity" ("Forbidden Mixtures," 409). For more advocates of this position, see the list in John R. Huddleston, "Unveiling the Versions: The Tactics of Tamar in Genesis 38:15," *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures* 7, art. 4 (2001), http://www.jhsonline.org/Articles/article_19.pdf (accessed March 8, 2012), n. 2.

Huddleston asserts, however, that "the veil was not part of a prostitute's costume." Instead, he notes that "the *ancient* view [was] that the veil was intended only to hide her identity" ("Divestiture," 58). Huddleston suggests that it was her clothing (that is, her veil) that concealed her identity, while her location at Enaim "conveyed her harlot status" ("Unveiling the Versions," par. 2). On the veil as an indicator of social standing in Assyria, see Toorn, "Significance of the Veil," 338.

⁴⁴Here personal identity issues revolve not only around Tamar but also around Judah, for it is his signet, cord, and staff that Tamar asked for as a pledge and then publicly revealed as his (38:18, 25). See Elizabeth E. Platt, "Jewelry, Ancient Israelite," *ABD*, 3:829: "In both instances they are definite signs of Judah's identity."

Dress and Social Identity

Dress was an important means of one person interpreting another's social identity and status in the ancient world. This was not only true for the ANE⁴⁵ in general, but it can also be amply illustrated from biblical literature well into the time of the Roman Empire.⁴⁶ Dress was thus so communicatively powerful that one could often determine another's social status by either observing it (decoding the signals)⁴⁷ or by

⁴⁵Cf. Mary Harlow and Lloyd Llewellyn-Jones, "Pre-Islamic Dress Codes in the Eastern Mediterranean and Southwest Asia," in *Central and Southwest Asia*, ed. Gillian Vogelsang-Eastwood, vol. 5 of *Encyclopedia of World Dress and Fashion*, ed. Joanne B. Eicher (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 24; Hamel, "Poverty in Clothing," 73; Kruger, "Hem of the Garment," 79; idem, "Symbolic Significance," 106-107; Postgate, "Assyrian Uniforms," 373-74, 384; Siebert-Hommes, "'On the Third Day,'" par. 1; Viviers, "Clothed and Unclothed," 609-611; and Vogelzang and van Bekkum, "Meaning and Symbolism," 265-72. See also the discussion with regard to dress being critical in distinguishing between various socioeconomic classes in Ebla in Alfonso Archi, "Clothes in Ebla," in *Michael: Historical, Epigraphical and Biblical Studies in Honor of Prof. Michael Heltzer*, ed. Yitzhak Avishur and Robert Deutsch (Tel Aviv - Jaffa: Archaeological Center Publications, 1999), 45-54.

⁴⁶On the social identity role resulting from the importation of foreign fashions into Athens, for example, see Margaret C. Miller, *Athens and Persia in the Fifth Century BC: A Study in Cultural Receptivity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 153-55. On the importance of dress codes in the Roman world in the context of the NT, see the extensive discussion in Bruce W. Winter, *Roman Wives, Roman Widows: The Appearance of New Women and the Pauline Communities* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003).

⁴⁷With regard to group identification, the dress code of the Essenes, for instance, allowed them to identify themselves not only to the world but to each other (A. I. Baumgarten, "He Knew That He Knew That He Knew That He Was an Essene," *JJS* 48 [1997]: 57-58; cf. Jodi Magness, *The Archaeology of Qumran and the Dead Sea Scrolls* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002], 195-206; and Reid, "Transfiguration," 190). While the wearing of phylacteries by pious Jews signaled that they were persons observant of the covenant (so Malina and Neyrey, "Honor and Shame," 55; and Neyrey, "The Symbolic Universe of Luke-Acts: 'They Turn the World Upside Down,'" in *Social World of Luke-Acts*, 283), Baumgarten also suggests that the broad phylacteries and

simply referring to it (sending the coded signals).

Resseguie, discussing the meaning of dress in the Gospel of Luke, observes how pervasive and crucial dress was for decoding social and socioeconomic status:

In the ancient world, the quality of the fabric (wool, linen, cotton, or silk), the condition and length of the garment, the color of the dyes, and the type of ornamentation indicated social status. Linen and fine silk were expensive fabrics available only to those of high social status. Unblemished garments were essential for social and religious duties. The color and quality of dyes testified to social status; purple dye was very expensive and available only to the wealthy. A “fulled” garment was thoroughly washed and bleached in a special clay to make it as white as possible. This was a costly process and thus available only to a very few persons of means. On the other hand, unbleached garments—dark brown and gray—were the standard of the poor and *hoi polloi*. The length of the garment was also an important indicator of social status. The poor and slaves dressed with short tunics and cloaks, while long cloaks and tunics were common among the rich and dignitaries. Footwear and ornamentation also signaled social status. Long fringes, ornate hems, rings and headgear, for instance, were common among the wealthy and those of high status, while slaves not only lacked all ornamentation but also went barefoot.⁴⁸

For example, one could identify the Jewish heroine Judith by “the garments of her widowhood” (τὰ ἱμάτια τῆς χηρείσεως αὐτῆς [Jdt 8:5; cf. 10:3]). In another passage describing the fear, perplexities, and worry that characterize human life, Sir

fringes of the Pharisees apparently were part of their own dress code criteria for identification (A. I. Baumgarten, “He Knew,” 58, n. 19; cf. Matt 23:5).

⁴⁸Resseguie, “Clothing,” 89-90. With regard to the Roman world, cf. Larissa Bonfante and Eva Jaunzems, “Clothing and Ornament,” in *Civilization of the Ancient Mediterranean: Greece and Rome*, ed. Michael Grant and Rachel Kitzinger [New York: Scribner’s, 1988], 3:1401; A. T. Croom, *Roman Clothing and Fashion* (Stroud, UK: Tempus, 2000), 145; Olson, *Roman Woman*, 96-99; and Maria Wyke, “Woman in the Mirror: The Rhetoric of Adornment in the Roman World,” in *Women in Ancient Societies: An Illusion of the Night*, ed. Léonie J. Archer, Susan Fischler, and Maria Wyke (New York: Routledge, 1994), 135. Men’s jewelry was distinguished from women’s jewelry, since the former indicated social rank while the latter was considered only used for adornment (Olson, *Roman Woman*, 55).

40:4 spans the socioeconomic spectrum by describing those who wore either a turban and the golden head ornament (MT⁴⁹)—or, hyacinth (bluish purple⁵⁰) and a crown (LXX⁵¹)—to those who were wrapped in or who otherwise wore coarse linen.⁵² And in Jas 2:2, James, in a denunciation of the practice of Christians in favoring the rich over the poor, does not identify the rich as rich per se but rather points to their dress as their

⁴⁹The turban (תַּיִטָּב) and golden head ornament (זָבִיבָה) were worn only by the high priest (cf. Zech 3:5 and Exod 28:36; 39:30; Lev 8:9).

⁵⁰The modern color purple (reddish or Tyrian purple: תַּיִטָּבָה / πορφύρα) was frequently associated with royalty and royal authority (cf., e.g., Judg 8:26; Esth 8:15; Dan 5:7, 16, 29; 4QProto-Esther^c ar [4Q550b] 5). Yet it was not a color worn solely by royalty (cf., e.g., Exod 28:5, 6; Prov 31:22; Jer 10:9; 1 Esdr 3:6). On the distinctions between modern violet (bluish/hyacinthine purple: תַּיִטָּבָה / ὑάκινθος) and modern purple (reddish/Tyrian purple), cf. Manfred Dietrich, “Trumpet Snails and Purple Snails as an Indication of the Transfer of Religion and Technology in the Eastern-Mediterranean Region,” in *Homeland and Exile: Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern Studies in Honour of Bustenay Oded*, ed. Gershon Galil, Mark Geller, and Alan Millard, VTSup 130 (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 51-54; I. Irving Ziderman, “Seashells and Ancient Purple Dyeing,” *Biblical Archaeologist* 53 (June 1990): 98-101; and idem, “Purple Dyeing in the Mediterranean World: Characterisation of Biblical *Tekhelet*,” in *Colour in the Ancient Mediterranean World*, ed. Liza Cleland and Karen Stears with Glenys Davies, British Archaeological Reports International Series 1267 (Oxford: Hedges, 2004), 40-45. Wearing purple indicated high status (Herbert Block, “The Missing Thread of Blue,” *JBQ* 31 [2003]: 247; Jane Bridgeman, “Purple Dye in Late Antiquity and Byzantium,” in *The Royal Purple and the Biblical Blue: Argaman and Tekhelet: The Study of Chief Rabbi Dr. Isaac Herzog on the Dye Industries in Ancient Israel and Recent Scientific Contributions*, ed. Ehud Spanier [Jerusalem: Keter, 1987], 159).

⁵¹With reference to the Greek version, the high priest wore this color of hyacinth (bluish purple) on his robe (Exod 28:31; 39:22) and a wreath or crown (στέφανος: Sir 45:12).

⁵²In this verse Ben Sira does not identify their socioeconomic status except by noting their customary garb, but it appears that he is comparing the high priest to those lower on the sociological scale, since in the previous verse he has already mentioned the one who sits on the throne—the king.

distinguishing mark of socioeconomic identity, comparing the reception of “a gold-ringed man [dressed] in a bright/shining garment” (ἀνὴρ χρυσοδακτύλιος ἐν ἐσθῆτι λαμπρᾷ) with that of “a poor man [dressed] in a filthy garment” (πτωχὸς ἐν ῥυπαρᾷ ἐσθῆτι).⁵³

Dress and Status Transitions

Dress also marked transitions from one social or spiritual identity to another.⁵⁴

The more important the goddess or god in the ANE, the higher the quality of the dress s/he wore, and one can probably deduce changes in her/his relative status in the local pantheon in part from the type of dress supplied to that particular goddess or god.⁵⁵

Changes in dress critically marked Joseph’s changes in both personal and social identity during his transitions from being in his father’s care, to slavery in Egypt, and to the status of an Egyptian courtier (Gen 37:3; 39:12-18; 41:42).⁵⁶ At one point in his life,

⁵³The explicit mention of the rich appears later, where James reminds his audience that the rich (οἱ πλούσιοι [2:6]) are their oppressors and the ones who drag them into court.

For an ancient non-biblical reference to those who attempted to disguise their social identity and worth by adorning themselves with various fashionable types of clothing, see Aristotle *Eth. nic.* 1125a 27-33.

⁵⁴See Resseguie, “Clothing,” 89-94. Social and spiritual identities frequently overlap. Wilder agrees (“Illumination and Investiture,” 67-68) with Oden (“Grace or Status?” 101) that God clothing Adam and Eve in Gen 3:21 indicated God’s gracious act of raising their status from that of the level of vegetative life (fig leaves) to that of animal life (garments of skin), a status investiture.

⁵⁵So Zawadzki, *Garments of the Gods*, 156-57. Cf. the clothing of cult statues as described in Jer 10:9 and Ezek 16:17-18.

⁵⁶Matthews discusses this in his “Anthropology of Clothing,” 28-36. See also Carmichael (“Forbidden Mixtures,” 408, 413), Furman (“His Story,” 143-44),

King Jehoiachin was identified by his distinctive prison dress or “clothes of imprisonment” (בְּגָדֵי כְלָאוֹ [2 Kgs 25:29; Jer 52:33]), and changing his clothes indicated a radical change in social status. In the Roman world, the wearing of the *toga virilis* indicated the transition from youth to manhood as well as full Roman citizenship.⁵⁷ In the NT Luke is particularly interested in utilizing dress imagery to convey this transitional aspect of identity,⁵⁸ using it to narrate, for example, the transition of the demoniac from spiritual abasement to spiritual regeneration (8:26-39)⁵⁹ as well as the generous status enhancement the younger son received when he returned home in the parable of the Prodigal Son (15:11-32). The transformation of spiritual identity via dress occurs in a significant manner as well in the Pauline corpus.⁶⁰

Huddleston (“Divestiture,” 60), and McKay (“Gendering the Body,” 94). McKay observes that “it will come as no surprise to discover that changes of dress often accompany, or even determine, changes of societal role or gender role” (ibid.).

⁵⁷Cf. Kim, *Significance of Clothing Imagery*, 94-95; and J. Albert Harrill, “Coming of Age and Putting on Christ: The *Toga Virilis* Ceremony, Its Paraenesis, and Paul’s Interpretation of Baptism in Galatians,” *NovT* 44 (2002): 255-66.

⁵⁸See the discussion by Resseguie in “Clothing,” 89-94. For more discussion of the meaning of dress in Luke, see also Karris, *Luke: Artist and Theologian*, 85-87; Michael P. Knowles, “What Was the Victim Wearing? Literary, Economic, and Social Contexts for the Parable of the Good Samaritan,” *BI* 12 (2004): 155-58; and Reid, “Transfiguration,” 189-93. Cf. Müller, “Kleidung als Element,” 187-214.

⁵⁹Luke highlights this through his narration of the demoniac’s transition from being naked to being “clothed and in his right mind” (ἱματισμένον καὶ σωφρονοῦντα [8:35]). Cf. Hamel, who suggests that the reference to his initial lack of clothing may have been a respectful way of indicating that he was mentally ill (“Poverty in Clothing,” 74).

⁶⁰For instance, in 1 Cor 15:51-52 Paul describes the Christian’s future transformation from mortality to immortality by twice utilizing the verb ἀλλάσσω, which can refer to both a generic change or to a change of dress (BDAG, s.v.

Such actions as ripping, stripping, and branding—along with their consequent visual appearance—were also highly capable of communicating identity transitions. The tearing of the Babylonian dress item known as a *sisiktu* is a classic example of an action directed at one’s dress, changing that one’s positional status in society.⁶¹ Within the HB an unusual levirate law came into play when a man refused to marry his brother’s widow: The widow would publicly spit on that man and remove his sandal (Deut 25:5-9), and his household would forever be socially degraded and known as the “house of the pulled-off sandal” (בֵּית הַלִּוּי הַנָּעֵל [25:10]).⁶² And branding by fire “with the ivy-leaf symbol of Dionysus” those who refused to participate in the cult of Dionysus being propagated by Ptolemy IV Philopator indicated that those so branded on

“ἀλλάσσω” [cf. secs. 1 and 2]). Furthermore, in the next two verses (15:53-54) Paul describes the future human transformation from a perishable body to an imperishable one utilizing ἐνδύω, a verb of dress. See the discussion in Kim (*Significance of Clothing Imagery*, 203-205) and Wilder (“Illumination and Investiture,” 65). For a more comprehensive discussion of the use of dress language to describe spiritual identity and transformation in the Pauline corpus, cf. Berger (*Identity and Experience*, 40-43), Dahl and Hellholm (“Garment-Metaphors,” 139-58), Jeal (“Clothes Make the [Wo]man,” 685-99), and Kim (*Significance of Clothing Imagery*, 106-226).

⁶¹Stephens, “Ancient Significance of *SĪSĪTH*,” 65. Cf. Viberg, “Saul Exposed by Irony,” 302-305.

⁶²For discussions of this custom, see Calum M. Carmichael, “A Ceremonial Cruc: Removing a Man’s Sandal as a Female Gesture of Contempt,” *JBL* 96 (1977): 321-36; Paul A. Kruger, “The Removal of the Sandal in Deuteronomy XXV 9: ‘A Rite of Passage’?” *VT* 46 (1996): 534-39; Donald A. Leggett, *The Levirate and Goel Institutions in the Old Testament with Special Attention to the Book of Ruth* (Cherry Hill, NJ: Mack, 1974), 55-62; Anthony Phillips, “The Book of Ruth—Deception and Shame,” *JJS* 37 (1986): 12-13; and Åke Viberg, *Symbols of Law: A Contextual Analysis of Legal Symbolic Acts in the Old Testament*, Coniectanea Biblica: Old Testament Series 34 (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1992), 145-65.

their bodies had received a status reduction and did not have equal citizenship with the Alexandrians (3 Macc 2:29-30).⁶³

Dress and Gender Identity

Within Israelite society dress could communicate gender identity, and on some occasions certain dress was forbidden to certain genders when it communicated a gender different from that of the person wearing it. The clearest evidence for this is the sartorial legislation that prohibited men and women from wearing each other's dress (Deut 22:5).⁶⁴ At the same time, certain articles of dress were not gender-specific and could be worn by both women and men.⁶⁵ In such situations the dress by itself would not communicate gender identity.⁶⁶

⁶³Cf. the discussion in Shaye J. D. Cohen, ““Those Who Say They Are Jews and Are Not’: How Do You Know a Jew in Antiquity When You See One?” in *Diasporas in Antiquity*, ed. Shaye J. D. Cohen and Ernest S. Frerichs, Brown Judaic Studies 288 (Atlanta: Scholars, 1993), 6.

⁶⁴See, e.g., P. J. Harland, “Menswear and Womenswear: A Study of Deuteronomy 22:5,” *ExpTim* 110 (1998): 73-76. Harland concludes by providing one interpretation—that this was based on a “rejection of actions which might confuse or mix sexual identity” (ibid., 76).

⁶⁵E.g., both Adam and Eve wore “tunics of skin” (כְּתָנוּת עוֹר [Gen 3:21]; cf. the woman in Song 5:3); and Tamar wore a certain type of robe (מְעִיל [2 Sam 13:18]) frequently associated with men (e.g., Exod 28:4; 1 Sam 18:4; Job 1:20; Ezek 26:16).

⁶⁶Cf. Furman, who notes the differing messages dress could communicate for men and women in Genesis (“His Story,” 147). Here she summarizes the use of dress in the stories of Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and Judah, as well as Rebekah, Tamar, and Potiphar's wife. Notice also the dress catalog in Isa 3:18-23, which contains only a few items that were exclusively associated with women's dress, but many of the articles were associated only with men and were the insignia of official positions and roles they played in society. See Platt, “Jewelry, Ancient Israelite,” 3:830-32; idem, “Jewelry of Bible Times and the Catalog of Isa 3:18-23,” Parts I and II, *AUSS* 17 (1979): 71-84,

More specifically, hairstyles, and in particular, the length of one's hair, could socially communicate one's gender in the ancient world.⁶⁷ The Jewish author who wrote what is known as *The Sentences of Pseudo-Phocylides*,⁶⁸ who "was not a philosopher, but a purveyor of conventional ideals,"⁶⁹ remarked about the gender identity that one's hair length could communicate, and the moral dangers it could produce (lines 210-214):⁷⁰

Do not grow locks in the hair of a male child.
Braid not his crown or the cross-knots on the top of his head.

189-201. Cf. Pilch, "Cosmetics and Jewelry," *Cultural Dictionary*, 31; and Running, "Garments," 406-407.

⁶⁷Cf., e.g., 1 Cor 11:14-15; 1 Tim 2:9; 1 Pet 3:1-3; David E. Blattenberger III, *Rethinking 1 Corinthians 11:2-16 Through Archaeological and Moral-Rhetorical Analysis*, Studies in the Bible and Early Christianity 36 (Lewiston, NY: Mellen, 1997), 52-53; and Loren T. Stuckenbruck, "Why Should Women Cover Their Heads Because of the Angels? (1 Corinthians 11:10)," *Stone-Campbell Journal* 4 (2001): 205-34 (particularly 210-12, 227-30).

⁶⁸For an overview of the issues surrounding its Jewish authorship, see P. W. van der Horst ("Pseudo-Phocylides: A New Translation and Introduction," in *OTP*, 2:565-71) and Walter T. Wilson (*The Sentences of Pseudo-Phocylides*, Commentaries on Early Jewish Literature [Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2005], 3-8). On its date cf. P. W. van der Horst, *The Sentences of Pseudo-Phocylides: With Introduction and Commentary*, Studia in Veteris Testamenti pseudepigraphica 4 (Leiden: Brill, 1978), 82; idem, "Pseudo-Phocylides," 2:568, where he repeats his belief stated earlier (*Sentences of Pseudo-Phocylides*, 82) that it is best dated between 30 BCE and 40 CE; and Wilson, *Sentences of Pseudo-Phocylides*, 7, where he suggests that the evidence points to a time somewhere between 100 BCE and 100 CE.

⁶⁹John J. Collins, "Life After Death in Pseudo-Phocylides," in *Jerusalem, Alexandria, Rome: Studies in Ancient Cultural Interaction in Honour of A. Hilhorst*, ed. García Martínez and Gerhard P. Luttikhuisen, JSJSup 82 (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 85.

⁷⁰English translation quoted from Wilson, *Sentences of Pseudo-Phocylides*, 200. See the discussion of this text in *ibid.* (pp. 208-209), Blattenberger (*Rethinking 1 Corinthians 11:2-16*, 52-53), and Cohen ("Those Who Say," 6).

For men to wear long hair is not seemly, just for sensual women.
Protect the youthful beauty of a handsome boy;
For many rage with lust for sex with a male.

Hair was not simply a style, or part of one's body, but an element of one's overall dress and a tightly constructed and guarded sign that was supposed to communicate the social identity of gender to observers.⁷¹

Dress and Ethnic Identity

Was one an Israelite? An Egyptian? A Persian? An "Oriental"?⁷² A human?⁷³

Dress could frequently enable one to decode such ethnic identities.⁷⁴ Joseph, for

⁷¹Cf. comparisons to the "loose" or "spread out" hair of women in *Apoc. Zeph.* 4:4 and 6:9 (O. S. Wintermute, "Apocalypse of Zephaniah: A New Translation and Introduction," in *OTP*, 1:511 and 512, n. 6b). Wintermute suggests that this apocalypse was written after 100 BCE and before 70 CE (*ibid.*, 1:500-501). See also the comparison of the hair of the locusts in Rev 9:8 to women's hair (τρίχας γυναικῶν).

⁷²The Athenians, for example, emphasized "Orientals" having sleeves, since sleeves were not characteristic of other cultures with which they interacted (Miller, *Athens and Persia*, 156).

⁷³In terms of the former, in Heb 5:2 the author unexpectedly and strikingly writes that the earthly high priest can deal gently with those who are ignorant and have gone astray since he is "clothed with weakness" (περίκειται ἀσθένειαν; cf. this meaning for περίκειμαι in BDAG and LSJ, s.v. "περίκειμαι," and Attridge, *Hebrews*, 144). The author has no interest in the magnificent dress of the high priest (see the next chapter for one possible exception to this conclusion; Jewish sources [e.g., Sir 45:7-8; 50:5-11] rhapsodized about the glorious and stunning vestments of the earthly high priest). Rather, the author's focus is in the high priest's metaphorical dress—being clothed with the weakness that is a function as well as an indicator of his social identity as a member of the human race. Cf. Attridge (*Hebrews*, 144), Koester (*Hebrews*, 286-87, 296-97), and Vanhoye (*Old Testament Priests*, 139).

⁷⁴Kenneth E. Bailey stated that "Jewish and non-Jewish costumes could be differentiated by sight in Palestine in the first century" (*Through Peasant Eyes: More Lucan Parables, Their Culture and Style* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980], 42-43). Cohen, however, asserted that one could not distinguish between the dress of Jews and

instance, not only acted but also dressed as an Egyptian (Gen 41:14, 42; 43:31-32); the result was that even his own brothers had a difficult time perceiving his true identity (cf. 42:7-8). Similarly, the “code of clothing”⁷⁵ at work in the book of Esther helps explain why Queen Esther did not wear the more culturally appropriate dress of sackcloth (as her relative Mordecai had done [4:1]) when faced with a fullblown crisis for her people, the Jews: She needed to maintain her “Persian” identity by wearing her royal robes (5:1).⁷⁶ In addition, when the Persian king honored Mordecai, Mordecai wore a royal robe that the king had worn (6:7-11); but as David J. A. Clines notes, this dress announced “his identity as Persian—as Persian as it is possible for a Jew to be.”⁷⁷

Gentiles during this time period (“Those Who Say,” 3-8, 39-41). But Philip F. Esler convincingly argues against Cohen’s thesis in “Jesus and the Reduction of Intergroup Conflict: The Parable of the Good Samaritan in the Light of Social Identity Theory,” *BI* 8 (2000): 337-38; cf. also the discussion in Knowles, “Victim,” 158-60; and Magness, *Archaeology of Qumran*, 195-206.

⁷⁵The term comes from David J. A. Clines, “Reading Esther From Left to Right: Contemporary Strategies for Reading a Biblical Text,” in *The Bible in Three Dimensions: Essays in Celebration of Forty Years of Biblical Studies in the University of Sheffield*, ed. David J. A. Clines, Stephen E. Fowl, and Stanley E. Porter, JSOTSup 87 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1990), 38.

⁷⁶On this verse see also Siebert-Hommes, “On the Third Day.” In this article Siebert-Hommes discusses the role of dress communication with regard to the characters of Ahasuerus, Vashti, Mordecai, Esther, and Haman. With regard to this verse (5:1), she suggests that the Hebrew terminology *וְהִלְבֵּשׂ אֶסְתֵּר מִלְכוּת*, which is frequently translated as “Esther put on her royal robes” (e.g., NIV, NRSV), should really be translated as “Esther put on [or, clothed herself with] kingship” (ibid., under “Queen Esther: Dressed With Her Kingship”). This would highlight Esther’s role-related identity instead of her social identity as a Persian.

⁷⁷Clines, “Reading Esther,” 39. On the confusing descriptions in the Hebrew and the Greek texts of the dress that Mordecai wore in 8:15, cf. Kristin De Troyer, “On Crowns and Diadems from Kings, Queens, Horses, and Men,” in *IX Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies: Cambridge, 1995*, ed.

The lack of dress could cause a rupture in the decoding process of the ethnic identity of another—with devastating results. For instance, in the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30-36), thieves beat a man and stripped him (ἐκδύσαντες αὐτὸν [10:30]) of his dress.⁷⁸ While neither the priest nor the Levite may have wanted to have become ritually impure by coming into contact with an apparent corpse,⁷⁹ one possibility is that because they were unable to ethnically or socially identify the man, their consequent actions were predicated on this decoding problem.⁸⁰ According to Michael P. Knowles,⁸¹ the actions of the Samaritan contrast “with the ironic inability of priest or

Bernard A. Taylor, *SBLSCSS* 45 (Atlanta: Scholars, 1995), 355-67; and Alison Salvesen, “כָּמֶר (Esther 1:11; 2:17; 6:8): ‘Something to Do with a Camel’?” *Journal of Semitic Studies* 44 (1999): 35-46.

Cf. the Jewish romance *Artapanus*, in which the author writes that the fictional Egyptian king Chenephres died of elephantiasis as a result of forcing the Jews to wear linen clothing and not put on any woolen clothing, his purpose in this sumptuary law being to make them ethnically conspicuous so he could punish them (fragment preserved in Eusebius *PE* 9.27.20; see John J. Collins, “Artapanus: A New Translation and Introduction,” in *OTP*, 2:901). On its third-century BCE date, see *ibid.*, p. 891. A more recent version of this type of sumptuary law took place during the 1930s and 1940s when the Nazis forced European Jews to wear armbands with the star of David in order to target their ethnicity.

⁷⁸Since they were thieves, they wanted to steal something. But the narrative describes nothing stolen. One could deduce that they stole his clothes and that this is why they stripped him of them.

⁷⁹On the ritual dangers of corpse contamination, see, e.g., Roy Gane, *Leviticus, Numbers*, NIVAC (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004), 658-59; Baruch A. Levine, *Numbers 1-20: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 4 (New York: Doubleday, 1993), 468-79.

⁸⁰“To ask what the victim had been wearing turns out to be not only the wrong question, but one that leads—against all expectation—to unrighteous conduct” (Knowles, “Victim,” 171). Cf. Pilch, “Clothes,” 19.

⁸¹Knowles, “Victim,” 170.

Levite to see beyond external appearances: with no social cues to guide them, they do nothing to help.”

Dress Communicates Role-Related Identity

It is clear that dress can reveal various social identities, such as socioeconomic status, gender, and ethnicity. But as contemporary scholars have demonstrated, dress can also communicate role-related identity. While the contexts, expressions, and details are in many ways different, in general it was as true thousands of years ago as it is today. Again, there are many ways to illustrate this.

The early usage of the *kusîtu* garment shifted from secular to ceremonial towards the end of the first millennium BCE, becoming the dress of gods, kings, and priests.⁸² While Neo-Babylonian texts restricted its use to female deities, Neo-Assyrian texts understood it differently: It identified the wearer as king.⁸³ Another ANE dress item, a piece of jewelry known as a “city of gold” or mural crown, was a crown in the shape of a turreted city, and it was worn by or associated primarily with female deities.⁸⁴ But

⁸²Oppenheim, “Golden Garments,” 179. On the different renderings of this word, see *ibid.*, n. 20, and cf. the usage in Matsushima, “Some Remarks.”

⁸³Oppenheim, “Golden Garments,” 179; cf. Albrecht Goetze, “The Priestly Dress of the Hittite King,” *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* 1 (1947): 177-79.

⁸⁴E.g., the Hittite goddess Katahha, the Assyrian goddess Nikkal, the Anatolian goddess Cybele, and the Roman goddess Roma. For its use with male deities, see H. A. Hoffner, Jr., “The ‘City of Gold’ and the ‘City of Silver,’” *IEJ* 19 (1969): 179. For further support, see the next note.

sometimes it was worn by females of royal or high and wealthy rank,⁸⁵ even within later rabbinic Judaism.⁸⁶ Here both socioeconomic and role-related identities come into play.

The dress of the priesthood in the OT, whether the high priest or the common priests, was particularly revelatory with regard to role-related identity.⁸⁷ With regard to the role-related identity of the high priest, Lev 21:10 underscores a particular legal statute for the high priest by designating him in three ways, the third of which states that he has been consecrated “to put on the garments” (לִלְבַּשׁ אֶת־הַבְּגָדִים). This accentuates the point that the dress of the high priest was indicative of his role-related identity.

But priestly dress imagery also extended to those who were not priests from the

⁸⁵E.g., the Ugaritic queen Aḥatmilku; an Elamite, Naqia-Zakūti (wife of Assyrian king Sennacherib and mother of the future king Ešarḥaddon), and Libbališarrat (wife of Assyrian king Aššurbanipal). See the discussion on this dress item in Hoffner, “City of Gold,” 178-80; S. M. Paul, “Jerusalem—A City of Gold,” *IEJ* 17 (1967): 259-63; idem, “Jerusalem of Gold—Revisited,” in “*I Will Speak the Riddles of Ancient Times*: Archaeological and Historical Studies in Honor of Amihai Mazar on the Occasion of His Sixtieth Birthday, ed. Aren M. Maeir and Pierre de Miroschedji (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2006), 2:787-94; and Hayim Tawil, “Two Biblical Architectural Images in Light of Cuneiform Sources (Lexicographical Note X),” *BASOR* 341 (February 2006): 42-43. I have followed Tawil’s more recent transliteration and nomenclature with regard to the listed names when he has differed from Paul.

⁸⁶Paul, “Jerusalem,” 259-61; and idem, “Jerusalem of Gold—Revisited,” 787-89.

⁸⁷For dress communicating role-related identity in the OT, cf. McKay, “Gendering the Body,” 94; and idem, “Gendering the Discourse,” 182. With regard to priestly dress, Kim asserts that its ability to distinguish those who wore it as priests was one of its “most obvious features” (*Significance of Clothing Imagery*, 18). Cf. Knowles, “Victim, 162. An example of this is when King Saul told Doeg the Edomite to kill eighty-five priests at Nob, but these priests are significantly described solely in terms of their dress: they were the ones who wore the linen ephod (1 Sam 22:18). On this point, see Prouser, “Suited to the Throne,” 33.

priestly tribe of Levi. The blue “cords” (NASB, NIV, NRSV) which the Israelites were commanded to wear on their clothing (Num 15:37-41),⁸⁸ for example, were extensions of the fringe or hem and indicated both a national and spiritual application of role-related identity. Despite the visual boundaries between the priests and the rest of the nation with regard to the dress one could wear,⁸⁹ Jacob Milgrom concluded that “by using the combination of [the otherwise forbidden combination of] wool and linen in the tassel, the ordinary Israelite was, . . . in a small way, wearing a priestly garment.”⁹⁰ This is noteworthy, since it indicates that one element of priestly dress could communicate role-related identity. Thus, the wearing of the blue cord indicated that while most Israelites did not have an official priestly occupation, they had a priestly role and truly were a kingdom of priests (Exod 19:6).⁹¹

This ability of dress to communicate role-related identity continued into and

⁸⁸The language here is confusing among the translations. On the **כַּנָּף** (“border” [e.g., KJV] or “corner” [e.g., NASB, NIV, NRSV]) of their clothing was to be a **צִיָּצֵת** (“fringe” [e.g., KJV, NRSV] or “tassel” [e.g., NASB, NIV]). Upon or attached to that was a blue **פִּתְיֵל** (“cord” [e.g., NASB, NIV, NRSV] or “ribbon” [e.g., KJV]). Levine explains the syntax of the Hebrew: “a cord of blue was to be added to or included among the ordinary tassels. Its striking color would make it stand out from the other fringes” (*Numbers 1-20*, 401).

⁸⁹See Milgrom, “Hems and Tassels,” 65; and Nissan Rubin and Admiel Kosman, “The Clothing of the Primordial Adam as a Symbol of Apocalyptic Time in the Midrashic Sources,” *HTR* 90 (1997): 163.

⁹⁰Milgrom, “Hems and Tassels,” 65.

⁹¹Ibid. Cf. Neufeld, who suggests that these cords were to communicate not only status but also piety (“Sumptuous Clothing,” 669), and the discussion in Cohen, ““Those Who Say,”” 6-8.

beyond the time of the Exile.⁹² Maccabean literature indicates that the diadem (διάδημα) was one of the salient indicators of kingship and political rule (cf. Sir 11:5).⁹³ And there were numerous ways in which this role-related status via dress was formulated and recognized in the Roman world.⁹⁴ Both Caligula and Nero, for example, restricted the use of hues of purple to the emperor and his family.⁹⁵ Moreover, Miriam

⁹²For another example before the Second Temple period, see the story of Jehu, who after he became king of Israel deviously gathered the worshipers of Baal together in the house of Baal in Samaria (2 Kgs 10:17-21). These Baal worshippers were able to recognize that there were no worshipers of YHWH in attendance because the keeper of the wardrobe had provided vestments for the Baal worshipers (2 Kgs 10:22-23). It is probable that this distinctive dress was also the way in which the executioners of these worshipers were able to identify them and not allow any to escape (cf. 2 Kgs 10:24-25). On the terminology for the “keeper of the wardrobe,” see the discussion in Mordechai Cogan and Hayim Tadmor, *II Kings: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 11 (New York: Doubleday, 1988), 115; and John Gray, *I & II Kings: A Commentary*, 2nd ed., OTL (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1970), 561.

⁹³Notice in 1 Macc 6:15 that Antiochus IV Epiphanes gave Philip, the newly appointed regent for Antiochus IV’s son Antiochus, the diadem (τὸ διάδημα), the robe (τὴν στολήν), and the signet ring (τὸν δακτύλιον). See also 1 Macc 8:14, where it is putting on the diadem or dressing oneself with purple which indicated kingship (οὐκ ἐπέθειτο αὐτῶν οὐδὲ εἰς διάδημα οὐδὲ περιεβάλλοντο πορφύραν [“not one of them has put on a crown or worn purple” (NRSV)]).

⁹⁴The use of the *toga praetexta* was reserved for magistrates and high priests (Croom, *Roman Clothing*, 41; cf. Bonfante and Jaunzems, “Clothing and Ornament,” 3:1406; Lloyd Jensen, “Royal Purple of Tyre,” *JNES* 22 [1963]: 115; Kim, *Significance of Clothing Imagery*, 94). Three forms of shoe could only be worn by patricians, senators, and equestrians (Croom, *Roman Clothing*, 61). As in the time of Tamar, wearing certain types of dress could brand a woman as a prostitute (McGinn, *Prostitution*, 334; cf. Shelley Stone, “The Toga: From National to Ceremonial Costume,” in *World of Roman Costume*, 13). Another example is the fillet, or cloth headband, the use of which could indicate one’s athletic status (Cynthia L. Thompson, “Hairstyles, Head-coverings, and St. Paul: Portraits from Roman Corinth,” *Biblical Archaeologist* 51 [June 1988]: 102). One could list a number of other examples of this.

⁹⁵Judith Lynn Sebesta, “*Tunica Ralla, Tunica Spissa*: The Colors and Textiles of Roman Costume,” in *World of Roman Costume*, 70. Cf. Croom, *Roman Clothing*, 25;

T. Griffin asserts that “the most tangible indication of the way the Emperor and his subjects regarded his role was his dress.”⁹⁶ Such an expansive understanding of dress in both the Second Temple and Roman orbits could hardly have had a negligible effect on the writers of the NT.

One of the classic examples of NT dress disclosing role-related identity is the brief description of John the Baptist: “And John was clothed with camel’s hair and a leather belt around his waist [καὶ ἦν ὁ Ἰωάννης ἐνδεδυμένος τρίχας καμήλου καὶ ζώνην δερματίνην περὶ τὴν ὀσφὺν αὐτοῦ] and was eating locusts and wild honey” (Mark 1:6; cf. Matt 3:4). While Mark does not say anything about what the dress of John means, this succinct description still communicates the role-related identity John was attempting to disclose:

The skin garments of John the Baptist create an appearance-related impression by which he communicates something about his perceived role and identity within a community. The leather garments do not just fall on the Baptist involuntarily but involve a deliberate choice in which his perceived identification with the classical prophets determines the selection of what he wears—an appearance-related impression that communicates his role as a prophet.⁹⁷

While John’s dress conveyed to observers his prophetic role in society, Mark’s brief literary description, implicitly alluding to the dress of Elijah (cf. 2 Kgs 1:8), similarly

and Jensen, “Royal Purple of Tyre,” 115.

⁹⁶Miriam T. Griffin, *Nero: The End of a Dynasty* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1985), 222.

⁹⁷Neufeld, “Under the Cover,” 70-71.

conveyed to his audience John's Elijah-like role.⁹⁸

The trials of Jesus also include dress imagery that communicates role-related identity. The robe(s) put on Jesus at the time of his trial(s) and scourging are variously described as a scarlet cloak (χλαμύδα κοκκίνην [Matt 27:28; cf. 27:31]), purple (that is, a purple robe or garment: πορφύραν [Mark 15:17, 20]; ἱμάτιον πορφυροῦν [John 19:2; cf. 19:5]), or a bright/shining robe (έσθητα λαμπράν [Luke 23:11]).⁹⁹ Despite these varied descriptions, they point to role-related identity issues at play, whether indicative of Jesus being perceived by the Roman forces as royal, insane, or innocent.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸Knowles, "Victim," 170. In the time of the prophet Zechariah, prophets were known to wear hairy dress (MT: אֵרֶרֶת שֵׁעָר; LXX: δέριον τριχίνην [Zech 13:4]). On the comparison between the dress of Elijah and John, see also Paul Joüon, "Le costume d'Elie et celui de Jean Baptiste: étude lexicographique," *Bib* 16 (1935): 74-81; James A. Kelhoffer, *The Diet of John the Baptist*, WUNT 176 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 4, n. 8; and Neufeld, "Sumptuous Clothing," 668-70.

⁹⁹With regard to Luke's terminology referring to the color white in 23:11, see Paul Joüon, "Luc 23,11: *esthêta lampran*," *RSR* 26 (1936): 80-85; and Karris, *Luke: Artist and Theologian*, 86-87.

¹⁰⁰On the possibility of the perception of insanity via his dress, see Justin J. Meggitt, "The Madness of King Jesus: Why Was Jesus Put to Death, But His Followers Were Not?" *JSNT* 29 (2007): 379-413. This is not that much different from the royal imagery, in that several "delusional," "insane," or "mad" people were garbed in *faux* royal or imperial dress. See the discussion of Philo's account of Carabas (*Flacc.* 36-41) in Meggitt, "Madness of King Jesus," 397-98, 404.

With regard to the dress indicating innocence, see, e.g., Karris (*Luke: Artist and Theologian*, 87) and Reid ("Transfiguration," 192). Reid's suggestion that it may also infer heavenly status appears to contradict the data: Why would Herod dress him in heavenly dress after ridiculing him and mocking him? Or is it an ironic reference by Luke?

Role-Related Dress Investiture

Clothing one in fine dress during a formal ritual—investiture—frequently accompanied a change in one’s role, and it often involved issues of inheritance and rulership.¹⁰¹ The transfer of the high priestly dress from Aaron to his son Eleazar (Num 20:25-28) indicated the transfer of the role and office of high priest from Aaron to Eleazar.¹⁰² When Jonathan Maccabeus put on the “the sacred vestments” (τὴν ἁγίαν στολήν [1 Macc 10:21]),¹⁰³ he effectively became the nation’s high priest (10:20).¹⁰⁴ And the removal of Enoch’s earthly dress and his investiture in glorious dress in 2

¹⁰¹Palmer, “Clothes,” 417. See also the discussion in Wilder, “Illumination and Investiture,” 60, particularly n. 23.

¹⁰²On the dress of the high priest as a way of distinguishing the role the high priest played, see, e.g., Kim, *Significance of Clothing Imagery*, 19.

¹⁰³While the terminology (τὴν ἁγίαν στολήν) is singular, it refers to the distinctive wardrobe of the high priest (cf., e.g., LXX Exod 28:2-4).

¹⁰⁴It is unlikely that the high priestly vestments had been kept by King Alexander I Balas (cf. 1 Macc 3:49) and so the purple (πορφύραν) and the golden crown (στέφανον χρυσοῦν) given by him to Jonathan in this verse must refer to another mark of honor. Cf. 1 Macc 10:62. 1 Macc 14:41-47 refers to the largely tripartite role of Simon Thassi (see 2:3) as high priest (ἀρχιερεὺς or ἱερεὺς, and related verbs; cf. 14:38, 41, 47; 15:1-2), military leader (στρατηγός; cf. 14:42, 47), and ethnarch (ἐθνάρχης; cf. 14:47, 15:1-2) of the Jews. In 14:43-44, Simon was to be dressed in purple (πορφύραν) and to wear gold (χρυσοφορῆ), but none of the people (τοῦ λαοῦ) or priests (τῶν ἱερέων) were to be dressed in purple (πορφύραν) or to wear a golden brooch (πόρπη χρυσοῦν). Reference to the purple and gold does not indicate the dress of the high priest, but rather it points to role-related dress denoting the ruling authority during this era in Jewish history (cf. 8:14; 10:20, 62, 64), similar to that of Simon’s brother Jonathan, who earlier in Maccabean history also was dressed in purple and wore a golden brooch (11:57-58).

(*Slavonic*) *Enoch* 22:8-10¹⁰⁵ became “the outward expression of a transformed identity,” one Fletcher-Louis suggests is not only angelomorphic but also high priestly in nature.¹⁰⁶

The transfer of the prophet Elijah’s mantle to Elisha indicated the transference of Elijah’s status and role as prophet to Elisha (1 Kgs 19:19; 2 Kgs 2:8-15).¹⁰⁷ The robe and sash of the King Hezekiah’s official Shebna were to be transferred to Eliakim, thus

¹⁰⁵ A strong case for this work being dated before the end of the first century CE is made by Andrei A. Orlov, “Noah’s Younger Brother Revisited: Anti-Noachic Polemics and the Date of 2 (*Slavonic*) *Enoch*,” in *From Apocalypticism to Merkabah Mysticism: Studies in the Slavonic Pseudepigrapha*, JSJSup 114 (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 379-96 (essay reprinted from *Henoch* 26 [2004]: 172-87). Orlov dates it prior to 70 CE. Cf. F. I. Anderson, “2 (Slavonic Apocalypse of) Enoch: A New Translation and Introduction,” in *OTP*, 1:94-97; and Charles A. Gieschen, “The Different Functions of a Similar Melchizedek Tradition in 2 *Enoch* and the Epistle to the Hebrews,” in *Early Christian Interpretation of the Scriptures of Israel: Investigations and Proposals*, ed. Craig A. Evans and James A. Sanders, JSNTSup 148 / SSEJC 5 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1997), 366-69.

¹⁰⁶ Fletcher-Louis, *Glory of Adam*, 59. He suggests that his investiture is indebted in part to anointing rituals for the priesthood in Exodus and the divestiture and investiture of the high priest Joshua’s dress in Zech 3 (*ibid.*, 20-24).

2 (*Slavonic*) *Enoch*, in an apparent anti-Noah polemic, also describes the critical investiture of Enoch’s descendant Methuselah (69:8; I follow Orlov’s translation of names in “Noah’s Younger Brother Revisited”), the latter’s fictitious grandson Nir (and Noah’s purported younger brother [70:4, 13]), and Melchizedek, the miraculously born son of Nir’s wife Sothonim (71:19-20). They are invested with priestly garments—garments which not only initiated them into the priesthood but identified them as priests. On the importance of these acts of investiture, see Orlov, “Noah’s Younger Brother Revisited,” 382; *idem*, “‘Noah’s Younger Brother’: The Anti-Noachic Polemics in 2 (*Slavonic*) *Enoch*,” in *From Apocalypticism*, 361-78, particularly 369-72 (essay reprinted from *Henoch* 22 [2000]: 259-73); and *idem*, “The Heir of Righteousness and the King of Righteousness: The Priestly Noachic Polemics in 2 *Enoch* and the Epistle to the Hebrews,” *JTS*, n.s., 58 (2007): 52, n. 12. For a discussion of the possibility of priestly dress being associated with Noah in 1QapGen 6:4 and 1Q19 13 2, see Fletcher-Louis, *Glory of Adam*, 44-45.

¹⁰⁷ On the mantle as representing the status and identity of the one wearing it, see Viberg, *Symbols of Law*, 134. Cf. also Rubin and Kosman, “Primordial Adam,” 164.

indicating a transfer of authority as well as role (Isa 22:15-21).¹⁰⁸ On the other hand, investing one with the king's signet or seal indicated a transfer of authority and royal power from the king to the one so invested, but not a transfer of royal identity.¹⁰⁹ Examples here include not only Joseph (Gen 41:39-42)¹¹⁰ but also Haman (Esth 3:10) and Mordecai (Esth 8:2, 8-10).¹¹¹

With regard to the transfer of authentic royal identity, investiture with the “upright tiara” of the Achaemenid kings in Persia “was to declare oneself king—and there is no suggestion in literature that a woman, even a queen, could wear it.”¹¹² Alexander the Great's generals began their dynasties by putting on or investing themselves with diadems (διαδήματα) after his death (1 Macc 1:9). The inauguration of Ptolemy VI Philometer's rule over Asia began when he “put on the diadem of Asia” (περιέθετο τὸ διάδημα τῆς Ἀσίας [1 Macc 11:13]).¹¹³ Finally, the relationship of

¹⁰⁸In the case of Shebna, it was not investiture but divestiture—removal from office—signified by his loss of official dress (Palmer, “Clothes,” 417).

¹⁰⁹See also King Jehoiachin (Jer 22:24) and Zerubbabel (Hag 2:23), but these are called (or, compared to) the seal or signet ring of YHWH.

¹¹⁰Cf. Platt, “Jewelry, Ancient Israelite,” 3:830.

¹¹¹As mentioned earlier, Mordecai was also invested with the king's robes (Esth 6:7-11). Cf. Fletcher-Louis (*Luke-Acts*, 219) and Platt (“Jewelry, Ancient Israelite,” 3:830).

¹¹²Salvesen, “כִּתְרָה,” 38.

¹¹³Cf. also Alexander VI Dionysus and Diodotus Tryphon (or, Trypho) described as inaugurating their reigns by “putting on the diadem of Asia” in 1 Macc 11:54; 12:39; 13:31-32. On other headgear used with περιτίθημι, cf. Prov 1:9 and Sir 6:31. Cf. the different nuances in BDAG, s.v. “περιτίθημι,” secs. 1 and 2.

dress to role-related identity (and even morality) was so intertwined for the Roman emperor that Shelley Hales astutely observes:

The rise of would-be emperors is marked by a sequence of telling costume changes as they change from usurpers into emperors (Tacitus *Hist.* 2.89). Challengers who forget to make the change, or who fail to assume the right clothes, lose (Tacitus *Hist.* 2.20). Even if they make the costume, failure to live up to the actions prescribed for that outfit marks imposters (Tacitus *Hist.* 4.59; Dio 73.6; Suet. *Aug.* 10 cf. *Caesar* 64). It is at these moments that such men show their clothes to be nothing but costume and disguise.¹¹⁴

Role-Related Dress Disguise

Disguising one's role via dress appears as a crucial motif several times in the OT narratives of the kings of Israel and Judah.¹¹⁵ Saul disguised his role-related royal identity by putting on "other clothes" (בְּגָדֵי אֲחֵרִים), that is, non-royal garments, when he met with the Witch of Endor (1 Sam 28:8).¹¹⁶ King Jeroboam's wife disguised herself when she met with the blind prophet Ahijah (1 Kgs 14:1-6). King Ahab was

¹¹⁴Shelley Hales, "Men Are Mars, Women Are Venus: Divine Costumes in Imperial Rome," in *The Clothed Body in the Ancient World*, ed. Liza Cleland, Mary Harlow, and Lloyd Llewellyn-Jones (Oxford: Oxbow, 2005), 133.

¹¹⁵For a good overview, see Richard Coggins, "On Kings and Disguises," *JSOT* 50 (1991): 55-62.

¹¹⁶On the disguise of Saul, see Coggins, "On Kings and Disguises," 56-57; and Pamela Tamarkin Reis, "Eating the Blood: Saul and the Witch of Endor," *JSOT* 73 (1997): 6-9, 15-16. Reis suggests that the reference to Saul putting on other garments after the note about him disguising himself implies that he has clothed himself with treachery (בְּגָדֵי), since both that verb and the word used here for clothing (בְּגָדֵי) have the same root (*ibid.*, 6-7). Here the dress disguise not only indicates role-related identity but also implies spiritual identity, that is, treachery against YHWH. Reis reiterates this point when she further suggests that parallels between Saul's daughter Michal disguising a teraphim as David and Saul's self-disguise imply that Saul has become "a hollow man, a fake, an abomination" (*ibid.*, 16).

unable to recognize one of the “sons of the prophets” because he had disguised himself with a bandage over his eyes (1 Kgs 20:35-41). Ahab later disguised his own royal identity in battle but urged his ally, King Jehoshaphat, to not disguise himself but continue wearing his royal robes (1 Kgs 22:30; 2 Chr 18:29);¹¹⁷ nevertheless, it was Ahab who was struck by an arrow from an archer and died. Similarly, King Josiah’s attempt to disguise his royal identity during battle with Neco II of Egypt did not prevent him from being killed (2 Chr 35:22-24). In all of these cases, disguise of role-related dress was associated with or led to disaster.¹¹⁸

Role-Related Dress Miscues

It is one thing to disguise one’s real role via dress, but it is another to wear dress that inadvertently communicates the wrong role. A classic example is illustrated in 1 Tim 2:9-10. Here Christian women are urged to “dress themselves in a respectable manner with modesty and propriety, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or expensive clothes, but through good deeds, which is appropriate for women who profess to being religious.”¹¹⁹ This text does not rail against women wearing gold or pearls or expensive clothes in general, as some have interpreted it, nor does it deny the feminine gender the

¹¹⁷While the MT of both of these texts indicates that these are Jehoshaphat’s robes (לְבָשׁ בְּגָדֶיךָ [“you put on your robes”]), the LXX indicates that what Jehoshaphat is to wear is Ahab’s clothing (σὺ ἔνδυσαι τὸν ἱματισμὸν μου [“you put on my clothing”]).

¹¹⁸Coggins, “Of Kings and Disguises,” 59-61.

¹¹⁹ἐν καταστολῇ κοσμίῳ μετὰ αἰδοῦς καὶ σωφροσύνης κοσμεῖν ἑαυτάς, μὴ ἐν πλέγμασιν καὶ χρυσίῳ ἢ μαργαρίταις ἢ ἱματισμῷ πολυτελεῖ, ἀλλ’ ὃ πρέπει γυναιξὶν ἐπαγγελλομέναις θεοσέβειαν, δι’ ἔργων ἀγαθῶν.

right to braid their hair. Rather, working from the standpoint of the Roman world, it urges women to dress in a morally acceptable way and not as the Roman “new women.” It was these “new women” whose relatively new financial freedom had caused them to defy social customs of feminine and marital decorum by claiming the right to sexually indulge themselves as “women of pleasure.”¹²⁰ And it was the latter, the *hetairai*, who were known for wearing brazen and indecent dress, extravagant and outrageous hairstyles, and excessive and luxurious jewelry (including gold and pearls).¹²¹ Christians who wore this type of dress, at this time in history and in this geographic and cultural context, brought upon the Christian community a public relations disaster, resulting from the role-related identification of the one so dressed as sexually immoral.¹²²

Role-Related Dress Caution

Although one can discover numerous examples of dress communicating various role-related identities, at the same time caution is necessary. Two examples from the

¹²⁰See the lengthy discussion in Winter, *Roman Wives, Roman Widows* (here, pp. 21-22).

¹²¹*Ibid.*, 100 (cf. his discussion on this text in *ibid.*, 97-109). For documentation, see McGinn, *Prostitution*, 154-70.

¹²²In noting the ability of dress to communicate morality in the Roman world, Hales observes: “The way in which an emperor dressed was an obvious starting point for determining whether he was a ‘good’ or ‘bad’ emperor” (“Men Are Mars,” 131-42 [here, 132]). Similarly, a Vestal Virgin’s departure from her standard dress “suggested a departure from her sacred, virginal status into the domain of sexual misconduct regularly associated, in moralising discourse, with Roman women’s close attention to their physical appearance” (Wyke, “Woman in the Mirror,” 143). Cf. DeBrohun, “Power Dressing,” 22.

NT will suffice to illustrate this point. First, Luke’s story of the woman who was a “sinner” (7:37; cf. 7:39)¹²³ brings up the issue of this intriguing woman’s occupation or role in life. Standing behind Jesus at a banquet and weeping, she began to wash his feet with her tears, “and she was wiping them with the hair of her head” (καὶ ταῖς θριξίν τῆς κεφαλῆς αὐτῆς ἐξέμασσευ [7:38]), kissing his feet, and anointing them with the perfume from her alabaster jar.

As we have seen, hair (including its length, color, adornment, and overall style) is one of the elements of dress. This Lukan narrative thus raises a number of questions relative to dress and role-related identity, including: (1) was her hair initially unbound, or did she unbind it during this narrative; and (2) what did her obviously loose hair symbolize in that society?¹²⁴ Since Luke’s narrative classifies her as a “sinner,” did her already unbound hair—or, her act of unbinding her hair—broadcast that she was a prostitute? Charles H. Cosgrove summarizes his investigation of Greco-Roman societal data on the subject by noting that the communicative meaning of unbound hair or the unbinding of hair was not uniform and could indicate a number of things:

¹²³Of the biblical stories of a woman anointing Jesus (Matt 26:6-13; Mark 14:3-9; Luke 7:36-50; John 12:1-8), only Luke and John refer to the woman’s hair (Luke 7:38, 44; John 12:3), used to wipe his feet (Luke 7:38, 44-46; John 12:3).

¹²⁴For a recent discussion of these and other related issues, see Charles H. Cosgrove, “A Woman’s Unbound Hair in the Greco-Roman World, With Special Reference to the Story of the ‘Sinful Woman’ in Luke 7:36-50,” *JBL* 124 (2005): 675-92. Notice the prohibitions concerning priestly hair in Lev 10:6 and 21:10 as well as reference to the priest unbinding a suspected adulteress’s hair in Num 5:18 (on the similarities between the latter narrative in Numbers and Luke’s story, see Gane, *Leviticus, Numbers*, 526-28).

This can be a sexually suggestive act, an expression of religious devotion, a hairstyle for unmarried girls, a sign of mourning, a symbolic expression of distress or proleptic grief in the face of impending danger (and a way of pleading with or currying the favor of those in power, whether gods or men), a hairstyle associated with conjury, a means of presenting oneself in a natural state in religious initiations, and a precaution against carrying demons or foreign objects into the waters of baptism.¹²⁵

Cosgrove's conclusion is that her action was "not sexually provocative, indecent, or even a breach of etiquette."¹²⁶ Nevertheless, this particular narrative element of the woman's hair accentuates the role-related identity issues involved in correctly and sensitively exegeting the passage.

Second, when Jesus warned his disciples to "Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes" (βλέπετε ἀπὸ τῶν γραμματέων τῶν θελούντων ἐν στολαῖς περιπατεῖν [Mark 12:38; cf. Luke 20:46¹²⁷]), he was not indicating that this particular type of dress was worn exclusively by scribes. The NT indicates that στολαί were worn not only by scribes but by angelic messengers (Mark 16:5), the Prodigal Son upon his return (Luke 15:22), and the saints in the book of Revelation (6:11; 7:9, 13, 14; 22:14).¹²⁸ In her monograph on scribes, Christine Schams concludes that this dress reference is more generic than exclusive: "The reference to the 'robes of scribes' should

¹²⁵Cosgrove, "A Woman's Unbound Hair," 691.

¹²⁶Ibid.

¹²⁷In his comments on this version of Jesus' saying in Luke, Resseguie declares that the strutting rich found their identity in their dress ("Clothing," 94; cf. p. 89).

¹²⁸"The term can designate any luxury garments, the garments of soldiers, Levites, priests, or kings, but also garments of women" (Christine Schams, *Jewish Scribes in the Second-Temple Period*, JSOTSup 291 [Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1998], 156).

therefore be understood as distinguished garments of men of eminence and standing and/or wealth, rather than a specifically scribal robe.”¹²⁹ This article of dress thus points more to a socioeconomic status rather than a role-related one. This again points out the need for sartorial awareness and the avoidance of exegetical overreach in making exclusive identifications.

Summary of Dress and Identity in the Biblical World

Ancient literature, including that from the ANE, the OT, extrabiblical Jewish literature, the Roman world, and the NT, provide numerous examples of the importance of dress in society and its powerful ability to provide keys to identity. Dress was considered one of the basic necessities of life.¹³⁰ Repeated usage of dress terminology and dress motifs underscores the importance of dress in communicating. As McKay succinctly observed, “The garments speak silently, but speak they do.”¹³¹

Dress communicated diverse kinds of personal, social, and role-related identity to in-text observers as well as to the readers and auditors of those texts. On occasion only one salient piece of the overall dress ensemble provided the key to identity. Dress could also disguise one’s identity; here dress meanings communicated correctly, but they were coded for the purpose of deception and thus false identification. At the same time, dress decoding was not fail-proof, for it was possible to misread intentional dress

¹²⁹Ibid.

¹³⁰Cf. Exod 21:10: “If he takes another wife to himself, he shall not diminish the food, clothing, or marital rights of the first wife” (NRSV).

¹³¹McKay, “Gendering the Body,” 93.

cues. The multivalent nature of dress in the biblical world thus provides one with both opportunity and caution in the interpretation of sartorial messages.

Dress and Identity in the Book of Revelation

In line with what we have seen in the ANE, the OT, Jewish extrabiblical writings up to the time of Revelation, the Roman world, and the rest of the NT, it should not be unexpected that dress imagery plays an important role in the book of Revelation. Indeed, in Revelation it proves provocative, rich, and compelling. Neufeld, who has written the seminal studies on dress imagery in Revelation,¹³² agrees with social scientists and cultural historians that dress reveals “philosophical, civil, national, and religious identity. Dress and ornamentation provides important social, cultural, and religious information concerning power, status, group identity, manufacture, and trade.”¹³³ Thus one should not be surprised to see Revelation utilizing dress to communicate identity.

¹³²Neufeld, “Sumptuous Clothing,” 664-89; idem, “Under the Cover,” 67-76. For further on the significance of dress in Revelation outside of the commentaries, cf., e.g., Charles A. Gieschen, “Baptismal Praxis and Mystical Experience in the Book of Revelation,” in *Paradise Now: Essays on Early Jewish and Christian Mysticism*, ed. April D. DeConick, Society of Biblical Literature Symposium Series 11 (Atlanta: Scholars, 2006), 349-52; Resseguie, “Clothing,” 92, 93; idem, *The Revelation of John: A Narrative Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2009), 36-38; idem, *Revelation Unsealed: A Narrative Critical Approach to John’s Apocalypse*, Biblical Interpretation Series 32 (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 41-42; and Royalty, *Streets of Heaven*, 173.

¹³³Neufeld, “Sumptuous Clothing,” 665. Cf. K. C. Hanson, “Blood and Purity in Leviticus and Revelation,” *Listening: Journal of Religion and Culture* 28 (1993): 224; and Bruce J. Malina and John J. Pilch, *Social-Science Commentary on the Book of Revelation* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2000), 60, 118.

Importance of Dress

Neufeld notes that “a predominate feature of the New Testament are [*sic*] the references to clothing and adornment in an apocalyptic and eschatological context.”¹³⁴ Compared to the rest of the NT, both dress terminology and dress imagery are unusually pervasive throughout Revelation.¹³⁵ The basic reason for this is that Revelation is clearly a visionary work.¹³⁶ Near the very beginning of Revelation, reference is made to the fact that John testified to all that he saw (ὅσα εἶδεν [1:2]). Not much later a loud, trumpet-like voice orders John to write down what he sees and send it to the seven churches (1:11). Throughout the work numerous references to what John sees or views in vision occur.¹³⁷ Since John repeatedly sees various characters in his visions, and since dress is a powerful communicator of meaning, values, and identity, it is no wonder that John describes dress so frequently.

Revelation’s numerous references to dress encompass not only the presence of

¹³⁴Neufeld, “Sumptuous Clothing,” 676.

¹³⁵Cf. *ibid.*, 677.

¹³⁶This does not deny other aspects of Revelation, such as its auditory characteristics. On the auditory and oral nature of Revelation, see Harry O. Maier’s extensive discussion in his *Apocalypse Recalled: The Book of Revelation after Christendom* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2002), 91-122. Maier describes the overall book of Revelation as “the New Testament’s noisiest book” (*ibid.*, 91).

Neither does this observation assert that all dress imagery is related to John’s visionary experiences. See, e.g., 16:15 and 22:14.

¹³⁷With regard to βλέπω, see 1:11, 12 and 22:8 (2x). With regard to ὁράω, see 1:2, 12, 17, 19, 20; 4:1; 5:1, 2, 6, 11; 6:1, 2, 5, 8, 9, 12; 7:1, 2, 9; 8:2, 13; 9:1, 17; 10:1, 5; 13:1, 2, 11; 14:1, 6, 14; 15:1, 2, 5; 16:13; 17:3, 6 (2x); 8, 12, 15, 16, 18; 18:1; 19:11, 17, 19; 20:1, 4 (2x), 11, 12; 21:1, 2, 22; 22:4.

such dress terminology and imagery but also the absence or negation of the same conceptual motifs. With regard to the latter, it is the absence of dress¹³⁸ that four times constitutes the basis of either a condemnation or judgment (3:17; 17:16) or a warning (3:18; 16:15).¹³⁹ Nakedness is shameful (αἰσχύνη [3:18]; ἀσχημοσύνη [16:15]) and can be rectified by being dressed in white garments (ἱμάτια λευκὰ [3:18]);¹⁴⁰ the implied contrast to the shamefulness of nakedness is that dress is understood to be accompanied not only with propriety but with honor. These explicit and repeated warnings against the absence of dress thus draw attention to the import of the presence of dress within the overall rhetoric of Revelation.¹⁴¹

Revelation also contains numerous descriptive references to the presence of dress with regard to the various beings that populate Revelation's narratives, visions, and exhortations. In more than eighty different verses, Revelation refers to the explicit or implied dress of a cast of generalized as well as specific characters.¹⁴² A number of

¹³⁸See the use of γυμνός (“naked” [3:17, 16:15, 17:16]) and γυμνότης (“nakedness” [3:18]).

¹³⁹Notice also the use of the verb ποιέω in 17:16 to describe the stripping off of clothes.

¹⁴⁰Gieschen suggests that “it is very probable that the clothing with white also has its roots in priestly clothing” (“Baptismal Praxis,” 350).

¹⁴¹Neufeld notes that priests were particularly singled out in the requirement to cover up one's nakedness (“Sumptuous Clothing,” 675; cf. Exod 20:26); this is intriguing within the light of Revelation's identification of God's people as priests (1:6; 5:10; 20:6).

¹⁴²This dress imagery includes garments, ornaments, treatments, equipment, and tools (on which, see Vicary, “Signs of Clothing,” 293-94.). See, e.g., Rev 1:13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 20; 2:1, 10, 12, 16, 18, 27; 3:1, 4, 5, 7, 11, 12, 17, 18; 4:4, 10; 5:8; 6:2, 4, 5, 11;

nouns and adjectives describe articles of dress such as cloth and clothing,¹⁴³ crowns and victory wreaths,¹⁴⁴ and jewelry and precious stones.¹⁴⁵ Metaphorical dress includes a

7:2, 3, 9, 13, 14; 8:3, 5; 9:1, 4, 7, 8, 9, 17; 10:1, 2; 11:1, 3; 12:1, 3; 13:1, 16, 17; 14:1, 9, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19; 15:2, 6; 16:2, 15; 17:1, 3, 4, 5, 16; 18:12, 16; 19:8, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 20, 21; 20:1, 4; 21:2, 9, 11, 15, 19, 20, 21; 22:14. Cf. Neufeld, who counted only sixteen of these occasions (“Sumptuous Clothing,” 677-78). It is probable that part of the reason for this discrepancy is because of the narrower dress definitions Neufeld utilized.

¹⁴³I.e., βύσσινος (“fine linen”: 18:12, 16; 19:8, 14), κόκκινος (“scarlet”: 17:4; 18:12, 16 [in 17:3 the word refers to the color of the beast upon which the prostitute rides, not to dress]), λευκός (“white”: 3:4), λίνον (“linen”: 15:6; the textual variants here [λινοῦν (“made of linen”) or λίθον (“stone”)] do not change the imagery of something that is worn; see the discussion in Beale, *Revelation*, 804-805), ποδήρης (“foot-length robe”: 1:13), πορφύρα (“purple [cloth/garment]”: 18:12), πορφυροῦς (“purple” or “purple [clothing]”: 17:4; 18:16), σάκκος (“sackcloth”: 11:3), σιρίκον (“silk/silken”: 18:12), and στολή (“robe”: 6:11; 7:9, 13, 14; 22:14).

¹⁴⁴I.e., διάδημα (12:3; 13:1; 19:12), and στεφάνος (2:10; 3:11; 4:4, 10; 6:2; 9:7; 12:1; 14:14). With regard to the imagery of the στεφάνος, Gregory M. Stevenson emphasizes its communicative importance in Greco-Roman culture when he states that it could express “at least four different concepts: victory, royalty, divine glory, and honor” (“Conceptual Background to Golden Crown Imagery in the Apocalypse of John [4:4, 10; 14:14],” *JBL* 114 [1995]: 258). On the polysemic nature of such imagery in Revelation, see *ibid.*, 269-72. Cf. J. R. Harrison, “The Fading Crown: Divine Honour and the Early Christians,” *JTS*, n.s., 54 (2003): 495-96.

¹⁴⁵I.e., ἄργυρος (“silver”: 18:12), λίθος τίμιος (“precious stone”: 17:4; 18:12, 16; 21:11, 19), μαργαρίτης (“pearl”: 17:4; 18:12, 16; 21:21), χρυσίον (“gold” or “gold ornaments/jewelry”: 17:4; 18:12, 16), and χρυσός (“gold”: 18:12; cf. 9:7). With regard to the syntax of 18:12, one could argue that all eight of the first articles of cargo mentioned refer to articles understood primarily in terms of dress and personal adornment (“cargo of gold, and silver, and precious stone, and pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet” [γόμον χρυσοῦ καὶ ἀργύρου καὶ λίθου τιμίου καὶ μαργαριτῶν καὶ βυσσίνου καὶ πορφύρας καὶ σιρικοῦ καὶ κοκκίνου]). In this verse the syntax combines them all in a group (two more phrases in this verse begin with καὶ πᾶν), and the last four are certainly articles of dress.

The precious stone (λίθος τίμιος) imagery in 21:11 and 19 refer to the adornment and appearance of the New Jerusalem, but the language comes from that of dress. The same is true for the pearls in 21:21, which are part of the “necklace” of the

cloud (νεφέλη [10:1]) and the sun (ἥλιος [12:1]).¹⁴⁶ Moreover, the frequency of various verbs of dress is not less than conspicuous, appearing twenty-one times.¹⁴⁷ The cumulative weight of these scattered, repeated, and sometimes striking references to dress in the book of Revelation indicates that dress must carry significant

bride, the New Jerusalem. Cf. 21:2, where the New Jerusalem is adorned (κεκοσμημένην) like a bride, while the foundations of the city are adorned (κεκοσμημένοι) with precious stones.

¹⁴⁶In 10:1 the Mighty Angel is “clothed with a cloud” (περιβεβλημένον νεφέλην), while in 12:1 the Woman is “clothed with the sun” (περιβεβλημένη τὸν ἥλιον). Royalty observes that “clothing functions as a metaphor in Revelation for moral condition” (*Streets of Heaven*, 173), but here he refers to texts like Rev 3:4, 5, 18.

¹⁴⁷I.e., forms of ἐνδύω (“I dress, clothe” [1:13; 15:6; 19:14]), κοσμέω (here, “I adorn, decorate” [21:2, 19]), περιβάλλω (here, “I put around, on” [3:5, 18; 4:4; 7:9, 13; 10:1; 11:3; 12:1; 17:4; 18:16; 19:8, 13]), περιζώννυμι (“I gird about” [1:13; 15:6]), and χρυσόω (“I make golden, guild, adorn with gold” [17:4; 18:16]).

At least three other verbs are not typically dress verbs, but in Revelation (as in some other NT texts) they carry this meaning. The first one, ποιέω (“I make, do”) is used in 17:16 to describe the stripping off of clothes.

The second one, ἔχω (“I have”), has a dress meaning in 9:9, 17. In those texts it respectively describes locusts and mounted troops wearing protective breastplates (cf. BDAG, s.v. “ἔχω,” sec. 4). Revelation also utilizes the verb to describe those who have hand-held items which could be classified as accessories or, according to Vicary’s classification scheme (“Signs of Clothing,” 293-94), dress treatments, equipment, or tools, e.g., 1:16 (stars [cf. 3:1]; sharp, two-edged sword [cf. 2:12]), 18 (keys; cf. 3:7 and 20:1); 5:8 (harps and bowls of incense); 6:2 (bow), 5 (scales); 8:2 (censer), 13:17 (mark); 14:1 (name), 14 (crown and sickle), 17-18 (sickle); 15:2 (harps); 17:4 (golden cup); 19:12 (name), 16 (name); 20:1 (key and chain); 21:9 15 (measuring rod]).

The third verb, λαμβάνω (“I take, receive”), is also not typically a dress verb, but in John 13:12 it has the meaning of “put on” with reference to Jesus putting on his garments after washing his disciples’ feet. In several texts in Revelation λαμβάνω also works as a dress verb (14:9, 11; 19:20; 20:4; cf. 2:17). Most of these texts refer to the reception of the mark of the beast, and in these cases the verb works as a periphrasis for the passive form “be marked” (cf. BDAG, s.v. “λαμβάνω,” sec. 10, part C). Consequently, since the mark of the beast is similar to a brand or tattoo (cf. Aune, *Revelation 6-16*, 455 [on 7:3], 456-59, and 766-68 [on 13:16b]), this verbal usage would indicate verbal dress imagery.

communicative weight within its overall rhetoric.

It is even more remarkable that on two occasions the primary identification or characterization of various figures in Revelation occurs via dress imagery alone. First, in 7:13 one of the heavenly elders asks John who “the ones clothed in white robes” (οἱ περιβεβλημένοι τὰς στολὰς τὰς λευκὰς) were and where they had come from. In 7:9-10 John had previously seen and described this large company of people in five different ways: (1) they were a large group that no one could number; (2) they came from every nation, tongue, language, and people; (3) they stood before the throne (of God) and before the Lamb; (4) they were clothed in white robes; and (5) palm branches were in their hands. Nevertheless, in 7:13 the description of white robes is the only identifying characteristic that the elder mentions in asking John his question(s) about this group.¹⁴⁸ Apparently the white robes had become part of the sartorial foreground, while the palm branches in their hands had receded to the background. As such, it was the white robes that were the salient sartorial symbol.

And second, in 19:14 the only characterization of the armies of heaven that follow the Rider on the White Horse is that they are “dressed in fine linen, white [and] clean” (ἐνδεδυμένοι βύσσινον λευκὸν καθαρὸν). This is a surprisingly brief description. The first army described in Revelation, mentioned in John’s description of the terrors of the sixth trumpet, was dressed in breastplates of “fiery red, and hyacinth

¹⁴⁸The ones so clothed are “those who have emerged [see Aune, *Revelation 6-16*, 430, on the tense of the present participle] from the great tribulation” (οἱ ἐρχόμενοι ἐκ τῆς θλίψεως τῆς μεγάλης [7:14]), and John climactically describes this group as before God’s throne, sheltered by him, and serving him constantly (7:9, 15-17).

[or, bluish purple], and sulfury yellow” (πυρίλους καὶ ὑακινθίνους καὶ θειώδεις [9:17]).¹⁴⁹ The picture of the heavenly armies in 19:14, in contrast, is sublimely monochromatic, made more noticeable by its simplicity in comparison to the complex dress description of their leader, the Rider on the White Horse (19:12-16).

The former example demonstrates that it was possible for one to identify characters in a mixed group¹⁵⁰ based on their dress alone. The latter one, however, indicates that dress as the sole description of some of the beings John saw in vision was apparently adequate for descriptive purposes. Moreover, the revelation of identity via dress alone certainly underscores its importance in the book of Revelation.

Dress Communicates Identity

Resseguie emphasizes the importance of dress in Revelation, since both the type and condition of it “highlights the character, status, or moral qualities of a person.”¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁹Whether this description refers to both the horses and the riders (cf., e.g., Beale, *Revelation*, 510; Beckworth, *Apocalypse*, 568; Osborne, *Revelation*, 382) or just the riders (e.g., Boxall, *Revelation of Saint John*, 148; Gordon D. Fee, *Revelation*, New Covenant Commentary Series [Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2011], 135; Robert Mounce, *Revelation*, 196; Smalley, *The Revelation to John*, 239; Henry Barclay Swete, *The Apocalypse of St John: The Greek Text with Introduction Notes and Indices*, 3d ed. [1909; repr., *Commentary on Revelation: The Greek Text with Introduction Notes and Indices*, Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1977], 123; Trafton, *Reading Revelation*, 98) is a point of dispute. The description of the breastplates is also under discussion among commentators: (1) Does it describe color, or material? (2) If colored, are the breastplates multicolored, or singularly-colored (i.e., some are one color, others are another color)? On these questions, cf., e.g., Robert Mounce (*Revelation*, 196) and Swete (*Apocalypse of St John*, 123).

¹⁵⁰Cf. 7:11-12: The scene also includes angels, elders, and the four living creatures.

¹⁵¹Resseguie, *Revelation of John*, 75.

And Neufeld notes that in Revelation “clothes and jewelry are a part of each character’s identity kit that aids in playing out assigned social roles.”¹⁵² Furthermore, Neufeld believes that dress in some texts in Revelation, such as the first part of John’s inaugural vision in 1:13, provides “clues” to the identity of the one so dressed.¹⁵³ For him, Revelation’s pervasive dress signifiers also present an “ever present semiotic for expressing identity and intention, for upholding the status quo or subverting it.”¹⁵⁴

Dress works as a means of revealing identity numerous times in Revelation. This is particularly true, for example, with reference to the color white (λευκός). Those who are worthy in the church of Sardis will walk with Jesus “in white” (ἐν λευκοῖς [3:4]), and whoever overcomes “will be dressed in white clothes” (περιβαλεῖται ἐν ἱματίοις λευκοῖς [3:5]). The twenty-four elders are dressed “in white clothes” (ἐν ἱματίοις λευκοῖς [4:4]). Each of the martyrs under the fifth seal is given a “white robe” (στολή λευκή [6:11]). The huge, uncountable multitude is clothed with “white robes” (στολὰς λευκὰς [7:9; cf. 7:13-14]). And, as mentioned earlier, the armies of heaven are “dressed in fine linen, white (and) clean” (ἐνδεδυμένοι βύσσινον λευκὸν καθαρὸν [19:14]). In discussing these visible white garments in relation to purity, K. C. Hanson concludes that they “symbolize group membership as well as status and honor,

¹⁵²Neufeld, “Sumptuous Clothing,” 679 (see also 678, 686). Cf. Resseguie, *Revelation of John*, 38.

¹⁵³Neufeld, “Sumptuous Clothing,” 679.

¹⁵⁴*Ibid.*, 678. Cf. Resseguie, *Revelation of John*, 36-37.

and therefore, purity is expressed as ‘in-group’ and social hierarchy.”¹⁵⁵

Dress Communicates Role-Related Identity

In line with other ancient understandings, dress in Revelation also reveals role-related identity. Two examples will suffice to illustrate this. First, John describes two witnesses who prophesy for 1,260 days “dressed in sackcloth” (περιβεβλημένοι σάκκουϛ [11:3]). Sackcloth was a coarse cloth typically made out of goat or camel hair.¹⁵⁶ As indicated earlier, John the Baptist wore clothes made from camel’s hair (Matt 3:4; Mark 1:6), and he himself followed the example of Elijah in wearing hairy garments (cf. 2 Kgs 1:8; Zech 13:4). As such, the dress of these witnesses indicates in part that their role is that of prophesying a message of repentance, in line with similar messages given by Elijah (1 Kgs 18:21, 37, 39) and John the Baptist (cf. Matt 3:1-2, 8, 11; Mark 1:4).¹⁵⁷

Second, a classic example of role-related identity concerns the Great Prostitute (17:1). John describes her as “clothed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and and precious stone and pearls” (περιβεβλημένη πορφυροῦν καὶ κόκκινον καὶ κεχρυσωμένη χρυσίῳ καὶ λίθῳ τιμίῳ καὶ μαργαρίταις [17:4]). Here is an example of dress that is multivalent in meaning, since it connotes not only socioeconomic status

¹⁵⁵Hanson, “Blood and Purity,” 224. Cf. Craig R. Koester, “The Message to Laodicea and the Problem of Its Local Context: A Study in the Imagery in Rev 3.14-22,” *NTS* 49 (2003): 423-24.

¹⁵⁶BDAG, s.v. “σάκκος, ου, ό.”

¹⁵⁷See, e.g., Beale (*Revelation*, 576) and Osborne (*Revelation*, 420).

but also royal and even high priestly imagery.¹⁵⁸

But in 17:4 John also describes her as holding a golden cup “filled with the abominations and unclean things of her sexual immorality [γέμον βδελυγμάτων καὶ τὰ ἀκάθαρτα τῆς πορνείας αὐτῆς]” and mentions in 17:5 that her title reveals her to be the “mother of prostitutes [ἡ μήτηρ τῶν πορνῶν].” Ultimately, the revelatory angel defines her as “the prostitute [τὴν πόρνην]” in 17:16. True to this designation, the woman’s ornate dress imagery also symbolizes sexual immorality and compounds her verbal description as a prostitute. In Jer 4:30 the prophet similarly portrayed Israel as a wanton nymphomaniac, a sexually immoral woman who wore scarlet clothes and golden ornaments and painted her eyes for her multiple lovers.¹⁵⁹ As Stephen S. Smalley concisely concludes with regard to the Great Prostitute’s dress in Rev 17, “the woman looks the part.”¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁸On the socioeconomic aspect, cf. Rev 18:16-17, a reference to the wealth of Babylon. For other connotations, cf., e.g., Beale (*Revelation*, 854-57), Ford (*Revelation*, 278-79), Lupieri (*Commentary on the Apocalypse*, 254-55), Malina and Pilch (*Social Science Commentary*, 204-205), Osborne (*Revelation*, 610-14), and Smalley (*The Revelation to John*, 430).

¹⁵⁹Scarlet and golden ornaments are not exclusively the dress of sexually immoral women (see 2 Sam 1:24). Nevertheless, cf. Isa 1:15-22, where scarlet and red are associated with a Jerusalem described as sexually immoral (1:21). With regard to painting one’s eyes, two other references to such a practice (2 Kgs 9:30; Ezek 23:40) refer to one who is sinful and ultimately doomed. Finally, the word for “lovers” here (עֲנֻבִים) occurs elsewhere in the HB only in Ezek 23:5, 7, 9, 12, 16 (2x), and 20, where the cities of Jerusalem and Samaria are characterized as adulterous.

¹⁶⁰Smalley, *The Revelation to John*, 430. Cf., e.g., Aune (*Revelation 17-22*, 935) and Boxall (*Revelation of Saint John*, 242). On the meaning of Babylon’s sexual immorality here, see, e.g., Osborne, *Revelation*, 608, 613.

With regard to the Greco-Roman world, Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar notes that

Summary of Dress and Identity in Revelation

Neufeld observes that the narrative of Revelation “is liberally strewn with clothes.”¹⁶¹ What is important for this study is not only that Revelation exhibits an interest in dress that fits in well with what one finds in literature centuries earlier than it, but that Revelation also utilizes dress in order to communicate identity, supporting the well-known maxim that “you are what you wear.” In his discussion of dress in Revelation, Neufeld concludes, in part, that “clothing and ornamentation serve an important function in the Apocalypse. They make vivid through items of covering and decoration not only identity but also the loyalty of those who are followers of either Satan or the lamb.”¹⁶² Such being the case, one should expect that dress in Revelation may provide numerous clues about the various identities of the wearer(s).

Summary and Conclusions

From the ANE to the Roman world, and from the HB to the NT, abundant

according to neo-Pythagorean dress codes “especially the colours red and purple, as well as dresses streaked with gold, are frowned upon, since that kind of dress was regarded as the dress of the hetaerae” (“The White Dress of the Essenes and the Pythagoreans,” in *Jerusalem, Alexandria, Rome*, ed. Florentino García Martínez and Gerard P. Luttikhuisen, JSJSup 82 [Leiden: Brill, 2003], 305). Cf. Winter, *Roman Wives, Roman Widows*, 103-108. Similarly, the Greek historian Diodorus Siculus (fl. ca. 60-30 BCE) recorded a legend about the lawgiver Zaleucus, who stopped licentious behavior at Locri by enacting a law forbidding, in part, women from wearing gold jewelry or a garment with a purple border—unless they were courtesans (Diodorus Siculus 12.21.1); see the brief discussion in Winter, *Roman Wives, Roman Widows*, 100.

¹⁶¹Neufeld, “Under the Cover,” 71.

¹⁶²*Ibid.*, “Sumptuous Clothing,” 686.

evidence exists that dress was understood to be an important necessity. While people utilized it for warmth and protection, evidence also demonstrates that people across numerous cultural, geographical, and religious settings understood dress to communicate much critical information. Dress conveyed decisive information that could help one formulate a number of identity constructions. For example, one could identify various individuals based on their dress, and dress frequently worked as an extension of one's personality. Dress also revealed one's socioeconomic status of poverty or wealth. Ethnic identities could be ascertained via dress decoding. Certain dress was restricted to men or women, and hair length signified gender in some cultures. Various societal roles and functions also came to light through dress interpretation. Furthermore, dress could communicate transitions from one social, political, or religious status to another. As such, dress in the biblical world functioned in similar ways to that of the contemporary world; in fact, it functioned even more directly and efficiently than it does in today's society because of such modern realities as globalization, mass advertising, "mix and match," etc.

While dress interpretation was a complex endeavor during this ancient swath of history, people were able to decode and make sense of dress messages and construct meaningful identities as a result. Nevertheless, dress interpretation did not necessarily lead to foregone or even automatic conclusions. Dress could send the wrong signals, for instance, and disguises could thwart dress decoding.

In light of the repeated use of dress language and imagery in the ANE, the OT, extrabiblical Jewish literature, the Roman world, and the NT—in particular, the book of

Revelation—the pursuit of possible evidence for Baigent’s criteria with regard to distinctive clothing or dress as an indicator of high priestly identity appears fruitful for research. Based on his readings of Mark 9:1-12 and Rev 1:13-16, Fletcher-Louis has suggested that one can associate some descriptions of Jesus’ dress with priestly concerns: “In early Christology, passages which show any interest in Jesus’ glorious attire also reflect a priestly background.”¹⁶³ Texts in Revelation that consequently evince interest in the dress of Jesus are potentially significant as high priestly identity markers.

¹⁶³Fletcher-Louis, *Glory of Adam*, 59, n. 13. Cf. idem, “Sacral Son of Man,” 294-95. Fletcher-Louis supports his contention that bright, iridescent, or glorious dress of Jesus in Mark 9:1-12 and Rev 1:13-16 reflects priestly interests by referring to such texts as Sir 50:6-7; 4QpIsa^d (4Q164) on Isa 54:12a; 4Q405 23 II, 7-10; 4Q175; *Let. Aris.* 97; Josephus *A.J.* 3:216-7; *L.A.B.* 26:9; 2 *En.* 22:8-10; and 3 *En.* 12 (“Sacral Son of Man,” 294-95).

CHAPTER 4

THE RITUAL DRESS OF THE HIGH PRIEST

Introduction

Biblical and extrabiblical texts do not hesitate to describe in some detail the dress of the high priest.¹ In the culture of the time, such a description carried significant weight, since it communicated a tremendous amount of information, including status and identity.² As one can clearly see by comparing Lev 16:32 and 21:10, to be high

¹Ben Sira, Philo, and Josephus are three who write significantly on the dress of the high priest. An in-depth study of this topic in any of these works would be beyond the bounds of this study; nevertheless, I will discuss salient points from them. For the Hebrew text of Ben Sira, I have utilized Pancratius C. Beentjes, *The Book of Ben Sira in Hebrew: A Text Edition of All Extant Hebrew Manuscripts and a Synopsis of All Parallel Hebrew Ben Sira Texts*, VTSup 68 (Leiden: Brill, 1997); cf. Israel Lévi, ed., *The Hebrew Text of the Book of Ecclesiasticus*, 3d ed., Semitic Study Series 3 (Leiden: Brill, 1969). Furthermore, I refer to “Ben Sira” when addressing the Hebrew text and “Sirach” when addressing the Greek text; when addressing the book as a whole, I default to “Ben Sira.” For Philo and Josephus I use the following Greek texts: *Philo*, trans. F. H. Colson, G. H. Whitaker, and Ralph Marcus, LCL; and *Josephus*, trans. H. St. J. Thackeray, Ralph Marcus, and L. H. Feldman, LCL.

Other later significant treatments of the high priest’s vestments by early Christians—beyond the scope of this research—were written by Justin, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Epiphanius, and Jerome (see Robert Hayward, “St Jerome and the Meaning of the High-Priestly Vestments,” in *Hebrew Study: From Ezra to Ben-Yehuda*, ed. William Horbury [Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1999], 91, n. 5).

²Cf. Edwards, “Dress and Ornamentation,” 2:233; Michael D. Swartz, “The Semiotics of the Priestly Vestments in Ancient Judaism,” in *Sacrifice in Religious Experience*, ed. Albert I. Baumgarten, *Studies in the History of Religions (Numen Book Series)* 93 (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 59-60. Note, e.g., the implied change in the status of Aaron’s son Eleazar when Aaron died and Moses placed Aaron’s garments on him

priest was to wear dress appropriate to and communicative of that role; consequently, to wear the garments was to be high priest.³ But only some of the elements of the high priest's dress ensemble were unique to him, clearly setting him apart from the other priests.⁴ These unique dress elements of the high priest were immediately recognizable. From a sartorial standpoint, the high priest thus belonged to two overlapping

(Num 20:26-28; cf. *Jub.* 32:3-9, where Levi's priestly appointment is partly mediated by receiving the dress of priesthood).

See also the surprising narrative of Josephus (*A.J.* 11.325-39) describing how the dress of the high priest Jaddua impacted Alexander the Great when the latter met the former at the head of a Jewish delegation in procession from Jerusalem. Jaddua was dressed in the same high priestly dress (blue and gold robe, headgear with golden plate inscribed with the name of YHWH) that Alexander had seen someone (Jaddua? the heavenly high priest?) wearing in an earlier dream of his. For discussion of this intriguing (and problematic) narrative, cf. Shaye J. D. Cohen, "Alexander the Great and Jaddua the High Priest According to Josephus," *Association for Jewish Studies Review* 7 (1982): 41-68; Frances Flannery-Dailey, *Dreamers, Scribes, and Priests: Jewish Dreams in the Hellenistic and Roman Eras*, JSJSup 90 (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 207-209; Crispin H. T. Fletcher-Louis, "Alexander the Great's Worship of the High Priest," in *Early Jewish and Christian Monotheism*, ed. Loren T. Stuckenbruck and Wendy E. S. North, Early Christianity in Context, JSNTSup 263 (London: T & T Clark, 2004), 72-102; Tae Hun Kim, "The Dream of Alexander in Josephus *Ant.* 11.325-39," *JSJ* 34 (2003): 425-42; Arnaldo Momigliano, "Flavius Josephus and Alexander's Visit to Jerusalem," *Athenaeum* 57 (1979): 442-48; Cecilia M. Peek, "Alexander the Great Comes to Jerusalem: The Jewish Response to Hellenism," *BYU Studies* 36 (1996-97): 99-112; Richard Stoneman, "Jewish Traditions on Alexander the Great," *SPhilo* 6 (1994): 37-53; and VanderKam, *From Joshua to Caiaphas*, 63-85.

³Lev 16:32 shows that the person was ordained in order to: (1) serve as high priest (instead of his father); and (2) to wear the high priestly garments. Lev 21:10 shows that the ordination was for the purpose of wearing the high priestly dress—synonymous with serving in the role of high priest (cf. Exod 28:41; 29:9, 29; Lev 8:33; *Jub.* 32:3; 4Q213b 6 [4QLevi^c ar 6]; *T. Levi* 8:10). See also *T. Levi* 8:2, where the patriarch Levi is clothed in the dress of the high priest, indicative of his status as high priest (on this, see, e.g., Jordi Latorre i Castillo, "Leví sacerdote en los Testamentos de los Doce patriarcas," *Estudios bíblicos* 62 [2004]: 70).

⁴Compare texts focusing on the dress of the high priest (e.g., Exod 28:4-39, 42-43; 39:2-31; Lev 8:6-9; 16:4) with texts focusing on the dress of the common priests (e.g., Exod 28:40-43; 39:27-29; Lev 6:10; 8:13).

classifications: on the one hand he wore some dress items that identified him as a priest, while on the other hand he wore some dress items that distinguished him from all other priests.

In 1992 E. P. Sanders noted that “the dress of the priests, like everything else if one tries to describe it in detail, presents difficulties.”⁵ Despite this informed warning, a textual⁶ catalogue and discussion⁷ of the various elements of the high priest’s dress ensemble⁸ remains necessary for this study. Such a survey will provide a foundation for

⁵Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief*, 92.

⁶Some discussions include important archaeological and iconographic information relative to priestly and high priestly dress. See, e.g., Christine Elizabeth Palmer, “Garments of Glory: The High Priestly Reflection of Yahweh” (M.A. thesis, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, 1997). In this current study, however, I will focus primarily on textual data.

⁷Besides commentaries and encyclopedias, specialized studies on the general topic of priestly and high priestly dress include: Johannes Gabriel, *Untersuchungen über das alttestamentliche Hohepriestertum mit besonderer Berücksichtigung des hohepriesterlichen Ornates*, Theologische Studien der Österreichischen Leo-Gesellschaft 33 (Vienna: Mayer, 1933); Menahem Haran, “The Priestly Image of the Tabernacle” *HUCA* 36 (1965): 191-226; idem, *Temples and Temple-Service in Ancient Israel: An Inquiry into the Character of Cult Phenomena and the Historical Setting of the Priestly School* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1978); Haulotte, *Symbolique du Vêtement*, particularly 44-54 and 167-75; Palmer, “Garments of Glory”; Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief*, 92-102; Siegfried Schemel, “Die Kleidung der Juden im Zeitalter der Mischnah: nebst einem Anhang: Die Priesterkleidung Swartz” (PhD diss., University of Rostock, 1912); Swartz, “Semiotics,” 57-80; and John A. Tvedtnes, “Priestly Clothing in Bible Times,” in *Temples of the Ancient World: Ritual and Symbolism*, ed. Donald W. Parry (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co.; Provo, UT: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 1994), 649-704.

⁸A number of texts describe characters not clearly designated as high priests with what appears to be high priestly dress imagery, but I will not examine these texts in this chapter. For instance, in the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, the author describes the angel Yaoel as wearing a *kidaris* or turban on his head (11:3). While the high priest wore the *kidaris* (cf. LXX Exod 28:4; 28:39; Lev 16:4; Jdt 4:15; Sir 45:12; Zech 3:5), the author of this apocalypse does not clearly designate Yaoel as a high priest. Characters not designated as high priests—but with apparently high priestly dress imagery—may not

investigating possible high priestly dress imagery relative to Jesus Christ and/or angelomorphic figures in the book of Revelation.

In this chapter I will survey data primarily from the HB about the daily and the yearly ritual dress of the high priest, with no attempt to either provide a comprehensive, in-depth study of each element of his dress or focus on their theological meaning. Nevertheless, I will focus on some elements of the high priest's ritual dress, particularly those elements that: (1) have been understood in different ways; (2) have undergone development over time; and (3) are potentially significant in view of the overall purpose of this study with regard to the book of Revelation. I will also explore some overlooked or ignored elements of the high priest's ritual dress in both ancient and contemporary discussions. Finally, I will summarize this chapter's exploration of the ritual dress of the high priest and provide some conclusions.

Daily Ritual Dress of the High Priest

From a temporal standpoint, the ritual dress of the high priest was of two basic kinds: (1) dress that he wore on a daily basis during the course of the year;⁹ and (2)

necessarily be being portrayed as high priests. Note, e.g., that Bohak compares the purple, violet, scarlet, and linen coloring of the wings of certain bees in *Jos. Asen.* 16:18 to the dress of the high priest (*Jewish Temple in Heliopolis*, 11), but Brooke denies that the text can bear the weight of such an identification ("Men and Women as Angels," *JSP* 14 [2005]: 170-71).

⁹Within the corpus of the HB, one finds the clearest descriptions of the high priest's daily dress in the books of Exodus and Leviticus (cf. sporadic descriptions in 1 Samuel, Ezra, Nehemiah, Ezekiel, and Zechariah), with the most detailed description of the high priest's dress found in Exodus.

Menahem Haran asserts that the high priest wore the same clothing as the common priests when ministering at the sacrifices offered on the altar of burnt offering, with only his special sash and turban distinguishing him from them, while the other,

dress worn specifically for the once-a-year observance of the Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur (Lev 16:4). Ancient through modern analyses have traditionally broken down the daily ritual dress of the high priest into eight “garments” or “vestments,” with four other garments used only on the annual Yom Kippur (Lev 16:4).¹⁰ The HB does not, however, enumerate in any one place the complete dress catalog of the high priest.

The breakdown of the high priest’s regular dress into eight garments frequently stems from rabbinic discussions such as are found in *m. Yoma* 7:5, which indicated that the high priest “serves in eight garments.”¹¹ According to this traditional perspective,

additional garments were added and worn on only two occasions each day, in the morning and the evening (“The Complex of Ritual Acts Inside the Tabernacle,” in *Studies in the Bible*, ed. Chaim Rabin, Scripta hierosolymitana 8 [Jerusalem: Magnes, 1961], 279). The reasons he gives for this distinction are that: (1) the additional garments generally matched the interior workmanship of the sanctuary in terms of their use of gold and mixed fabrics; that (2) it would be difficult to wear the heavy additional garments at the altar of burnt offering; and that (3) these additional dress items were ritual objects in their own right, even as the altar, the lampstand, and the table (*ibid.*, 279-83).

¹⁰Cf., e.g., Menahem Haran, “Priestly Vestments,” *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 2nd ed. (2007), 16:512; *idem*, “Complex of Ritual Acts,” 279; *idem*, *Temples and Temple-Service*, 166. A distinction was made between the anointed high priest and the high priest of many garments (*m. Hor.* 3.4). Margaret Barker suggests that the tradition of anointing the high priest in the Second Temple period must have not been observed, since other statements (*b. Hor.* 12a; *b. Ker.* 5b) indicate that the anointing oil had been hidden away during the reign of Josiah (Barker, “The Temple Roots of the Christian Liturgy,” in *Christian Origins: Worship, Belief and Society: The Milltown Institute and the Irish Biblical Association Millennium Conference*, ed. by Kieran J. O’Mahony, JSNTSS 241 [Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2003], 33).

¹¹Translation in Jacob Neusner, *The Mishnah: A New Translation* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1988), 277. Cf. Swartz, “Semiotics,” 61-62. See also Himmelfarb, *Ascent to Heaven*, p. 132, n. 74, where she notes that the work known as the *Alphabet of Metatron* describes Enoch-Metatron as garbed in eight garments, here traditionally understood to refer to the dress of the high priest.

the first four were worn by both the common priest and the high priest:¹² (1) undergarments; (2) tunic; (3) sash or waistband; and (4) turban.¹³ Furthermore, according to the traditional interpretation, the high priest alone wore the last four of these eight garments, which were sometimes designated as the “golden garments”:¹⁴ (5) robe; (6) ephod; (7) breastpiece; and (8) head ornament.¹⁵

Though this summary of eight garments is still standard and typical, it is neither original nor universal. The first mention of the dress of Aaron as (high) priest in the HB (Exod 28:4), for example, lists only six items to be made.¹⁶ On the other hand, the more condensed narrative in Lev 8:7-9 lists nine actions of Moses in putting, girding, clothing, and placing nine items of dress on Aaron during Aaron’s vesting at his

¹²For reference to martial dress worn by the seven Aaronic priests—dress that specifically was to be brought into the sanctuary—see 1QM 7 9-11.

¹³Cf. Josephus, who asserts that the high priest is dressed in the same way as the common priest—though with other items of dress (*A.J.* 3.159).

¹⁴Cf. *m. Yoma* 7:3-4 (translation in Neusner, *The Mishnah*, 277) and *Lev. Rab.* 21:10. On the ANE “golden garments,” see Oppenheim, “Golden Garments,” 172-93.

¹⁵Terminology for priestly dress is not uniform in contemporary discussion. Cf. the dress terminology, e.g., in Neusner (*The Mishnah*, 277) and in William H. C. Propp (*Exodus 19-40: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 2A [New York: Doubleday, 2006], 522 (Propp’s terms are listed second): (1) tunic = shift; (2) underpants = [same]; (3) head covering = hat; (4) girdle = sash; (5) breastplate = “pectoral pouch called *hōšen*”; (6) apron = Ephod; (7) upper garment = Robe; and (8) frontlet = Blossom. With regard to these dress items, I shall use the following nomenclature and order in this study: (1) undergarments; (2) tunic; (3) sash; (4) robe; (5) ephod; (6) breastpiece; (7) headgear; and (8) head ornament.

¹⁶Natalio Fernández Marcos discusses the imitative descriptions of the high priest’s dress in this biblical passage by the *Letter of Aristeas*, Ben Sira, Philo, and Josephus as examples of *ekphrasis* in his “Rewritten Bible or *Imitatio*? The Vestments of the High Priest,” in *Studies in the Hebrew Bible, Qumran, and the Septuagint Presented to Eugene Ulrich*, ed. Peter W. Flint, Emanuel Tov, and James C. VanderKam (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 321-36.

inauguration as high priest.¹⁷ In this latter list the undergarments are missing, while the “decorated band of the ephod (NRSV)” and the Urim and Thummim are listed.¹⁸ Table 1 sets forth this particular listing of ritual dress elements.

The HB utilizes the phrase **בְּגָדֵי הַשָּׂרָד** (“finely worked vestments,” NRSV) three times to categorize both the high priest’s and the common priest’s garments (Exod 31:10, 35:19; 39:41).¹⁹ Nevertheless, from a linguistic standpoint, the HB frequently differentiates the dress of the high priest from that of the regular priesthood. Aaron’s garments are called “holy garments” or “sacred vestments” in numerous texts in Exodus

¹⁷While some items are placed or put on top of other items, as opposed to being just “put on,” the effect is the same in terms of the enumeration. For more on the English translations of the dress items, see the discussion below.

¹⁸These latter elements do not appear in the summary list in Exod 28:4, but they do appear later in that same chapter (Exod 28:27, 28, and 30). Some other lists are dissimilar as well. *T. Levi* 8:2-10 and *L.A.B.* 13:1 list seven and five items, respectively. In the two accounts of Levi’s visionary investiture by seven (angelic) men in white, *T. Levi* 8:2 lists “the robe of priesthood, and the crown of righteousness, and the breastplate of understanding, and the garment of truth, and the plate of faith, and the turban of (giving) a sign, and the ephod of prophecy,” while 8:4-10 lists “a staff of judgment,” “a holy and glorious robe,” “a linen vestment like an ephod,” “a girdle like (a) purple (robe),” “a branch of rich olive,” “a crown,” and “a diadem of the priesthood” (translation from Harm W. Hollander and M. de Jonge, *The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs: A Commentary*, *Studia in Veteris Testamenti Pseudepigrapha* 8 [Leiden: Brill, 1985], 149). *L.A.B.* 13:1 refers to Moses arranging “all the vestments of the priests, the belt and the robe and the headdress and the golden plate and the holy crown” (D. J. Harrington, “Pseudo-Philo: A New Translation and Introduction,” in *OTP*, 2:321). The ephod, breastpiece, and precious stones are also mentioned earlier in this verse—but they appear between mention of the altar of incense and the laver. Even if this text were listing the unique high priestly dress items, it would not match the fuller lists in the HB.

¹⁹The last word in this phrase is difficult to translate (cf. Haran, “Priestly Image,” 213-15). For an excellent summary of the discussion, see Propp, *Exodus 19-40*, 490-91. Propp favors translating the phrase as “Textile Garments” (*ibid.*).

Table 1. Dress actions and dress items in Leviticus 8:7-9

	Dress Action			Dress Item		
	MT	LXX	English	MT	LXX	English
v. 7	וַיִּתֵּן	ἐνέδυσεν	he put / he dressed	אֶת־הַכֹּתֶנֶת	τὸν χιτῶνα	the tunic
	וַיַּחְזֵר	ἔζωσεν	he girded	בְּאַבְנֵט	τὴν ζώνην	with the sash / the sash
	וַיִּלְבֹּשׁ	ἐνέδυσεν	he dressed	אֶת־הַמְעִיל	τὸν ὑποδύτην	the robe / the undergarment
	וַיִּתֵּן	ἐπέθηκεν	he put / he put on	אֶת־הָאֶפֶד	τὴν ἐπωμίδα	the ephod
	וַיַּחְזֵר	συνέζωσεν	he girded / he girded together	בְּחֹשֶׁב־הָאֶפֶד	τὴν ποίησιν τῆς ἐπωμίδος	with the decorated band of the ephod / the work [or] doing of the ephod
v. 8	וַיִּשֶׂם	ἐπέθηκεν	he put / he put on	אֶת־הַחֹשֶׁן	τὸ λογεῖον	the breastpiece / the oracle
	וַיִּתֵּן	ἐπέθηκεν	he put / he put on	אֶת־הָאֲוִרִים וְאֶת־הַתְּמִימִים	τὴν δὴλωσιν καὶ τὴν ἀλήθειαν	the Urim and the Thummim / the Manifestation and the Truth
v. 9	וַיִּשֶׂם	ἐπέθηκεν	he put / he put on	אֶת־הַמְצַנֶּפֶת	τὴν μίτραν	the turban / the mitre
	וַיִּשֶׂם	ἐπέθηκεν	he put / he put on	אֶת־צִיץ־הַזָּהָב	τὸ πέταλον τὸ χρυσοῦν	the golden blossom / the golden leaf
				נֹר־הַקֹּדֶשׁ	τὸ καθηγιασμέν ἄγιον	(the) holy crown / the holy dedication [or] consecration

Note: For the English translations, if there is a slash (“/”), the MT is indicated first and the Greek is after the slash. If there is no slash, the translation works for both MT and LXX.

and Leviticus, while the dress of the common priests is not so described.²⁰

The varying enumerations of the specific dress items of the high priest in the HB are paralleled by the varying enumerations of the high priest's dress found in scholarly analyses of the biblical and extrabiblical data.²¹ This is also true with regard to the categorization of the more generalized dress forms as shared with the common priests or unique to the high priest. When scholarly treatments of the dress of the high priest

²⁰The terms for “holy garments” or “sacred vestments” are: *בגדי־קֹדֶשׁ* (Exod 28:2, 4; Lev 16:4); and *בגדי־הַקֹּדֶשׁ* (Exod 29:29; 31:10; 35:19, 21; 39:1, 41; 40:13; Lev 16:32).

²¹Bond suggests that Exod 28 lists nine high priestly garments, but the “outer chequered coat” disappeared “in later literature” and possibly was not in use in the Second Temple period (“Discarding the Seamless Robe,” 416, n. 30). Rachel Elior asserts that there were not eight but seven high priestly garments in *The Three Temples: On the Emergence of Jewish Mysticism* (Oxford: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2004), 41, 243. In Podella's analysis of Lev 8:7-9, he lists only seven instead of nine dress items (see *Das Lichtkleid JHWHs*, 60-64 [list on p. 63]). Stephen D. Ricks incorrectly notes that Exod 29:5-6 contains reference to “eight sacred garments” when it instead lists seven (“The Garment of Adam in Jewish, Muslim, and Christian Tradition,” in *Temples*, 715).

Furthermore, Louis H. Feldman, in discussing Josephus's arrangement of the biblical material on the high priest's dress according to the order in which the high priest would put them on, strangely classifies biblical references in Exod 28:39-42 of “the tunic, the sash, the headdress, and the breeches” as “undergarments” (“Rearrangement of Pentateuchal Material in Josephus' *Antiquities*, Books 1-4,” in *Judaism and Hellenism Reconsidered*, JSJSup 107 [Leiden: Brill, 2006], 384 [essay originally published in *HUCA* 70-71 {1999-2000}: 129-51]). And Sanders's discussion is confusing, since he ends up designating five items of the high priest's ensemble as tunics: As undergarments he lists “breeches, full-length linen tunic, full-length blue tunic”; on top of those he lists “linen tunic, blue tunic, ephod (a very abbreviated tunic),” and then he adds the breastpiece and headgear, the latter including the turban, covering cloth, and three-tiered crown (*Judaism: Practice and Belief*, 100). This does not agree with his summary of Josephus's description (*ibid.*, 93), nor his later discussion. Since he does not include the sash (in actuality he lists a “second sash” [*ibid.*, 99]) or the head ornament in this catalog, his number of dress items significantly exceeds the proverbial “golden eight.”

follow the standard enumeration of eight “golden garments,” they frequently make a clear demarcation between the four dress items worn with all the priesthood and the four dress items worn solely by the high priest among the priesthood.²² But while this typical differentiation remains generally descriptive of the data (i.e., the high priest wore at least some dress items different from the common priests), not only is the general enumeration problematic, but the categorical enumeration is clearly incorrect. All of this is an indication that—at a bare minimum—traditional catalogs of the high priest’s dress are not necessarily obvious from a textual standpoint. Furthermore, as I will demonstrate, such a breakdown into eight “garments” or “vestments” is thus not only stereotypical but also artificial and incongruent with contemporary analyses of dress.²³

In the Pentateuch²⁴ three of the eight traditional dress item forms that the high priest wore on a daily, ritual basis were common to each priest of the tribe of Levi: undergarments, tunic, and sash.²⁵ But as I will demonstrate below, even though some of

²²See, e.g., Haran, *Temples and Temple-Service*, 169-71. Swartz suggests that one can also divide the garments according to materials and functions, but he objects that it is “unwise to divide too sharply between utilitarian objects, such as the robe, and ornamental objects, such as the breastpiece” (“Semiotics,” 62).

²³E.g., the head ornament, typically considered a plate or rosette of gold, would not be considered a “garment” or “vestment” any more than a bracelet or set of earrings. All of the aforementioned articles, however, would be considered dress elements.

²⁴See also discussion about the high priest’s garments in Second Temple sources (e.g., Josephus *A.J.* 3.151-78 and *B.J.* 5.228-36; *Let. Aris.* 96-99; Philo *Mos.* 2.109-35 and *Spec.* 1.82-97). Primary consideration in this study, however, will be given to sources from the HB, with reference to other sources when significant to issues regarding the development of—or interpretational difficulties about—such ritual dress.

²⁵Not all discussions on the high priest’s ritual dress clearly categorize his dress ensemble. For instance, in Haran’s analysis, the “turban” is considered one of the four “undergarments” common to all the priests: “There is an all-important difference in quality between the four undergarments [of the high priest] common to all the priests

these same articles of dress were worn by both the common priests and the high priest, those belonging to or worn by the high priest are described differently: They have a different texture or weave, or they contain other specified or unique elements. In this sense, then, the daily dress of the high priest contains *no* dress items that *precisely* match those of the regular priests.

The second category of the daily ritual dress worn by the high priest includes five traditionally recognized items of dress: (1) the robe; (2) the ephod; (3) the breastpiece; (4) the headgear; and (5) and the head ornament. From the standpoint of linguistics and craftsmanship, these five traditional dress items ascribed to the high priest were exclusive to him.²⁶ Nevertheless, in their basic form the evidence presented will substantiate that some of these were not necessarily worn by the high priest alone but by other dignitaries.

It was particularly these latter garments that became politicized during the Roman occupation, becoming part of a power-play dynamic. For significant portions of the time when Judea was under Roman domination, the high priest's garments were kept under lock and key, the exceptions being the three yearly festivals (Passover,

and Aaron's four overgarments" (*Temples and Temple-Service*, 171; cf. 169-70). Treiyer's analysis is similarly confused: He also classifies the high priest's mitre or tiara as one of the four "undergarments commons [*sic*] to every priest," though with a footnote attempting to implicitly clarify how it can be classified as a common undergarment and yet be a completely different Hebrew word from that for the common priests (*Day of Atonement*, 78).

²⁶Texts outside of the Pentateuch (e.g., 1 Sam 2:18; 2 Sam 6:14; 1 Chr 15:27) indicate the ephod was utilized by others than the high priest. Some texts indicate that it was carried rather than worn (cf. Judg 17:5; 18:14, 17-20; 1 Sam 23:6, 9; 30:7).

Weeks/Pentecost, Booths/Tabernacles) and the fast day (Yom Kippur).²⁷ This use of the high priest's garments for political purposes underscores the role of his garments as a substitute for his social identity.

The Undergarments

The first article of ritual dress common to both the high priest and the common priests was comprised of the undergarments (מְכַנְּסִים).²⁸ These are typically described

²⁷See 1 Macc 10:20-21; Josephus *A.J.* 15.403-409, 18.90-95, 20.6-16. Other than general references to the priestly garments that were kept under these conditions, Josephus mentions “all his [the high priest's] ornaments” (τὸν πάντα αὐτοῦ κόσμον [18.90]), the “foot-length tunic” (τὸν ποδήρη χιτῶνα [20.6]; cf. τὸν χιτῶνα τὸν ποδήρη [Exod 29:5]) known elsewhere as the robe or the robe of the ephod, “the priestly garments” (τὴν ἱερὰν στολήν [20.6]; cf. the same terminology understood as a collective in 20.7 and 9), and “the crown” (τὸν στέφανον [20.12]). See Brutti, *Development*, 273, n. 18; Fletcher-Louis, “Messiah: Part I,” 169; Lupieri, *Commentary on the Apocalypse*, 254; Pucci Ben Zeev, “La sovranità,” 99-112; Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief*, 326; Smallwood, “Date of the Dismissal,” 12-21; idem, *Jews Under Roman Rule*, 74, 149, 172-73, and 260-61; Swartz, “Semiotics,” 60; VanderKam, *From Joshua to Caiaphas*, 432-434; and Paul Winter, *On the Trial of Jesus*, 2nd ed., ed. T. A. Burkill and Geza Vermes, *Studia judaica* 1 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1974), 21-26.

The priestly vestments had been kept in different places over the centuries: during the time of the First Temple, in the chambers adjacent to the inner courtyard during the time of Solomon's Temple (cf. Lev 6:4, and Ezek 42:14 and 44:19); during the time of the Second Temple, in the *birah* or *baris* (“citadel,” “fortress”) built by John Hyrcanus north of the temple; and later, from Herod's time onward, in the Antonia fortress (Josephus *A.J.* 15.403-408, 18.93, 20.6-16). See Rivka Nir, *The Destruction of Jerusalem and the Idea of Redemption in the Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch*, Society of Biblical Literature Early Judaism and Its Literature 20 (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 45-46, particularly 46, n. 12. On the terminology of *birah* or *baris*, see, e.g., Daniel R. Schwartz, “‘Stone House,’ *Birah*, and Antonia during the Time of Jesus,” in *Jesus and Archaeology*, ed. James H. Charlesworth (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 341-48.

²⁸Exod 28:42 (cf. v. 43); 39:28; Lev 6:3; 16:4; Ezek 44:18. N. L. Tidwell conjectures that these undergarments “are the direct descendant of the old כַּנְּסִי בָר and represent a relic of the older form of priestly dress” (“The Linen Ephod: 1 Sam. II 18 and 2 Sam. VI 14,” *VT* 24 [1974]: 507). On the opaque etymology of this Hebrew term, see S. David Sperling, “Pants, Persians, and the Priestly Source,” in *Ki Baruch Hu:*

as being made out of linen (כָּרָה).²⁹ The purpose of these garments was to cover the (bare) flesh or nakedness of the priests (cf. Exod 20:26),³⁰ and they consequently reached from the loins or waist to the thigh area of the body (28:42).

The textual data, however, indicate that while the undergarments were common to both the high priest and the common priests, those of the high priest were distinguished from those of the other priests. Exodus 39:28 describes the undergarments as being made out of a specific type of linen, שֵׁשׁ מְשֻׁרָר (‘‘fine, twisted linen’’). But in the next verse this same descriptor defines ‘‘the sash / waistband

Ancient Near Eastern, Biblical, and Judaic Studies in Honor of Baruch A. Levine, ed. Robert Chazan, William W. Hallo, and Lawrence H. Schiffman (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1999), 381-82.

The terminology Josephus uses (τὸν μανναχάσην [‘‘the undergarment’’]; see *A.J.* 3.152) is not that of the LXX but is a somewhat modified transliteration of the Hebrew terminology (מְשֻׁרָר). As to why Josephus utilized such transliterations rather than LXX terminology for this and other high priestly dress items, see Stuart Dunbar Robertson, ‘‘The Account of the Ancient Israelite Tabernacle and First Priesthood in the ‘Jewish Antiquities’ of Flavius Josephus’’ (PhD diss., Annenberg Research Institute, 1991), 204-206.

The term ‘‘breeches’’ typically refers to 17th-19th-century knee-length trousers and is thus anachronistic. Contra Sperling (‘‘Pants,’’ 373-82), while the term used by Josephus (ἀναξυρίδας [‘‘trousers’’]) to describe this priestly dress item is the same as one used by Herodotus to describe one element of Persian military dress, one would not today designate a garment that extends from the waist to the thighs (Exod 28:42; cf. Josephus *A.J.* 3.152 and *B.J.* 5.231) as ‘‘trousers.’’ Cf. Robertson, ‘‘Account,’’ 206, n. 47.

²⁹Exod 28:42; 39:28; Lev 6:10; 16:4. On the ancient appreciation of (white) linen, see John E. Farrell, ‘‘The Garment of Immortality: A Concept and Symbol in Christian Baptism’’ (PhD diss., Catholic University of America, 1974), 227-57, particularly 231-35 and 249-60. The color of linen has been described in terms as ‘‘off-white, bone-white, or slightly yellowish’’ (Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief*, 96-98, here 97), as well as silver (Knowles, ‘‘What Was the Victim Wearing?’’ 162).

³⁰For a brief discussion on the role of the priestly undergarments in controlling their sexuality, see McKay, ‘‘Gendering the Body,’’ 99.

[הָאַבְנֵיטָ]” belonging to none other than the high priest.³¹ Despite the contention of Menachem Haran that the undergarments (Haran’s “breeches”) were an exception to the rule that the linen garments of the high priest were “somewhat different and more elaborate . . . than those of ordinary priests,”³² the description here of the undergarments being made out of fine, twisted linen would naturally be understood to belong solely to the high priest because of other high priestly dress items like the ephod and sash being made out of the same type of fabric.³³

The Tunic

Another article of dress that the high priest wore was the tunic (כְּתֹנֶת).³⁴ This was not a rare or unusual dress item, since, as D. N. Freedman and M. P. O’Connor

³¹This same terminology appears both in descriptions of the tabernacle and court curtains (Exod 26:1; 27:9, 18; 36:8, 9; 38:16, 18) and in descriptions of other high priestly dress items (Exod 28:6, 8, 15; 39:2, 5, 8).

³²Haran, “Priestly Image,” 213.

³³This is apparently how Sir 45:8 understands it, since it lumps the linen undergarments (περισκελῆ), the robe, and the ephod together as objects or instruments of strength or authority (σκεύεσιν ἰσχύος); since only the latter two dress elements are unique to the high priest, the undergarments must have been differentiated from that of the common priests as well for the argument to work. Notice the comment of Jacob Milgrom that the undergarments of the common priests may indicate that they were not considered an article of their sacred dress (*Leviticus 1-16: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB3 [New York: Doubleday, 1991], 1017).

³⁴The basic term is used for the high priest’s tunic in Exod 29:5 as well as in Lev 8:7 (in the latter text it is called “the tunic” [אַת־הַכְּתֹנֶת]) and 16:4 (where it is called a “sacred/holy linen tunic” [כְּתֹנֶת־בֶּדֶר קֹדֶשׁ]). As for the non-priestly, archaic כְּתֹנֶת פְּסִים (‘‘coat of many colours’’ [KJV]; ‘‘long robe with sleeves’’ [NRSV]) form (Gen 37:3, 23, 32; 2 Sam 13:18-19; cf. Gen 37:31, 33), see the discussion in D. M. Freedman and M. P. O’Connor, ‘‘כְּתֹנֶת,’’ *TDOT* (1995), 7:384-86. There they discuss how the one worn by David’s daughter Tamar (2 Sam 13:18) may be related to the מְעִיל (ibid., 7:385).

have noted, the word כְּתֹנֶת “is the Hebrew equivalent of one of the most common terms in the civilized world.”³⁵ Tunics were also worn by the common priests,³⁶ and all of the priestly tunics were fabricated with אָרָג (“woven”) craftsmanship from שֵׁשׁ (“fine linen” [Exod 28:39; 39:27]).³⁷ Tunics were not, however, restricted to the priesthood alone; one finds clear evidence that the Hebrew term was used in describing the dress of Adam and Eve (Gen 3:21),³⁸ Hushai the Archite (2 Sam 15:32), Job (Job 30:18), the woman in Song 5:3, and King Hezekiah’s royal steward (Isa 22:21; cf. 2 Kgs 19:1-2).³⁹

While the other priests also wore tunics, the textual data indicate that the high priest’s tunic was of a clearly different construction. In Exod 28:4 it is first expressly described as being uniquely “checkered” or “interwoven” (תְּשֻׁבֵיץ).⁴⁰ Second, Exodus

³⁵Freedman and O’Connor, “כְּתֹנֶת,” 7:383. Note this sartorial term in Akkadian, Arabic, Aramaic (Imperial and Jewish), Ethiopic, Mandaean, Mycenaean Linear B, Greek, Ionian, Latin, Phoenician, Sumerian, Syriac, and Ugaritic (ibid., 7:383-84).

³⁶Exod 28:40; 29:8; 40:14; Lev 8:13; 10:5; Ezra 2:69; Neh 7:70, 72.

³⁷In 39:27 the definite Hebrew article is associated with tunics for both the high priest and the common priests; but the LXX here (36:34) is anarthrous (χιτῶνας βυσσίνους [“fine linen tunics”]).

³⁸See Freedman and O’Connor (“כְּתֹנֶת,” 7:384-85) on this tunic’s nature.

³⁹The typical Greek equivalent to the Hebrew כְּתֹנֶת or כְּתָנֶת (χιτῶν; cf. the pluralized transliteration χοθωνωθ in Neh 7:70, 72) also appears in descriptions of the dress of King Ahab (1 Kgs 20:27 [MT 21:27]), the “daughters of Zion” (Isa 3:16, 24), high court officials in the time of King Hezekiah (Isa 36:22), pagan priests (Ep Jer 1:29), Andronicus (2 Macc 4:38), Jewish warriors (2 Macc 12:40), and others (4 Macc 9:11).

⁴⁰The word תְּשֻׁבֵיץ is a *hapax legomenon* in the HB. Cf. the discussion in Freedman and O’Connor, “כְּתֹנֶת,” 7:386, where they suggest that it had blue, purple, scarlet, and gold threads running through it; the HB does not, however, mention this.

later describes the high priest's tunic as being embroidered or woven (וְשִׁבְצָתָהּ הַכֹּהֵן) [28:39]).⁴¹ Nothing comparable is stated with regard to the tunics of the common priests. And third, the high priest's tunic is singled out from all similar tunics belonging to the common priests, labeling it as “the tunic” (אֵת־הַכֹּהֵן) [Exod 28:39; cf. 29:5; Lev 8:7]).⁴² Every indication thus demonstrates that while the tunic was not exclusive to the priesthood, the high priest's tunic was differentiated from those of the common priests through a unique description and fabrication.

Excursus: The High Priest Tearing His Clothes

The most familiar NT reference to the dress of the high priest is that of the high priest tearing his robes (or, clothes) during the interrogation of Jesus.⁴³ In fact, this is

⁴¹The NIV translates this as “weave the tunic,” while the NRSV translates it as “you shall make the checkered tunic.” The rare verb שָׁבַץ occurs only twice in this chapter with regard to the dress of the high priest. Notice that earlier in v. 20 the verb is used participially of the precious stones of the high priest's breastpiece: They are “woven,” or, in this case, “set” or “mounted” with gold (מְשֻׁבָּצִים זָהָב). Cornelis Houtman believes that the basic meaning of the verb does not deal with a certain kind of weaving but rather has the sense that “the tunic is to be shaped by sewing, it is to have folds or creases, so that it will fit tightly around the body” (*Exodus*, Historical Commentary on the Old Testament, trans. Sierd Woudstra [Kampen, The Netherlands: Kok; and Leuven: Peeters, 1993-2002], 3:475). He believes that its basic meaning relates well to the idea of “setting” or “mount” as found in מִשְׁבְּצוֹת (ibid.).

⁴²The LXX of Exod 28:39 pluralizes the reference to the tunic, interpreting it to refer to the fringes / tassels of the tunics (οἱ κόσμηται τῶν χιτῶνων) of *all* the priests. The difference between the singular and the plural in the Hebrew, however, is simply one of vocalization: הַכֹּהֵן (singular) vs. הַכֹּהֲנִים (plural). On the anomalous text of LXX Exod 29:5, see the discussion below.

⁴³For a good survey of the issues involved here, see Raymond E. Brown, *The Death of the Messiah: From Gethsemane to the Grave: A Commentary on the Passion Narratives in the Four Gospels* (New York: Doubleday, 1994), 1:517-19.

the most explicit reference in the entire NT to the dress of the high priest. The reason for this item's discussion here is that Mark narrates that the high priest tore "his clothes (τοὺς χιτῶνας αὐτοῦ [14:63])."⁴⁴ Mark's use of the plural⁴⁵ of the Greek term for the tunic of the high priest indicates that no one particular garment is meant;⁴⁶ reference to one tunic would refer to the high priest's inner clothing, but here the plural probably refers to his clothing in general.⁴⁷

Matthew's narrative of the same event⁴⁸ describes the high priest tearing not τοὺς χιτῶνας αὐτοῦ but τὰ ἱμάτια αὐτοῦ (26:65). This terminological difference

⁴⁴The term χιτῶν translates the כַּתְנֵת of the high priest in LXX Exod 28:4, 39; 29:5; 35:19; 36:34; Lev 16:4. Outside of Mark 14:63, χιτῶν in the NT describes the dress of non-priests (particularly in Jesus' teachings to his disciples regarding their dress: cf. Matt 5:40; 10:10; Mark 6:9; Luke 3:11; 6:29; 9:3; Acts 9:39; Jude 1:23) and the dress of Jesus at his crucifixion (John 19:23).

⁴⁵Typically only one tunic was worn by a person; Matt 10:10, Mark 6:9, and Luke 3:11 and 9:3 refer to two tunics, but these probably refer to the use of a spare and not two at once (John Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew*, NIGTC [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; Bletchley, UK: Paternoster, 2005], 1132). Cf. Josephus, who refers to some who wore two of these articles of dress (*A.J.* 17.136).

⁴⁶Josephus (*A.J.* 3.153, 159) indicates that the high priest wore two tunics (using the term χιτῶν for both of them)—one like the common priests, and a hyacinth-colored one.

⁴⁷Cf. Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, 1:519; Robert H. Gundry, *Mark: A Commentary on His Apology for the Cross* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 914; idem, *Matthew: A Commentary on His Handbook for a Mixed Church under Persecution*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 546; and Nolland, *Gospel of Matthew*, 1132. It is possible that the high priest could have opened up his outer garments and torn his inner garments; according to Josephus (*J.W.* 2.322), on one particular occasion the chief priests tore their garments (τῶν ἐσθήτων) and consequently had bare chests (τὰ στέρνα). Cf. Ep Jer 1:30 (Eng. 1:31), where the priests of pagan temples sit in their temples "having [their] clothes torn" (ἔχοντες τοὺς χιτῶνας διερρωγότας).

⁴⁸Luke's parallel narrative does not refer to the high priest's dress at all.

suggests that Matthew utilized a more familiar generic term for clothing and similarly was not referring to a particular dress item.⁴⁹ Matthew may have changed Mark's account⁵⁰ to refer to the clothes the high priest would more naturally tear—his outer clothing, rather than his inner clothing.⁵¹

In any case, some have set forth theological reasons for concluding that the high priest was wearing his ritual dress when he tore his clothes; this would supposedly demonstrate that the high priest broke the Torah (despite the fact that Lev 10:6 and 21:10 are not parallel).⁵² Nevertheless, it does not appear that ritual dress was involved here, since the Sanhedrin was meeting at the high priest's house (Mark 14:53-54; cf. Matt 26:3-4, 57-58; Luke 22:55), where such garments would not normally be worn.⁵³

⁴⁹Nolland, *Gospel of Matthew*, 1132. Ulrich Luz concludes that Matthew's usage does not indicate that the high priest was wearing official robes (*Matthew 21-28: A Commentary*, trans. James E. Crouch, ed. Helmut Koester, HCHCB [Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005], 430, n. 45). In Lev 16:4 the four high priestly dress items reserved for Yom Kippur were called holy garments (ἱμάτια ἁγιά). Use of such plural terminology appears to confirm that no particular dress item is in view in Matthew.

⁵⁰Markan priority is assumed.

⁵¹Gundry, *Matthew*, 546. Notice the use of both terms in Matt 5:40, and cf. Luke 6:29 (on these two verses, see Gundry, *Matthew*, 67) as well as LXX Lev 16:4 and Isa 61:10. See also John 19:23, where the soldiers at Jesus' crucifixion divide Jesus' clothing (τὰ ἱμάτια αὐτοῦ) into four parts, while they cast lots to see who gets his tunic (τὸν χιτῶνα). It does not appear likely that Matthew is alluding to the decrees (LXX Lev 10:6; 21:10) forbidding the priests or the "anointed" priest (the one who has been consecrated to wear the garments) from tearing their garments (τὰ ἱμάτια), since such tearing was forbidden specifically with regard to mourning for the dead.

⁵²Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 434.

⁵³So Gundry, *Mark*, 914. On possible locales for the high priest's residence, see Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, 1:349-50. Josephus indicates (*A.J.* 18.91-92) that when the high priest went out into the city, he did not wear his official robe but instead wore ordinary or "private" garments (τὴν ἰδιωτικὴν); he uses this terminology in reference to the practice of Hyrcanus (*ibid.*). For other corroborative accounts, see *m. Hor.* 3:5

The Sash

The third article of ritual dress common to the regular priests but also worn by the high priest on a daily basis was the sash or waistband (אַבְנֵט), an article of dress that occurs nine times in the OT, with only one of those occurrences referencing dress of someone other than the high priest or a common priest.⁵⁴ The אַבְנֵט was an item of dress that was girded or wrapped around the hips, groin, and lower abdomen and over

and *b. Hor.* 12b; cf. Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 17-22: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 3A (New York: Doubleday, 2000), 1814.

Nolland agrees that it is unlikely that the high priest was wearing ritual dress; he argues that because of the Roman control of the vestments they would not be used at his house even if they were in his possession at this time (*Gospel of Matthew*, 1132); for a similar argument, cf. R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 1029, n. 44. Josephus notes (*A.J.* 18.94) that the vestments were put back in Roman control “after the first day of the feast” (μετά μίαν τῆς ἑορτῆς)—the feast here being Passover (the other great feasts in which this took place were Pentecost and Tabernacles). The two Gospels that indicate that the high priest tore his robes—Matthew and Mark—are the same two that note that Jesus ate the Last Supper on the first (πρώτη) day of the feast of Unleavened Bread, which was identified in the Gospels with Passover (Mark 14:12, 14, 16; Matt 26:17-18; cf. Luke 22:1, 7-8, 13, 15). Thus, while the high priest had previously had access to his robe on the day that Jesus celebrated the Last Supper, by the time Jesus was later questioned, it is likely that he did not have access to this robe, and it was back under lock and key.

Robert H. Stein agrees that the tearing would not have involved the ritual clothes of the high priest, but then he suggests that they could have been “the inner tunics lying under the liturgical garments” (*Mark*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament [Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008], 685). This latter suggestion, however, does not make sense, since the priests did not mix liturgical and non-liturgical garments. Cf. the restriction in Ezek 42:14 and 44:19 prohibiting priests from wearing their vestments even as close as the outer court of the temple.

⁵⁴Exod 28:4, 39, 40; 29:9; 39:29; Lev 8:7, 13; 16:4; Isa 22:21. The anomalous text (Isa 22:21) is in reference to Shebna and Eliakim, the officials (הַסְּכָנִי [22:15]) in charge of the royal palace. This sartorial terminology in 22:21 is part of the reason why *Tg. Isa. 22* understood these figures as priestly in nature (see, e.g., Bruce Chilton, “Shebna, Eliakim, and the Promise to Peter,” in *Jesus in Context: Temple, Purity, and Restoration*, ed. Bruce Chilton and Craig A. Evans [Leiden: Brill, 1997], 319-37).

the tunic.⁵⁵ Heike Omerzu notes that “gender-specific systems of symbolization” contributed to the meaning of sashes: For women, different types of girdles/sashes reflected virginity, marriage, and birth, while for men, the belt/sash was frequently associated with bearing arms and indicated the “ability and readiness to fight as well as power in general.”⁵⁶ Irrespective of gender, sashes communicated status and power: for example, the more prominent a person’s social status, the more elaborately was the related sash ornamented.⁵⁷

With regard to the texts that describe priestly dress, on three occasions the sash clearly describes a dress item of the common priests—either separate from or along with that of the high priest (Exod 28:40; 29:9;⁵⁸ Lev 8:13). In the five remaining references

⁵⁵While frequently described as a “girdle,” modern readers would possibly confuse this term with a woman’s garment, and thus I do not utilize it here. Cf. also Sir 45:10 (MT), where the term אָזוּר (“belt; waistcloth, loincloth”) occurs after reference to the breastpiece of judgment and the ephod; אָזוּר appears to be a synonym for the high priest’s sash, and it refers to the leather belt Elijah wore (2 Kgs 1:8; cf. its related use around one’s loins or waist in Job 12:18; Isa 5:27; 11:5; Jer 13:1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 10, 11; Ezek 23:15). Cf. Patrick W. Skehan and Alexander A. Di Lella, *The Wisdom of Ben Sira: A New Translation with Notes, Introduction and Commentary*, AB 39 (New York: Doubleday, 1987), 512.

⁵⁶Heike Omerzu, “Women, Magic and Angels: On the Emancipation of Job’s Daughters in the Apocryphal Testament of Job,” in *Bodies in Question: Gender, Religion, Text*, ed. Darlene Bird and Yvonne Sherwood (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2005), 91 (an earlier version of this is “Das bessere Erbe: Die privilegierte Stellung der Töchter Hiobs im Testament Hiobs,” in *Körper und Kommunikation: Beiträge aus der theologischen Genderforschung*, ed. Katharina Greschat and Heike Omerzu [Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2003], 57-93).

⁵⁷Omerzu, “Women, Magic and Angels,” 91.

⁵⁸Notice the use of the singular term for sash in the MT, in contradistinction to the plural in the LXX, Syriac, and targumim. Because the preceding verse refers to Aaron’s sons alone, the mention of Aaron here (“Aaron and his sons”) is, according to Propp, “slightly odd” (*Exodus 19-40*, 350). Furthermore, reference to “Aaron and his sons” is missing from the LXX.

to the sash, it occurs as either: (1) a singular article of dress in a catalog of dress items belonging to the high priest (Exod 28:4, 39; Lev 8:7; 16:4); or (2) a particular item of dress in a catalog of both singular and plural dress items belonging to the priesthood, whether the high priest or the common priests (Exod 39:29; cf. vss. 27-31).

At least three pieces of textual data further indicate that the high priest's sash was distinguished from that of the common priests in the HB.⁵⁹ First, Exod 28:39 indicates that the Israelites fabricated the sash from woven or embroidered craftsmanship (מְעֵשֶׂה רִקְמִים [“the work of an embroider”]), a type of craftsmanship not utilized elsewhere for the common priests.⁶⁰ The same terminology is also utilized more elaborately in the 39:29: Embroidered craftsmanship (מְעֵשֶׂה רִקְמִים) was utilized in fabricating the high priest's sash out of fine, twisted linen (שֵׁשׁ מְזוּזָר), along with blue, purple, and crimson yarn made out of wool.⁶¹ And finally, 39:29 specifically designates

⁵⁹Cf. Josephus *A.J.* 3.154-55 and 159 and the discussion in *b. Yoma* 5b-6a (on whose girding with the sash came first, and subsequently, whether the high priest's sash was the same material as the sash of the common priests) and both *b. Yoma* 12a (on whether the sash of the high priest was the same as that of the common priest) and *b. Yoma* 12b (on whether the sash of the high priest was the only garment different from that of the common priests).

Milgrom (*Leviticus 1-16*, 519 and 548-49) and Propp (*Exodus 19-40*, 669) believe that the sashes of the high priest and the common priests were the same.

⁶⁰This type of craftsmanship was also utilized with reference to both the tabernacle's outer veil, situated in front of the Holy Place (26:36; 36:37), and the screen of the courtyard enclosure (27:16 and 38:18). Cf. 28:40 and 29:9 for the lack of such craftsmanship in the fabrication of the sashes of Aaron's sons.

⁶¹1QM 7 9-10 describes the battle dress of the priests, and there their sashes are embroidered with threads of these colors; but note that these vestments were not to be taken into the sanctuary. Cf. Emil Schürer, who asserts that the sashes of the common priests were “interwoven with purple, scarlet and blue ornaments” (*The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ [175 B.C.—A.D. 135]*, rev. ed., ed. Geza Vermes et al. [Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1979], 2:293).

the sash as “the sash” (וְאַתֶּה־הָאַבְנֵט).⁶² The same is true for Lev 8:7: “and he girded him with the sash” (וַיִּהְיֶה אִתּוֹ בְּאַבְנֵט).” These three texts demonstrate that in the HB the high priest’s sash was differentiated from that of the common priests, even though the basic dress form for both high priest and common priest was the same.⁶³

Sanders, following Josephus’s description of the sash in the Second Temple period, concludes that the high priest wore not only the four dress items worn by the

Sanders asserts that “the precise description of colours is very difficult—in fact, impossible” (*Judaism: Practice and Belief*, 95). The colored yarns would be made out of wool, since linen is not readily capable of being dyed (*ibid.*, 95-96). While the mixture of linen and wool was forbidden to the Israelites (Lev 19:19; Deut 22:11), Josephus (*A.J.* 4.208) and the Mishnah (*m. Kil.* 9:1) indicate that priests were able to wear these two fabrics (cf. Schürer, *History*, 2:293-94, n. 7). According to Ziderman, the three colors typically described as blue, purple, and crimson, could have been blue-purple (hyacinth), red-purple (Tyrian purple), and bluish red (crimson) (“Seashells,” 98-101). Cf. Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief*, 505-506, n. 10. On the symbolic meaning of sacral colors, see Brenner, “On Color,” 200-207.

⁶²The LXX translates the Hebrew as referring to all the priests: τὰς ζώνας αὐτῶν (“their sashes”). But note that in the list of dress items in MT Exod 39:27-29, the LXX has pluralized another singular element: in MT 39:28 “the turban, fine linen” (הַמְצַנְפֶּת הַשֵּׁשׁ) = “the turbans of fine linen” (τὰς κινδάρεις ἐκ βύσσου) in LXX 36:35.

⁶³Josephus states that the common priest’s sash had the breadth of about four fingers, that while it was situated at the breast it was wound a bit above the armpits, and that it had the appearance of a serpent’s skin. Furthermore, it was interwoven with multicolored flowers and embroidered with hyacinth, Tyrian purple, and crimson (*A.J.* 3.154; cf. 3.158-59). For a discussion of this particular passage, see Andrew R. Angel, *Chaos and the Son of Man: The Hebrew Chaoskampf Tradition in the Period 515 BCE to 200 CE*, Library of Second Temple Studies 60 (London: T & T Clark, 2006), 183-84. According to Sanders, the warp threads were of fine linen, while the weft threads provided the decorations (*Judaism: Practice and Belief*, 95; cf. *ibid.*, 99).

Based on later descriptions of the sash in Second Temple sources like Josephus, Alfred Edersheim concluded that this item of the high priest’s dress “may be regarded as the most distinctive priestly vestment, since it was only put on during actual ministration, and put off immediately afterwards” (*The Temple: Its Ministry and Services as They Were at the Time of Jesus Christ* [1874; repr., Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1997], 72).

common priests (i.e., undergarments, tunic, sash, and headgear [a “simple cloth cap over a linen turban”]),⁶⁴ but also “a second sash,” colored like the sash of the common priests, but including gold thread in its decoration (cf. *A.J.* 3.153-54, 158-59).⁶⁵ If Josephus is correctly describing what he has actually seen⁶⁶—and there are no strong indications here that he is distorting the record, particularly since he himself was a priest—then this appears to be another development over what is described in the HB.⁶⁷

The Robe

The first traditionally understood article of dress worn only by the high priest in the Israelite cult that I will explore is the *מַעִיל*. Second Temple Jewish authors sometimes described with rapturous tones the resplendent sight of the high priest,⁶⁸ and it was this robe that often captivated their attention and caused them to marvel with delight at the sheer beauty of it.⁶⁹ In the HB this dress item is typically referred to either

⁶⁴Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief*, 93.

⁶⁵*Ibid.*, 99.

⁶⁶Sanders supports the account of Josephus for these reasons: (1) Josephus described the dress elements in the order a priest would dress; (2) he is not dependent on the LXX but typically has the Hebrew in mind, with some differences indicating that he is not simply listing what is in that text; and (3) his description is detailed, indicative of a close-up examination of the dress items themselves (*ibid.*, 93).

⁶⁷See the next chapter for a more detailed description of the perspective of Josephus regarding the sash(es).

⁶⁸Cf., e.g., *Sir* 45:6-13; 50:5-11; *Let. Aris.* 96-99. With regard to priestly figures in general, Alicia J. Batten remarks that “if their garments were made according to the biblical instructions, they must have been spectacular” (“Clothing and Adornment,” *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 40 [2010]: 151).

⁶⁹Cf. Philo *Ebr.* 85-86; *QE* 2.107; *Spec.* 1.95 (the latter text refers in its wider context not only to the foot-length robe but also to the ephod, the breastpiece with its

simply as the **מְעִיל** (“robe”)⁷⁰ or more specifically as the **מְעִיל הָאֶפֶד** (“robe of the ephod”).⁷¹ Neither of these two linguistic designations appears in descriptions of the dress of the common priests within the Pentateuch.

The term **מְעִיל** was not exclusive to the high priest. Those who wore it included Samuel (1 Sam 2:19; 15:27; 28:14),⁷² Saul (1 Sam 24:4,11), Jonathan (1 Sam 18:4), David (1 Chr 15:27), the Levites and levitical singers who accompanied David leading the ark into Jerusalem (1 Chr 15:27), David’s daughter Tamar (2 Sam 13:18), Ezra (Ezra 9:3, 5),⁷³ Job and his friends (Job 1:20; 2:12; 29:14 [here, metaphorical]), and the “princes of the sea” (Ezek 26:16).⁷⁴ Since the Hebrew word itself would thus not

stones, and the Urim and Thummim [translated as the *δηλωσις* and the *ἀλήθεια*]).

⁷⁰Exod 28:4, 34; 39:23, 24, 25, 26; Lev 8:7; Sir 45:8. The term **מְעִיל** also occurs in Sir 45:12: **עטרת פז מעיל ומצנפת** (“golden crown, robe, and turban”). The LXX of this text, however, does not refer to a robe of any kind. It is also possible to understand **מְעִיל** here in terms of “to clothe” or “to wrap,” thus yielding the translation “a crown wrapped with gold” (see Otto Mulder, *Simon the High Priest in Sirach 50: An Exegetical Study of the Significance of Simon the High Priest as Climax to the Praise of the Fathers in Ben Sira’s Concept of the History of Israel*, JSJ 78 [Leiden: Brill, 2003], 156-57, n. 220).

⁷¹Exod 28:31; 29:5; 39:22. With regard to 28:31, Propp suggests that if the LXX *Vorlage* had only **מְעִיל** (which he assumes is probable), it would be the preferred reading (*Exodus 19-40*, 347). He also notes that in 39:22, the MT—supported by the Syriac—has **מְעִיל הָאֶפֶד**, while 4Q17 (4QExod-Lev^f) and the Samaritan text witness **הַמְעִיל**, the latter of which he concludes is the more difficult reading because it is different from the parallel in 28:31 (*Exodus 19-40*, 655).

⁷²This text provides the sartorial description of the spirit called up by the necromancer of Endor (and understood by her and Saul to be Samuel).

⁷³For a summary of arguments supportive and opposing the thesis that Ezra was a high priest, see VanderKam, *From Joshua to Caiaphas*, 45-47.

⁷⁴See also its metaphorical use (Ps 109:29; Isa 59:17; 61:10).

designate a high priestly garment, I would suggest that it was sometimes augmented and associated with the ephod in order to clearly emphasize the uniqueness of this garment vis-à-vis other non-high priestly occurrences of this dress item.

The **מְעִיל** first appears in the Pentateuch without specific reference to the ephod but immediately *after* that dress item: “a breastpiece and an ephod and a robe and a woven tunic” (**וְהָיָה חֹשֶׁן וְאֶפֶוד וּמְעִיל וְכַתְנֶת תְּשֻׁבֵץ**) [Exod 28:4]). These first four items in the larger six-item catalog list are listed in the *reverse* order of how the high priest would put them on. On the other hand, the last reference to the singular term **מְעִיל** in the Pentateuch is part of a narrative that details the high priest’s dress ensemble at his ordination in the logical order that it would be put on, and in this last reference the **מְעִיל** consequently appears *before* the ephod: “and he clothed him with the robe, and he put the ephod on him” (**וַיִּלְבַּשׁ אֹתוֹ אֶת־הַמְעִיל וַיִּתֵּן עָלָיו אֶת־הָאֶפֶד**) [Lev 8:7; cf. 8:8-9]).

Fuller, augmented references to the **מְעִיל** as the “robe of the ephod” in the HB occur in three texts: (1) Exod 28:31 (**אֶת־מְעִיל הָאֶפֶוד**); 29:5 (**וַיָּאֵת מְעִיל הָאֶפֶד**);⁷⁵ and

⁷⁵But the LXX of this text separates the robe from the ephod (τὸν ποδήρη καὶ τὴν ἑπωμίδα [literally, “the foot-length robe and the shoulder strap”]). On the ephod’s suspension from the shoulders, see Exod 28:7, 12, 25, 27; 39:4, 7, 18, 20. In the LXX the term typically used for the high priest’s ephod is ἑπωμυς (Exod 25:7; 28:4, 6, 7, 8, 12, 15, 29; 29:5; 35:9, 27; 36:9, 11, 14, 15, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29; Lev 8:7; Sir 45:8), a term which, when used extrabiblically with a sartorial sense, referred to the upper part of a woman’s tunic that was fastened on the shoulder by either brooches or shoulder-straps, or the tunic of a rower (LSJ, s.v. “ἑπωμύς”). In Ezekiel it refers to the “shoulders” of the temple doors and gates (40:48; 41:2, 3).

Propp hypothesizes about the purported LXX *Vorlage* of the list in Exod 29:5 (including a somewhat larger textual context: καὶ τὸν χιτῶνα τὸν ποδήρη καὶ τὴν ἑπωμίδα [“both the foot-length tunic and the ephod”]). He initially suggests that the initial Greek καὶ is unexpected and may have reflected **וְאֵת** in the LXX *Vorlage*. But without dwelling on that suggestion, he finally conjectures that the LXX *Vorlage*

(3) 39:22 (אַת־מְעִיל הָאֶפֶד).⁷⁶ The first and third texts begin detailed descriptions of this dress item (28:31-35; 39:22-26).⁷⁷ All of the rest of the references in the HB to the high priest's robe using only the term מְעִיל occur within these two detailed descriptions (28:34; 39:23, 24, 25, 26).

The high priest's robe was dyed "entirely in blue" (כָּלֵיל תְּכֵלֶת),⁷⁸ and it was

appears instead to have approximated אַת־הַכֹּתֶנֶת וְאֵת הַמְעִיל וְאֵת הָאֶפֶד ("the tunic and the robe and the ephod"), concluding that "compared to the MT, [this latter reconstruction would be] a shorter, more ambiguous and arguably superior reading" (Propp, *Exodus 19-40*, 350).

⁷⁶Propp supports the reading of 4Q17 (4QExod-Lev^f) 1 II and the Samaritan text (הַמְעִיל) over the longer MT (the Syriac is the same) because it is shorter and, in his judgment, the more difficult reading (*Exodus 19-40*, 655).

⁷⁷James C. VanderKam suggests that since the robe is mentioned in Exod 28 only in vss. 31-35, whereas the ephod and breastpiece are described more extensively in vss 5-30, it "seems to be regarded as part of the ephod, since it is termed 'the robe of the ephod'" ("Joshua the High Priest and the Interpretation of Zechariah 3," in *From Revelation to Canon: Studies in the Hebrew Bible and Second Temple Literature*, JSTSup 62 [Leiden: Brill, 2000], 173; essay originally published in *CBQ* 53 [1991]: 553-70). I am not entirely convinced that the paucity of textual content is determinate here, since: (1) the robe is listed separately in 28:4; and (2) the turban is described in even fewer verses in this chapter (28:37, 39). Nevertheless, this dress item is clearly described as the "robe of the ephod," and as discussion below will demonstrate, this terminology indicates an unusually close relationship between the two items.

⁷⁸Exod 28:31 and 39:22. Articles of dress could be understood by simply referring to their color. Sir 40:4 (MT), for example, refers to the one who wears a turban (תְּנִיף) and a golden "head ornament" (כִּיָּוָן), two dress items worn by the high priest (cf. Exod 28:36; 39:30; Lev 8:9; Zech 3:5). In the LXX, however, the reference is to one who wears two different items: the bluish-purple (ὑακίνθινος) and a crown (στέφανος). While both of these latter items could refer to royal emblems (cf. LXX Ezek 23:6 on the color and 2 Sam 12:30 and Ps 121:1-3 for the crown), they are also high priestly dress items (cf. LXX Exod 28:31 and 36:29 on the color and Sir 45:12 on the crown). On the basis of the high priestly imagery in the MT, I would conclude that the one who wears the ὑακίνθινος here would likely be the one who wears the hyacinth-colored high priestly robe, and thus the LXX would be using the color term to refer to this robe via synecdoche. Cf. Skehan and Di Lella, *Wisdom of Ben Sira*, 470.

constructed in an אָרְג style of craftsmanship, woven presumably with woolen threads (Exod 28:32; 39:22).⁷⁹ Unlike the tunic,⁸⁰ it is described (28:32) as having a “mouth” or collar (פֶּה),⁸¹ woven (מַעֲשֵׂה אָרְג) apparently with some kind of border so that it would not be torn (לֹא יִקְרַע).⁸² It had no sleeves but rather had slits at the side for one’s arms to go through. At the bottom hem of the robe and encircling it were bulb-shaped ornaments with the appearance of pomegranates, made out of blue, purple and crimson-colored woolen thread (28:33) along with twisted [linen⁸³] (מְשֹׁרֵר [39:24]), while golden bells interspersed the pomegranates (28:33-34; 39:25-26).⁸⁴ The purpose of the golden

See also Josephus’s reference to ὁ ὑάκινθος—that is, the high priest’s hyacinth-colored robe—in *A.J.* 3.184; the translation by Thackery in LCL (*Josephus*, 3:405) is incorrect, since it identifies the hyacinth as the color of the high priest’s *linen* tunic (cf. Louis H. Feldman, *Judean Antiquities 1-4: Translation and Commentary*, vol. 3 of *Flavius Josephus: Translation and Commentary*, ed. Steve Mason [Leiden: Brill, 2000], 281, n. 482).

⁷⁹See Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief*, 99.

⁸⁰Sanders describes this מַעֲשֵׂה as the “second tunic” worn by the high priest (*Judaism: Practice and Belief*, 99), creating a linguistic confusion of dress terms from the standpoint of the Hebrew. From the standpoint of the Greek (i.e., Exod 29:5: τὸν χιτῶνα τὸν ποδήρη), however, his terminology is accurate.

⁸¹On the controversial translation of this as “anus,” cf., e.g., Jeffrey M. Cohen, “A Samaritan Authentication of the Rabbinic Interpretation of *Kephî Tahrā*,” *VT* 24 (1974): 361-66, and Propp, *Exodus 19-40*, 444.

⁸²Ps 133:2 appears to refer to the “mouth” or collar of the high priest’s robe. The oil from Aaron’s anointing would pour down his beard to this opening (Exod 29:7; Lev 8:12; 21:10). Cf. Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief*, 99.

⁸³On the missing “linen,” see Propp on this verse and 28:33 (*Exodus 19-40*, 655, 347).

⁸⁴Cf. Cornelis Houtman, “On the Pomegranates and the Golden Bells of the High Priest’s Mantle,” *VT* 40 (1990): 223-29. The HB and LXX do not delineate the number of bells, but later interpretation spoke of twelve, twenty-four, thirty-six, fifty, seventy,

bells was to protect the high priest from death when he entered and exited the holy place before YHWH (28:35).

The high priest's robe, with its golden pomegranates and multi-colored pomegranates, was also described in Exod 28:35 as the robe he wore when he ministered (לְשָׂרֵת) in the sanctuary. This is the only single, specific garment of his dress ensemble so designated, even though there are references to both the holy garments (אֵת־בְּגָדֵי הַקֹּדֶשׁ) of Aaron and the garments of Aaron's sons—not specified as holy, yet designed “for ministering in the holy place” (לְשָׂרֵת בַּקֹּדֶשׁ).⁸⁵ These “garments for ministering in the holy place” were necessary so that Aaron and his sons could “minister as priests” (לְכַהֵן).⁸⁶ Without these robes of office, the high priest and the common priests could not fulfill their priestly roles.⁸⁷ This indicates that the high priest's robe, with its multicolored pomegranates and golden bells encircling its hem, is singled out as the robe that enables the high priest to officiate as high priest and to perform his sacred ministry in the sanctuary.

seventy-one, seventy-two, or 360 bells (cf. *ibid.*, 224; Robert Hayward, “St Jerome,” 97-98). The LXX indicates that there were not only multicolored pomegranates but also golden ones (ρόίσκους χρυσοῦς [LXX Exod 28:33]). It also describes (LXX Exod 28:34) floral decorations encircling the lower hem (καὶ ἄνθινον ἐπὶ τοῦ λώματος τοῦ ὑποδύτου κύκλῳ [“and floral work on the fringe of the undergarment all around”]); cf. *Let. Aris.* 96; *Philo Migr.* 103, *Mos.* 2.110 and 119-121, *QE* 2.120, *Spec.* 1.93-94).

⁸⁵Exod 35:19; 39:1, 41.

⁸⁶Exod 31:10; 35:19; 39:41.

⁸⁷Cf. Exod 29:1, 5-9 and Lev 16:32, where the ministry of Aaron and/or his sons is contingent upon being anointed, consecrated, and vested in the garments of ministry.

The Robe as (the) ποδήρης

Several terms were used to either translate into Greek or describe the high priestly ^{לְמַעַל}, including ὑποδυτης (“undergarment”),⁸⁸ ὑποδυτης ποδήρης (“foot-length undergarment”),⁸⁹ χιτῶν ποδήρης or ποδήρης χιτῶν,⁹⁰ ποδήρης ἔνδυμα (“foot-length garment or robe”),⁹¹ ποδήρης (substantive adjective),⁹² στολη,⁹³ and ὑακίνθος.⁹⁴ In the LXX the most common Greek term for this high priestly dress item is ὑποδύτης, occurring nine times in eight texts.⁹⁵ Since this term carries the meaning of an undergarment, in regard to the high priest, it would refer to a garment worn under the

⁸⁸LXX Exod 28:33 (2x), 34; 36:29, 30, 31, 32, 33; Lev 8:7. For ὑποδύτης as an undergarment (i.e., a garment under something else), cf. LSJ (s.v. “ὑποδύτης”), Propp (*Exodus 19-40*, 347), and John William Wevers (*Notes on the Greek Text of Exodus*, SBLSCSS 30 [Atlanta: Scholars, 1990], 458-59).

⁸⁹LXX Exod 28:31.

⁹⁰E.g., LXX Exod 29:5; Josephus *A.J.* 20.6.

⁹¹E.g., LXX Wis 18:24.

⁹²E.g., LXX Exod 25:7; 28:4, 31; 29:5; 35:9; Ezek 9:2, 3, 11; Zech 3:4; Sir 27:8; 45:8; Philo *Fug.* 185; *Her.* 176; *Leg.* 1.81; 2.56; *Mos.* 2.117, 118, 120, 121, 133, 143; *Mut.* 43; *Somn.* 1.214; *Spec.* 1.85 (2x), 93, 94; *Frg.* 117 on LXX Exod 28:27 (latter text in *Philo*, LCL, 12:257); Josephus *A.J.* 3.159; 8.93; *B.J.* 5.231.

⁹³E.g., Philo *QE* 2.107 and *Ebr.* 85-87.

⁹⁴E.g., Josephus *A.J.* 3.184. As indicated earlier, and contrary to Thackeray’s translation in LCL, this is not describing the high priest’s linen tunic as made out of hyacinth; rather, it speaks of the linen tunic and then the hyacinth (robe): ἀποσημαίνει δὲ καὶ ὁ τοῦ ἀρχιερέως χιτῶν τὴν γῆν λίνεος ὧν, ὁ δὲ ὑακίνθος τὸν πόλον (“And the high priest’s tunic likewise represents the earth, being [made out] of linen, and the hyacinthine [robe symbolizes] the firmament”). Cf. Philo *Mos.* 2.118.

⁹⁵LXX Exod 28:33 (2x), 34; 36:29, 30, 31, 32, 33; Lev 8:7.

ephod.⁹⁶ Consequently, it is significant to note that in translating the מְעִיל, the translators of the LXX typically used a word that was characterized by its relationship to another article of dress that the high priest wore.

The other term used in Greek translations of Hebrew texts containing מְעִיל is the term ποδήρης.⁹⁷ Typically adjectival in the LXX, its substantival use in translating מְעִיל in extant Hebrew texts occurs only once (Exod 28:4).⁹⁸ Despite this singular fact, its usage in reference to the high priest is much more substantial and—in some cases—disputed.

The word ποδήρης is the adjectival cognate to the word for foot, πούς, and thus it typically describes or refers to a robe that is foot-length.⁹⁹ This term serves in

⁹⁶Cf. LXX Exod 36:29 and Philo's discussion in *QE* 2.117 and *Spec.* 1.94. In Josephus *B.J.* 5.231 it apparently describes the linen tunic under the robe of the ephod.

⁹⁷While ποδήρης in general occurs more frequently than ὑποδύτης in the LXX (Exod 25:7; 28:4, 31; 29:5; 35:9; Ezek 9:2, 3, 11; Zech 3:4; Wis 18:24; Sir 27:8; 45:8), the former term translates מְעִיל only twice (Exod 28:4, 31).

⁹⁸LXX Exod 28:31 translates the high priestly מְעִיל using both Greek words (ὑποδύτην ποδήρη), thus specifying that the robe (underneath the ephod) is foot-length (i.e., reaching down to the feet). And in LXX Exod 29:5 the phrase καὶ τὸν χιτῶνα τὸν ποδήρη καὶ τὴν ἐπωμίδα can hardly be said to be an exact translation of the Hebrew הָאֶפֶד וְהַמְעִיל וְהַתְּכֵתֶמֶת וְהַתְּכֵתֶמֶת (“the tunic and the robe of the ephod”).

⁹⁹BDAG, s.v. “ποδήρης, ες”; cf. LSJ, s.v. “ποδήρης.” Besides the LXX, see Rev 1:13; *Let. Aris.* 96; Philo *Fug.* 185, *Her.* 176, *Leg.* 1.81 and 2.56, *Mos.* 2.117, 118, 120, 121, 133, and 143, *Mut.* 43, *Somn.* 1.214, *Spec.* 1.85 (2x), 93, 94, and *Frg.* 117 on LXX Exod 28.27 (text in Philo, LCL, 12:257); Josephus *A.J.* 3.153 and 159, 8.93, 20.6, and *B.J.* 5.231; *Barn.* 7:9; *T. Levi* 8:2. Cf., e.g., Aeschylus *Ag.* 898 (Herbert Weir Smyth ed. ref. = 887), 1594 (Herbert Weir Smyth ed. ref. = 1577); Appian *B civ.* 4.6.47 and *Pun.* 9.66; Euripedes *Bacch.* 833; Pausanias *Descr.* 1.19.1, 1.24.7, 5.19.6; Xenophon *An.* 1.8.9, and *Cyr.* 6.2.9 and 6.4.2. For these latter Greek texts (except for Plutarch *Mor.* 2.52c), see the Perseus Digital Library, <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/> (accessed March 8, 2012).

generally two basic ways in ancient Greek literature: (1) adjectivally modifying the dress term χιτῶν (“tunic,” “shirt”)¹⁰⁰ or other words;¹⁰¹ or (2) standing alone as an articular or anarthrous substantive.¹⁰² What this indicates for this study is that the LXX translator(s) understood the לְמַעַל to be characterized as a foot-length robe—despite the fact that the Hebrew term does not clearly include this idea.¹⁰³

The term ποδήρης occurs once in the NT, and there it occurs in the book of Revelation in the dress description of the one like a son of man (1:13). But the actual

¹⁰⁰See, e.g., Exod 29:5 (and the discussion below); Philo *Somn.* 214 and *Spec.* 1.85; Josephus *A.J.* 3.153, 3.159, 20.6. Cf. Pausanias *Descr.* 1.24.7 and *Descr.* 5.19.6 [= Elis 1]; Xenophon *Cyr.* 6.4.2. On χιτῶν, see BDAG, s.v. “χιτῶν, ὠνος, ὄ.”

¹⁰¹See, e.g., Exod 28:31 (ὑποδύτην ποδήρη); Wis 18:24 (ποδήρους ἐνδύματος); Philo *Fug.* 185 (τοῦ ποδήρους ἐνδύματος). In Appian *B civ.* 4.6.47 it modifies fine linen, from which a priestly robe of Isis is woven, while in Euripides *Bacch.* 833 it modifies πέπλοι (garments, mantles, or robes). It modifies a pillar in Aeschylus *Ag.* 887, apparently emphasizing its stability. As an adjective modifying huge shields, cf. Xenophon *An.* 1.8.9 and *Cyr.* 6.2.10.

¹⁰²For ποδήρης as an articular substantive, see, e.g., LXX Exod 25:7; 28:4; 35:9; Ezek 9:3, 11; *Let. Aris.* 96; Philo *Her.* 176, *Leg.* 1.81 and 2.56, *Mos.* 2.117, 120, 121, 133, and 143, *Mut.* 43, *Spec.* 1.93 and 94, and *Frg.* 117 on LXX Exod 28.27 (text in Philo, LCL, 12:257); *Barn.* 7:9; *T. Levi* 8:2.

For the word as an anarthrous substantive, see, e.g., Ezek 9:2; Zech 3:4; Sir 27:8; 45:8; Philo *Mos.* 2.118 and *Spec.* 1.85; Josephus *A.J.* 8.93; Rev 1:13. BDAG (s.v. “ποδήρης, ες”) suggests that one could supply χιτῶν with it because it occurs in association with the latter term on a number of occasions in classical, biblical, and Second Temple literature (e.g., Exod 29:5; Josephus *A.J.* 3.153). Cf. Appian *Pun.* 9.66 and Pausanias *Descr.* 1.19.1.

¹⁰³Notice the careful reference by Kruger: “Seemingly the garment extended to the feet (LXX ad Exod. 28.4, 31) with a skirt (*k n f*) at the lower end” (“Symbolic Significance,” 116, n. 42). It is possible that the Hebrew term for the high priest’s robe (לְמַעַל) was more specific than we understand now and referred to a certain type of robe that descended to the feet.

meaning of this term has been sharply disputed.¹⁰⁴ Consequently, since ποδήρης is vital in ascertaining whether or not high priestly imagery is evident in Rev 1:13, a more detailed investigation of this term’s meaning and usage in the LXX and other post-Septuagintal literature into the second century CE is necessary.

The term ποδήρης in the LXX

Lexical data about the ποδήρης within the LXX provide a mine of information that remains essential in determining the semantic range and contextual meaning of the word. It is these lexical data from the LXX, however, that have become a tangled web of confusion in various scholarly analyses. Table 2 lists the textual references where the word ποδήρης occurs in the LXX, the specific Greek terminology used in the relevant portions of those texts, and the Hebrew text assumed—correctly or incorrectly—to be associated with the LXX translation.¹⁰⁵

Of the twelve textual references to ποδήρης in the LXX, eight clearly refer to some dress aspect of the high priest.¹⁰⁶ Of the remaining four, three refer to Ezekiel’s mysterious “man clothed in linen” centrally involved in the judgment of the city of

¹⁰⁴Cf., e.g., Aune (*Revelation 1-5*, 93), Barker (*Revelation*, 84), Swete (*Apocalypse of St John*, 15), Vanhoye (“L’Apocalisse,” 262; and idem, *Old Testament Priests*, 281). But Patricia Ahearne-Kroll has asserted that “in the Septuagint Pentateuch ποδήρης always refers to the robe of the ephod that only Aaron wears (Exod 25:7; 28:4; 28:31; 29:5; 35:9)” (“LXX/OG Zechariah 1-6 and the Portrayal of Joshua Centuries after the Restoration of the Temple,” in *Septuagint Research: Issues and Challenges in the Study of the Greek Jewish Scriptures*, ed. Wolfgang Kraus and R. Glenn Wooden, SBLSCSS 53 [Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006], 181).

¹⁰⁵My phrasing here is necessarily ambiguous, since the Greek does not necessarily translate the Hebrew.

¹⁰⁶Exod 25:7; 28:4, 31; 29:5; 35:9; Zech 3:4; Wis 18:24; Sir 45:8.

Table 2. ποδήρης in the LXX

Reference	LXX	MT
Exod 25:7	καὶ λίθους σαρδίου καὶ λίθους εἰς τὴν γλυφὴν εἰς τὴν ἐπωμίδα καὶ τὸν ποδήρη ("the foot-length robe")	וְאֲבִי־שֵׁהֶם וְאֲבִי מִלְאִים לְאַפֹּד ("and for the breastpiece") וְלַחֲשׁוֹן
Exod 28:4	καὶ αὐταὶ αἱ στολαὶ ἅς ποιήσουσιν τὸ περιστήθιον καὶ τὴν ἐπωμίδα καὶ τὸν ποδήρη καὶ χιτῶνα κοσμηβωτὸν καὶ κίδαριν καὶ ζώνην	וְאֵלֶּה הַבְּגָדִים אֲשֶׁר יַעֲשֶׂוּ חֹשֶׁן וְאַפֹּד וּמְעִיל ("and a robe") וְכִתְנֵת תְּשִׁבִין מִצְנַפֶּת וְאֲבִנִּט
Exod 28:31	καὶ ποιήσεις ὑποδύτην ποδήρη ("a foot-length undergarment")	וְעִשִּׂיתָ אֶת־מְעִיל הָאַפֹּד ("the robe of the ephod")
Exod 29:5	ἐνδύσεις Ααρων τὸν ἀδελφόν σου καὶ τὸν χιτῶνα τὸν ποδήρη ("the foot-length tunic") καὶ τὴν ἐπωμίδα καὶ τὸ λογεῖον	וְהַלְבַּשְׁתָּ אֶת־אֶהֱרֹן אֶת־הַכִּתְנֵת ("the tunic") וְאֵת מְעִיל הָאַפֹּד ("and the robe of the ephod") וְאֶת־הָאַפֹּד וְאֶת־הַחֹשֶׁן
Exod 35:9	καὶ λίθους σαρδίου καὶ λιθους εἰς τὴν γλυφὴν εἰς τὴν ἐπωμίδα καὶ τὸν ποδήρη	וְאֲבִי־שֵׁהֶם וְאֲבִי מִלְאִים לְאַפֹּד ("and for the breastpiece") וְלַחֲשׁוֹן
Ezek 9:2	καὶ εἰς ἀνὴρ ἐν μέσῳ αὐτῶν ἐνδεδικῶς ποδήρη ("in/with a foot-length robe")	וְאִישׁ־אֶחָד בְּתוֹכְכֶם לְבָשׁ בְּדָיִם ("in linen")
Ezek 9:3	καὶ ἐκάλεσεν τὸν ἄνδρα τὸν ἐνδεδικότα τὸν ποδήρη	וַיִּקְרָא אֶל־הָאִישׁ הַלְּבָשׁ הַבְּדָיִם ("in linen")
Ezek 9:11	ὁ ἀνὴρ ὁ ἐνδεδικῶς τὸν ποδήρη	הָאִישׁ לְבָשׁ הַבְּדָיִם
Zech 3:4	καὶ ἐνδύσατε αὐτὸν ποδήρη	וְהַלְבַּשׁ אֶת־ךָ מִחֻלְצוֹת ("festal robes, apparel; rich garments")
Wis 18:24	ἐπὶ γὰρ ποδήρους ἐνδύματος ἦν ὅλος ὁ κόσμος ("a foot-length garment or robe")	[no Hebrew text for Wisdom]
Sir 27:8	καὶ ἐνδύση αὐτὸ ὡς ποδήρη δόξης ("robe of glory")	[no text in extant Hebrew mss.]

Table 2—Continued.

Reference	LXX	MT
Sir 45:8	ἐνέδυσεν αὐτὸν συντέλειαν καυχήματος καὶ ἐστερέωσεν αὐτὸν σκεύεσιν ἰσχύος περισκελῆ καὶ ποδήρη καὶ ἐπωμίδα	וילבישהו כליל תפארת ויפארהו ב[.]ר ^a ועוז: מכנסים כתנות ("tunic") ומעיל

^a Lévi's edition shows בכבוד ("in/with glory") for ב[.]ר (Hebrew Text, 61; cf. Beentjes, *Book of Ben Sira*, 79).

Jerusalem (9:2, 3, 11), while one appears in a wisdom saying in Sirach (27:8). I will examine not only these four latter occurrences of ποδήρης in order to determine whether they refer to high priestly dress but also examine the remaining texts to further determine what particular dress item of the high priest they are referring to.

Exodus 28:4 and 31. Of the twelve texts in the LXX in which the noun ποδήρης occurs, it clearly translates or describes the מְעִיל in only two of them: Exod 28:4 and 31.¹⁰⁷ This is a rather surprising conclusion, considering the number of times ποδήρης appears. Some have consequently asserted that the remaining LXX texts in which ποδήρης occurs indicate that the term actually translates several other, distinct Hebrew

¹⁰⁷With regard to the phrase καὶ τὸν ποδήρη καὶ χιτῶνα κοσμηβωτὸν ("and the robe and the fringed tunic") in 28:4, MS B (Codex Vaticanus) has a minus for the καί. Robertson incorrectly concludes that the LXX appears to take the Hebrew term for "checker-work" (תְּשֻׁבֵּת) here to mean "ankle-length, fringed," i.e., ποδήρη χιτῶνα κοσμηβωτὸν, but his supposed reading of the LXX is actually that of MS B ("Account," 209; cf. p. 212).

Aune's assertion (*Revelation 1-5*, 93) that in the LXX ποδήρης translates אֶפֶד in 28:31 is groundless. The Hebrew phrase is אֶת־מְעִיל הָאֶפֶד ("the robe of the ephod"), while the corresponding LXX phrase is ὑποδύτην ποδήρη (see table 2).

terms that do not refer to the robe; ποδήρης can thus hardly be a *terminus technicus*.¹⁰⁸

While ποδήρης does appear, at first glance, to translate not only the high priestly מַעֲיֵל but also the high priestly breastpiece (Exod 25:7; 35:9), a linen robe (Ezek 9:2, 3, 11), another type of robe that the high priest wears (Zech 3:4), and the high priestly tunic (Sir 45:8), I will demonstrate that such an assertion is at best overstated.

Exodus 25:7 and 35:9. With regard to Exod 25:7 and 35:9, the overall sartorial sequence refers first to the two stones on the shoulders of the high priest, then to the stones to be set in the ephod, and finally to the dress item under discussion here. The LXX translator at first glance appears to translate יָשֵׁן (“breastpiece”)—the last item in the list of three sartorial elements—by ποδήρης. But this translation appears problematic: How could the translator consider the breastpiece to be foot-length?

Another interpretation of the data, however, suggests a better solution: The LXX’s version is not a word-for-word translation at all.¹⁰⁹ The term יָשֵׁן is frequently

¹⁰⁸See, e.g., Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, 93. Stökl Ben Ezra dismisses Aune’s assertion that the supposed five Hebrew terms underlying the Greek term ποδήρης indicate that there is no priestly influence in Revelation, but he still agrees that there are “five Hebrew words behind the Septuagint ποδήρης” (*Impact of Yom Kippur*, 196, n. 254). Cf. Barker, *Revelation*, 84; Hollander and Jonge, *Testaments*, 151; Meredith G. Kline, *Images of the Spirit*, Baker Biblical Monograph (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1980), 48; M. Robert Mulholland, Jr., *Revelation: Holy Living in an Unholy World*, Francis Asbury Press Commentary (Grand Rapids: Francis Asbury Press, 1990), 82, n. 13; Swete, *Apocalypse of St John*, 15; Vanhoye, *Old Testament Priests*, 281; idem, “L’Apocalisse,” 262; and David Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 43 (New York: Doubleday, 1979), 321.

¹⁰⁹Contra W. Dommershausen, “יָשֵׁן,” *TDOT* (1986), 5:261.

translated in the LXX with the noun λογείον (“oracle or speaking-place”).¹¹⁰ In Exod 25:7 and 35:9, however, the usage of ποδήρης is clearly anomalous, and consequently it appears that it is not intended as a translation of the Hebrew term for the breastpiece. John William Wevers has noted that it is more likely that the LXX translator saw the breastpiece as part of the ephod;¹¹¹ since the ephod had already been mentioned, the reference to the breastpiece was thus deemed redundant in these verses.¹¹² According to this argument, the LXX translator consequently excised the supposedly glaring redundancy (i.e., reference to the ephod via the breastpiece) and purposefully added another sartorial element not mentioned in the Hebrew—the robe.

But this potential solution appears to open up another of the proverbial cans of worms: It would indicate that the stones were not only on the shoulder-pieces of the ephod, but also on the foot-length robe. From a technical standpoint, however, there were no precious stones on the foot-length robe; the stones were attached to the

¹¹⁰The term יָשֵׁן occurs in Exod 28:4, 15, 22, 23 (no corollary in the LXX), 24 (no corollary in the LXX), 26 (no corollary in the LXX), 28 (no corollary in the LXX), 29, 30; 29:5; 35:9, 27; 39:8 (LXX 36:15), 9 (LXX 36:16), 15 (LXX 36:22), 16 (LXX 36:23), 17 (LXX 36:24), 19 (LXX 36:26), 21 (LXX 36:28); Lev 8:8. Other than 28:4, only in 25:7 and 35:9—two passages identical in the LXX and virtually identical in the MT (25:7 does not begin with a י and יָשֵׁן is written defectively)—does the term ποδήρης appear instead of λογείον. In Exod 28:4 the LXX translates יָשֵׁן with the *hapax legomenon* περιστήθιον (“breastband”: LSJ, s.v. “περιστήθιον”), indicative of where the λόγιον / λογείον was situated (Wevers, *Greek Text of Exodus*, 445). Aquila’s version corrected this back to the standard translation (ibid.). Thus, the LXX typically translates יָשֵׁן as λόγιον / λογείον. Wevers states that λογείον is “an itacistic spelling [for λόγιον] which really means ‘a speaking-place,’ and can hardly have been intended” (*Greek Text of Exodus*, 451).

¹¹¹After all, from a visual standpoint precious stones in the breastpiece could be perceived to be those attached to the ephod.

¹¹²Ibid., 394-95.

shoulder-pieces of the ephod and to the breastpiece. Does the proposed solution actually make this textual conundrum more intractable?

In moving towards a conclusion here, there appear to be four basic possibilities. First, the LXX translator never had the term יָשֵׁן in his Hebrew text and translated what he read (מְעִיל ?) reasonably well as ποδήρης . Second, the translator incorrectly translated the יָשֵׁן that he saw in his Hebrew text as the ποδήρης . Third, the translator, recognizing that the breastpiece was closely attached to the ephod, and realizing that the ephod had just been mentioned, simply determined to avoid redundancy by substituting another dress item for the breastpiece—the robe. Here the translator possibly did not recognize that the list was not a list of dress items but instead stones attached to various dress items, and following this possibility to its logical conclusion, he was wrong.¹¹³ Finally, another possible solution to the problem is to conjecture that the LXX translator could have understood that the breastpiece, the ephod, and the robe were all associated via close proximity and could be described interchangeably via metonymy.

Any proposed solution remains a conjecture. While there is no textual evidence for the first option, it is true that the precious stone יָשֵׁן —which is the first dress item in the lists in Exod 25:7 and 35:9—finds its corollary in LXX Exodus as σαρδίον (“carnelion, sard[ius]” [25:7; 35:9]), σμάραγδος (“emerald”¹¹⁴ [28:9; 35:27; 36:13]), and βηρύλλιον (“beryl” [28:20; 36:20])—not to mention elsewhere as $\text{ὁ λίθος ὁ πράσινος}$ (“the light green [or, leek-green] stone” [Gen 2:12]), λίθους σοομ (“stones of

¹¹³Cf. Wevers, *Greek Text of Exodus*, 394.

¹¹⁴The Greek term can also refer to other green stones (LSJ, s.v., “σμάραγδος”).

soom”¹¹⁵ [1 Chr 29:2]), ὄνυξ (“onyx” [Job 28:16]), and ὀνύχιον (“a kind of onyx” [Ezek 28:13]).¹¹⁶ Certainly the ancients had immense difficulty interpreting precious stones, but the variety just within Exodus is startling with regard to this stone; perhaps the Hebrew *Vorlage* of LXX Exod 25:7 and 35:9 was radically different from our current MT. Nevertheless, this option is not as likely as others. Of the remaining possibilities, the theory that the LXX translator did not technically translate the שָׁהָרַחֵק as ποδήρης because of concern about redundancy is the most persuasive, largely because such a supposed translation is not congruent with the use of ποδήρης elsewhere in LXX Exodus. Assuming such conjecture to be the case, one could posit that the stones were considered to be on the robe via a metonymous understanding of the robe and the ephod.

Exodus 29:5. Exodus 29:5 presents another problem, since the MT and the LXX do not agree on how many high priestly dress items are listed. The MT refers to four high priestly dress items that the high priest would wear: “the tunic” (אֶת־הַכִּתְנֹת), “the robe of the ephod” (וְאֵת מְעִיל הָאֶפֶד), “the ephod” (אֶת־הָאֶפֶד), and “the breastpiece” (אֶת־הַחֹשֶׁן). The LXX, however, describes him being clothed with not four but three dress items: “the foot-length tunic” (τὸν χιτῶνα τὸν ποδήρη), “the ephod” (literally, “the shoulder strap”: τὴν ἐπωμίδα),¹¹⁷ and “the breastpiece” (literally, “the

¹¹⁵The word σοομ is an attempt at transliterating שָׁהָרַחֵק.

¹¹⁶On the lexical definitions, cf. LSJ and BDAG. A broader issue with this latter LXX text is that it is much more expansive than the Hebrew.

¹¹⁷On the ephod’s suspension from the shoulders, see Exod 28:7, 12, 25, 27; 39:4, 7, 18, 20. In the LXX the term typically used for the high priest’s ephod is ἐπωμίδας (Exod 25:7; 28:4, 6, 7, 8, 12, 15, 29; 29:5; 35:9, 27; 36:9, 11, 14, 15, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29;

oracle”: τὸ λογεῖον).¹¹⁸ Whether or not the LXX *Vorlage* here was different from the MT, it remains clear that it was not unknown for some later Jewish authors on occasion to describe the high priest’s robe as a foot-length tunic.¹¹⁹

Ezekiel 9:2, 3, 11. Was the one Ezekiel referred to in 9:11 as “the man dressed in linen” (הַבָּדִים לְבַשׁ הָאִישׁ) understood as a high priestly character?¹²⁰ From the

Lev 8:7; Sir 45:8), a term which, when used extrabiblically with a sartorial sense, referred to the upper part of a woman’s tunic that was fastened on the shoulder by either brooches or shoulder-straps, or the tunic of a rower (LSJ, s.v. “ἔπωμίδας”). In Ezekiel it refers to the “shoulders” of the temple doors and gates (40:48; 41:2, 3).

¹¹⁸Propp considers his suggested reconstruction of the Hebrew *Vorlage* behind the LXX’s καὶ τὸν χιτῶνα τὸν ποδήρη καὶ τῆν ἔπωμίδα to be a potentially superior reading (אֶת־הַכַּתְנַת וְאֵת הַמַּעִיל וְאֶת־הָאֶפֶד) compared to the MT (Propp, *Exodus 19-40*, 350). Notice the repetition of אֶפֶד in the MT. If such were the case, this text would be one more to add to Exod 28:4 and 31, in which ποδήρης translates מַעִיל.

But even if one deemed such a reconstruction not compelling and much too hypothetical, the fact is that The Three (Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion [hereafter Θ]) revised this Greek text so that it referred to something like “garment of the upper garment [or ephod]”: Aquila has τὸ ἔνδυμα τοῦ ἐπεινδύματος (“the garment of the upper garment”); Symmachus has τὸ ἐπένδυμα τοῦ ἐπεινδύματος (“the upper garment of the upper garment”); and Θ has τὸν ἐπεινδύτην τῆς ἔπωμίδος (“the outer garment of the ephod”); on this, see Wevers, *Greek Text of Exodus*, 468, n. 7; cf. *ibid.*, 459, n. 34.

¹¹⁹Notice Philo’s reference to τὸν ποδήρη χιτῶνα of the high priest in *Somn.* 1.214. Cf. also his use of ποδήρης χιτῶν in *Spec.* 1.85 and Josephus’s reference in *A.J.* 3.159 to the hyacinth-colored, foot-length tunic: ἐπεινδυσάμενος δ’ ἐξ ὑακίνθου πεποιημένον χιτῶνα, ποδήρης δ’ ἐστὶ καὶ οὗτος (“but he puts on a tunic made of blue material. And this too reaches to the feet” [or, “and this is also a foot-length garment”]).

¹²⁰Those who see this figure as a high priestly one include Walther Eichrodt, *Ezekiel: A Commentary*, trans. Cosslett Quin, OTL (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1970), 130; Moshe Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1-20: A New Translation with Interpretation and Commentary*, AB 22 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1983), 180; and Walther Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 1: A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel, Chapters 1-24*, trans. Ronald E. Clements, ed. Frank Moore Cross and Klaus Baltzer with the assistance of Leonard Jay Greenspoon, HCHCB (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979), 246-48 and 250. Cf. Beale, *Revelation*, 209. There may have been a tradition of interpreting the associated

standpoint of the Hebrew text, one of the most striking aspects of this being's description is his portrayal as one clothed in linen, differentiating him from the other six beings in the text.¹²¹ As an article or textual type of clothing, **בָּר** frequently refers to sacral—but not necessarily high priestly—fabric and attire.¹²² Excluding texts in which this term explicitly defines an article of dress,¹²³ comparable texts utilizing this noun

executioners of Ezek 9 in high priestly terms; see, e.g., the remarks of James R. Davila, who suggests that the reference to the seven chief angelic princes (or, angelic high priests) in the Qumran liturgical work *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice* (e.g., 4Q403 1 I, 1-29) was inspired by “the seven angels in Ezek 9:1-2” (*Liturgical Works* [Eerdmans Commentaries on the Dead Sea Scrolls 6; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000], 120).

Those who see him as a priestly figure include H.-J. Fabry, “**לְבָשׁ**,” *TDOT* (1995), 7:467; Kim, *Significance of Clothing Imagery*, 11, n. 24; Karin Schöpflin, “YHWH’s Agents of Doom: The Punishing Function of Angels in Post-Exilic Writings of the Old Testament,” in *Yearbook 2007: Angels: The Concept of Celestial Beings—Origins, Development and Reception*, ed. Friedrich V. Reiterer, Tobias Nicklas, and Karin Schöpflin, *Deuterocanonical and Cognate Literature* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2007), 130, 132; Marvin A. Sweeney, “Ezekiel: Zadokite Priest and Visionary Prophet of the Exile,” in *Form and Intertextuality in Prophetic and Apocalyptic Literature*, FAT 45 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 136; and Ka Leung Wong, *The Idea of Retribution in the Book of Ezekiel*, VTSup 87 (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 175, and the literature he cites there in support. Wong also sees the figure’s work in scattering coals on Jerusalem in 10:2 as priestly (*ibid.*, 175-78), as do Sweeney (“Ezekiel: Zadokite Priest,” 136), and Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 1*, 250.

Others see the figure as a priestly angel. Cf., e.g., Lamar Eugene Cooper, Sr., *Ezekiel*, *The New American Commentary* 17 (N.p.: Broadman & Holman, 1994), 131; and Iain M. Duguid, *Ezekiel*, NIVAC (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999), 146.

An “agnostic” perspective is exemplified by Daniel I. Block, who, while recognizing that linen dress was utilized for both priestly and angelic beings, concludes that it cannot be determined from the text whether the Man in Linen in Ezek 9-10 is priestly or angelic, though he thinks the evidence of the following events in 10:1-8 supports the latter (*The Book of Ezekiel: Chapters 1-24*, *New International Commentary on the Old Testament* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997], 304-305).

¹²¹Cf. **לְבָשׁ בְּדָיִם** (9:2); **הַלְבָּשׁ הַבְּדָיִם** (9:3); **לְבָשׁ הַבְּדָיִם** (9:11; 10:2, 6, 7).

¹²²Exod 28:42; 39:28; Lev 6:10; 16:4, 23, 32; 1 Sam 2:18; 22:18; 2 Sam 6:14 (despite it being on David; cf. the next text); 1 Chr 15:27.

¹²³It describes the ephod’s fabric in 1 Sam 2:18; 22:18; 2 Sam 6:14; 1 Chr 15:27.

describe either: (1) the sacral dress of the high priest and other priests (Exod 28:42; 39:28; Lev 6:10; 16:4, 23, 32); or (2) the dress of visionary beings or heavenly messengers (Ezek 9:2, 3, 11; 10:2, 6, 7; Dan 10:5; 12:6, 7).¹²⁴ Thus, while a high priestly or priestly interpretation is within the semantic range of רָבַד , the terminology alone does not clearly point in this direction in Ezekiel.

But it appears that this is not the case with the LXX. The cumulative weight of at least three lines of reasoning support a high priestly understanding in LXX Ezek 9-10. First, the way in which the LXX of Ezekiel uses ποδήρης to replace the sartorial רָבַד in 9:2, 3, and 11 is highly suggestive. When one excludes Ezek 9 from consideration, ποδήρης in the LXX clearly describes one of the components of dress worn not by the common priests but by the high priest in at least eight out of the remaining nine occurrences.¹²⁵ One can thus tentatively conclude that within the Ezekielian context, the LXX viewed רָבַד in high priestly terms.¹²⁶

¹²⁴If one takes these texts in which רָבַד is used to describe the dress of visionary beings or heavenly messengers and excludes the texts in Ezekiel, the Greek translations in Daniel (OG and Θ) utilize a term frequently associated with priestly vestments. The OG translates רָבַד with the adjective βύσσινος (“made of fine linen”), which emphasizes the linen aspect of a dress element, while Θ translates the Hebrew with βαδδιν —a rough transliteration of the Hebrew. The adjective and its cognate noun form (βύσσοσ [“fine linen”]) are frequently used of priestly dress (for βύσσινος , see Exod 28:39; 36:34 [MT 39:27]; for βύσσοσ , see Exod 28:5, 6, 15, 33, 39, etc.).

¹²⁵Exod 25:7; 28:4, 31; 29:5; 35:9; Zech 3:4; Wis 18:24; Sir 45:8. See the discussion below on the remaining occurrence in Sir 27:8.

¹²⁶Cf. the use of this dress element particularly in Lev 16:4, 23, 32. Zimmerli (*Ezekiel 1*, 226, n. 6a) agrees that the LXX is utilizing the term from a priestly standpoint in accordance with Exod 28:4 (where it is high priestly). Osborne is one who avers, however, that Ezek 9:2 is “without priestly imagery” (*Revelation*, 89).

A second line of reasoning supporting a high priestly interpretation of the ποδήρης in Ezekiel relates to another item of the Man in Linen's dress in chap. 9. One of the unusual elements of the LXX version in 9:2 is its alternative description of the Man in Linen as compared to the MT text. In this particular text, the MT's Man in Linen has "a writing case [הַסֵּפֶר הַקֵּטָה]; literally, "and a scribe's writing case/palette" at his side." The LXX, however, is radically different.

In the LXX that figure becomes a man clothed in a foot-length robe καὶ ζώνη σαπφείρου ἐπὶ τῆς ὀσφύος αὐτοῦ ("and a lapis lazuli¹²⁷ sash on his waist"). Rather than assume that the LXX "succeeds in making nonsense of the [Hebrew] phrase,"¹²⁸ I would suggest instead that it was attempting a reasonable contextual translation of its Hebrew *Vorlage*.¹²⁹ The only place outside of Ezekiel in which ζώνη occurs in close

¹²⁷On lapis lazuli being a better translation than sapphire, see Ross E. Winkle, "Iridescence in Ezekiel," *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 44 (2006): 56, n. 22. On the other hand, for arguments supportive of sapphire, see, e.g., D. Ginzberg, "The Mineralogical Identification of the Biblical Sapphire," *Eretz-Israel* 17 (1984): 82-83 (English summary on p. 4*).

¹²⁸A. M. Honeyman, "The Pottery Vessels of the Old Testament," *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* (1939): 90.

¹²⁹On the significant differences between MT and LXX Ezekiel, see Tov, *Text-Critical Use*, 250; idem, "Recensional Differences Between the Masoretic Text and the Septuagint of Ezekiel," in *The Greek and Hebrew Bible: Collected Essays on the Septuagint*, VTSup 72 (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 397-410 (originally published as "Recensional Differences Between the MT and the LXX of Ezekiel," *Ephemerides theologicae lovanienses* 62 [1986]: 89-101; I refer to the reprinted essay). On the methodical and literal nature of the LXX translation of Ezekiel, cf., e.g., Johan Lust, "Messianism in Ezekiel in Hebrew and in Greek, Ezek 21:15(10) and 20(15)," in *Emanuel: Studies in the Hebrew Bible, Septuagint, and Dead Sea Scrolls in Honor of Emanuel Tov*, ed. Shalom M. Paul et al., VTSup 94 (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 629; idem, "Multiple Translators in LXX-Ezekiel?" in *Die Septuaginta*, ed. Karrer and Kraus, 668; and Tov, *Text-Critical Use*, 250.

association with the already-utilized ποδήρης is in Exod 28:4, and there it clearly describes an element of the dress of the high priest.¹³⁰ Once the LXX had utilized ποδήρης in Ezek 9:2, it is possible that the difficult and potentially confusing Hebrew term (תִּשְׁבֵּץ)¹³¹ was understood in light of the preceding high priestly interpretation to refer to the polychromatic or rainbow-like (תִּשְׁבֵּץ [“bow, rainbow”]) belt or sash of the high priest.¹³²

Finally, while a number of scholars have viewed the Man in Linen in Ezek 9-10 as a priestly figure, LXX terminology regarding this figure in Ezek 10 is linguistically precise, clearly showing that it views this figure as not merely a priestly but a high priestly one. In 10:2 the LXX¹³³ uses the phrase τὸν ἄνδρα τὸν ἐνδεδυκότα τὴν στολήν¹³⁴ (“the man clothed with the garments/apparel”) instead of referring to the

¹³⁰See also Exod 28:31 (ποδήρης), 39 (ζώνη); and 29:5 (ποδήρης), 9 (ζώνη).

¹³¹This word occurs only in Ezek 9:2, 3, 11.

¹³²For a lengthier examination of the issues addressed in this paragraph, see the discussion in Winkle, “Iridescence in Ezekiel,” 56-70. On LXX contextual interpretation when faced with difficult words, cf. Emanuel Tov, “Did the Septuagint Translators Always Understand Their Hebrew Text?” in *Greek and Hebrew Bible*, 210-13 (originally published in *De Septuaginta: Studies in Honour of John William Wevers on His Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, ed. A. Pietersma and C. E. Cox [Mississauga, ON: Benben, 1984], 53-70; I refer to the reprinted essay); and idem, *Text-Critical Use*, 162-71.

¹³³The evidence for more than one translator of the LXX of Ezekiel is not too strong, and thus I agree with those who posit a single translator for chaps. 9-10 (see, e.g., Arie van der Kooij, “The Septuagint of Ezekiel and the Profane Leader,” in *The Book of Ezekiel and Its Influence*, ed. Henk Jan de Jonge and Johannes Tromp [Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2007], 43). Cf. Lust, “Multiple Translators,” 654-69, where he cautiously suggests one or two translators of LXX Ezekiel.

¹³⁴A few manuscripts have a textual variant that reads τοῦ ποδηρη here in 10:2 (but not in 10:6, 7); see Joseph Ziegler, ed., *Ezekiel*, 2nd ed., with an appendix by Detlef Fraenkel, *Septuaginta: Vetus Testamentum Graecum* 16.1 (Göttingen:

characteristic linen of the MT’s so-called Man in Linen (הַבְּרִיִּים לְבָשׁוֹתָם).¹³⁵ The LXX translation in 10:6 is somewhat different, but with the same overall meaning: τῷ ἐνδεδυκότι τὴν στολὴν τὴν ἁγίαν (“to the one clothed with the sacred garments/apparel”). Here, however, it further intensifies the sartorial description by highlighting the sacrality of the high priest’s garments. The third and final reference to this being in 10:7 contains only a case variation from 10:6: τοῦ ἐνδεδυκότος τὴν στολὴν τὴν ἁγίαν (“of the one clothed with the sacred garments/apparel”).

The explicitly stated emphasis on the sacrality of this designated dress in Ezek 10:6 and 7 (τὴν στολὴν τὴν ἁγίαν) is exactly the same as that found in only one other place in the LXX—Exod 28:3—but there it describes the overall dress ensemble of the high priest Aaron.¹³⁶ Furthermore, all other references in the LXX to a singular form of

Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1977), 124.

¹³⁵The conclusion by John William Wevers that the LXX “failed to identify the man clothed in linen [10:2] as the one in 9.11, simply calling him ‘a man dressed in a robe’” does not take into consideration the intertextual contact between these two dress terms as found not only in 9:11 and 10:2 but also 10:6-7 (*Ezekiel*, The Century Bible: New Series [London: Nelson, 1969], 87).

¹³⁶Cf. Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 1*, 226, n. 6a. In Exod 28:3 the Hebrew is plural, not singular—but the reference to the dress being “holy” is missing (אֲתֵּבְנֶהָ אֶת־בְּגָדֵי אֶהְרֵן [“the clothes/garments of Aaron”]). On the collective singular for this dress term, cf. Wevers, *Greek Text of Exodus*, 444. On the Greek in relation to the MT in Ezekiel, see F. Field, *Origenis Hexaplorum quae supersunt; sive veterum interpretum graecorum in totum vetus testamentum fragmenta* (1875; repr., Hildsheim: Georg Olms, 1964), 2:769; David J. Halperin, *The Faces of the Chariot: Early Jewish Responses to Ezekiel’s Vision*, Texte und Studien zum Antiken Judentum 16 (Tübingen: Mohr [Siebeck], 1988), 525, n. f; Ziegler, *Ezechiel*, 124-125; and Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 1*, 226. On LXX Ezekiel potentially using Pentateuchal material, see, e.g., the cautious discussion in Johan Lust, “The Vocabulary of LXX Ezekiel and Its Dependence Upon the Pentateuch,” in *Deuteronomy and Deuteronomistic Literature: Festschrift C.H.W. Brekelmans*, ed. M. Vervenne and J. Lust, Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium 133 (Leuven: University Press, 1997), 529-46.

στολή,¹³⁷ combined with a singular form of ἅγιος, refer to either an element of the high priest's dress or his overall dress.¹³⁸ Consequently, I would conclude that in Ezek 10 the LXX understood the Man in Linen as not simply a priestly figure but rather a high priestly figure.¹³⁹

But I must note two caveats in this exploration of the ποδήρης in Ezek 9. First, this conclusion does not indicate that the LXX translation was one of exact linguistic equivalence, since the Greek term occurs nowhere else in the LXX as an equivalent for כְּתָנִים. The high priestly dress items made out of כְּתָנִים were the undergarments worn on a daily basis (Exod 28:42; 39:28) and the undergarments, tunic, sash, and turban worn on Yom Kippur (Lev 16:4, 23, 32). If the LXX did not follow a different Hebrew text from

¹³⁷The plural of στολή, referring to the high priest's overall dress, occurs in LXX Exod 28:4; 35:19, 21; 36:8; 39:18; 40:13.

¹³⁸See LXX Exod 28:2 (στολήν ἁγίαν), 4 (στολὰς ἁγίας); 29:29 (ἡ στολή τοῦ ἁγίου); Lev 16:32 (στολήν ἁγίαν); 1 Macc 10:21 (τὴν ἁγίαν στολήν); Sir 45:10 (στολήν ἁγία). It is probable that some of these singular references refer synecdochically to the high priest's overall "apparel" instead of a single dress item, since the MT refers to the plural of כְּתָנִים ("garment") in Exod 28:2; 29:29; Lev 16:32. If that were the case, the Greek terminology is still singular, but the meaning moves from the part to the whole. Cf. Philo *Ebr.* 85 on the high priest's two robes (στολὰς).

Even though Ezek 10:2 has only the singular τὴν στολήν instead of combining it with the adjective defining its sacrality, this shorter terminology was still used for Aaron's high priestly dress (Exod 29:21; Lev 16:24). On collective singulars of στολή, cf. LEH, s.v. "στολή, -ῆς,"; Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief*, 527, n. 14 (referring to this term in Josephus *A.J.* 20.6); and Wevers, *Greek Text of Exodus*, 444.

¹³⁹While each reference to the "holy garment" in the LXX does not necessarily refer to the same dress element, the point here is not to assert that only one dress element is in view (e.g., Lev 16:32 refers to linen dress worn only on Yom Kippur, while Sir 45:10 apparently refers to the ephod). Rather, the terminology typically refers to high priestly dress, and any dress element worn by the high priest was considered holy. Notice, e.g., the differentiation between Aaron's holy garments and the garments for the rest of the priests in Exod 35:19 and 40:13-14 (the reference to Aaron's sons in Exod 28:4 may well refer to his high priestly successors; however, cf. 28:40-43).

the MT here, it is possible that the LXX dynamically translated the understood, basic dress form (כַּבֵּי), meaning, “robe-made-out-of-the-fabric-of-linen,” into the foot-length robe known as the high priestly ποδήρης.¹⁴⁰ As such, it would have transformed the high priestly tunic of Yom Kippur into the high priestly robe worn not only on Yom Kippur but also in the daily rituals.

Also, it is possible that all three thematic elements (i.e., visionary beings, heavenly messengers, and high priestly figures) coalesce in the LXX. Because angels were seen as heavenly analogues to earthly priests,¹⁴¹ it is not necessary to strictly differentiate between the two in a visionary context. At the same time, there is no evidence that high priestly imagery here should be suppressed in favor of a strictly angelic interpretation.¹⁴²

Consequently, with regard to the sartorial specificity of ποδήρης in Ezek 9, I would propose that—assuming the LXX’s *Vorlage* had כַּבֵּי in these texts—ποδήρης does not translate כַּבֵּי in an equivalent manner. The Greek term never translates כַּבֵּי anywhere else in the LXX. Furthermore, the latter term refers primarily to fabric, while the former refers to length. The LXX translation here would appear, at best, to be a

¹⁴⁰However, Anneli Aejmelaeus cautions that “it is possible to have both free translation and a different *Vorlage* in the same text” (“Septuagintal Translation Techniques—A Solution to the Problem of the Tabernacle Account?” in *On the Trail of the Septuagint Translators: Collected Essays*, rev. ed. (Leuven: Peeters, 2007), 121 (originally published in 1990).

¹⁴¹See, e.g., Barker, *Great High Priest*, 103-45; and A. J. McNicol, “The Relationship of the Image of the Highest Angel to the High Priest Concept in Hebrews” (PhD diss., Vanderbilt University, 1974).

¹⁴²Cf., e.g., John J. Collins, *Daniel: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, ed. Frank Moore Cross, HCHCB (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1993), 373.

loose one. In any case, while ambiguity may exist concerning the specific garment the MT was referring to, the LXX points in the direction of the high priest's dress.

Zechariah 3:4. Zechariah 3:4 indicates that the high priest Joshua is to have his “filthy garments” taken from him and instead clothed with מַחֲלָצוֹת. This word is a feminine plural, and it occurs only here and in Isa 3:22. In the latter text it refers to one of the fine garments worn by the wealthy “daughters of Zion” whom YHWH condemns for their proud attitudes (3:16-24, particularly vs. 16).

There are two basic approaches to understanding מַחֲלָצוֹת in Zech 3:4. One approach is to suggest that it has the same root consonants as another word, attested in Akkadian and Arabic, which conveys the meaning of purification.¹⁴³ Thus, according to this perspective, the term would refer to pure clothes that replace the filthy ones Joshua is wearing.¹⁴⁴ A different approach¹⁴⁵ argues that since this term derives from the stem חֲלַצ (meaning “to draw off” and used for both women's dress and the dress of the high priest), “it is apparently a generic term that can be applied generally to such an outer

¹⁴³Cf. Ahearn-Kroll, “LXX/OG Zechariah 1-6,” 180; Mark J. Boda, *Haggai, Zechariah*, NIVAC (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004), 252; Carol L. Meyers and Eric M. Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1-8: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 25B (Garden City: Doubleday, 1987), 190; D. Winton Thomas, “A Note on מַחֲלָצוֹת in Zechariah iii 4,” *JTS* 33 (1931-32): 279-80; and VanderKam, “Joshua the High Priest,” 160-61.

¹⁴⁴Notice the plural dress (בְּגָדִים; ἱμάτια) with which Joshua is clothed in 3:5.

¹⁴⁵See, e.g., Marvin A. Sweeney, *Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi*, vol. 2 of *The Twelve Prophets*, Berit Olam: Studies in Hebrew Narrative & Poetry (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 2000), 597.

garment”—such as a generic robe of state or the high priestly tunic or the robe.¹⁴⁶

It is not the concern here to make any determination about whichever approach to understanding the plural Hebrew terminology is best; rather, it is the LXX translation that is at issue. Intriguingly, the LXX translation uses the singular word ποδήρης. Nevertheless, six considerations lead one to the conclusion that the LXX potentially viewed the term מִחֶלְצוֹת as referring to a particular high priestly item of dress. First, in this passage Joshua is clearly identified as a high priest (3:1). Second, ποδήρης typically refers to the dress of the high priest.¹⁴⁷ Third, the turban which is placed on Joshua’s head (3:5), while not the same Hebrew term as in the catalogs of high priestly dress,¹⁴⁸ is translated by the LXX with a Greek term (κίδαρις) used for both priests and high priests in the priestly dress catalogs.¹⁴⁹ Fourth, certain Greek mss. transposed the order of Joshua’s transformation in Zech 3:5 so that it mirrored the ordination of Aaron

¹⁴⁶Ibid. Cf., e.g., David L. Petersen, *Haggai and Zechariah 1-8*, OTL (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1984), 196. Sweeney concludes that it appears to refer to the latter dress item, since the robe covered the high priestly tunic, and the term in Zech 3:4 is referring to an outer garment (*Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk*, 597).

¹⁴⁷On the attempt by the Nahal Hever fragments to reconcile the Greek and Hebrew texts via another Greek dress term (μετεκδύματα), see Ahearne-Kroll, “LXX/OG Zechariah 1-6,” 181. Even if one could demonstrate that Exod 29:5 refers to a foot-length tunic (as opposed to the robe), the Greek reference in Zech 3:4 would in the very least imply a high priestly garment.

¹⁴⁸Cf. צַנִּיף in Zech 3:5 and מִצְנֵפֶת in, e.g., Exod 28:4; 29:6; 39:28; Lev 8:9. For a cogent argument as to why the difference does not indicate a different article of dress, see Petersen, *Haggai*, 196-99.

¹⁴⁹Cf. LXX Exod 28:4, 39, 40; 29:9; 36:35; Lev 8:13; 16:4; Sir 45:12. For a discussion of how this turban in Zech 3:5 may relate to the non-high priestly turban of Ezek 21:26 (MT 21:31) and the crown in Zech 6:9-15, see Marko Jauhiainen, “Turban and Crown Lost and Regained: Ezekiel 21:29-32 and Zechariah’s Zemar,” *JBL* 127 (2008): 506-507.

in the Pentateuch, thus emphasizing high priestly sartorial elements much more than the MT of Zechariah.¹⁵⁰ Fifth, as indicated above, the Hebrew term מַלְאָכָה occurs elsewhere in the HB only in Isa 3:22. Michaël van der Meer notes that the Greek Tabernacle narrative in Exodus reveals “practically all of the luxury items that are mentioned in LXX-Isa 3,18-23,”¹⁵¹ and thus one should not be surprised to see מַלְאָכָה translated by another term significant in the Tabernacle narrative—ποδήρης.¹⁵² Finally, the combination of ποδήρης and κίδαρις in the LXX occurs only in Zech 3:4 and Exod 28:4—the latter a high priestly dress catalog verse. The cumulative weight of these six considerations thus clearly indicates that while the LXX considered the ποδήρης as a high priestly garment, only one fits the criteria—the robe.¹⁵³

Wisdom 18:24. There is no Hebrew text undergirding Wis 18:24 since the latter text was originally written in Greek. Referring to the rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram in Num 16, the text narrates the intercessory ministry of Aaron and reads as follows: “For on his long robe [ποδήρους ἐνδύματος] the whole world [or, the whole universe: ὅλος ὁ κόσμος] was depicted, and the glories of the ancestors were engraved

¹⁵⁰See Ahearn-Kroll, “LXX/OG Zechariah 1-6,” 182-83. These mss. transpose the verse so that Joshua is clothed with garments first, and then a clean turban is placed on his head. The robe is placed on Aaron in Exod 29:5 and Lev 8:7, and only afterward is the turban placed on his head (Exod 29:6; Lev 8:9). While the LXX does use the term μίτρα instead of κίδαρις for the turban (Exod 29:5-6; Lev 8:7, 9), the two terms appear to be synonymous (see Ahearne-Kroll, “LXX/OG Zechariah 1-6,” 182).

¹⁵¹Meer, “Trendy Translations,” 588.

¹⁵²Cf. Meer’s discussion in *ibid.*, 587-88.

¹⁵³Ahearne-Kroll agrees that the LXX associates Joshua’s robe with the robe of the high priest (“LXX/OG Zechariah 1-6,” 181 and 191).

on the four rows of stones, and your majesty was on the diadem upon his head” (NRSV).¹⁵⁴ Clearly, 18:24b refers to the ephod with the twelve jewels, while 18:24c refers to Aaron’s headgear. So what does the ποδήρης in 18:24a refer to? It must be a reference to the high priestly לְעֹזֵר of the HB, since the understanding that the whole world (or, universe) was depicted on the garment—absent from either the HB or LXX—appears almost identical to interpretive depictions of the equivalent to the high priestly לְעֹזֵר in Philo.¹⁵⁵ Furthermore, is it possible that the textual coup de grâce is a Philonic reference in *Fug.* 185, in which the same, exact two Greek words (ποδήρους ἐνδύματος) indisputably refer to the robe?¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁴The LXX reads: ἐπὶ γὰρ ποδήρους ἐνδύματος ἦν ὅλος ὁ κόσμος καὶ πατέρων δόξαι ἐπὶ τετραστίχου λίθων γλυφῆς καὶ μεγαλωσύνη σου ἐπὶ διαδήματος κεφαλῆς αὐτοῦ (“For on [his] foot-length robe the whole world was [portrayed], and the glories of the fathers on the four rows of engraved stones, and your majesty on the diadem of his head”).

¹⁵⁵See Philo *Somn.* 1.214-15 (in which τὸν ποδήρη χιτῶνα “is a close imitation of the whole heaven” [τοῦ παντὸς ἀντίμιμον ὄντα οὐρανοῦ], since it also includes or is closely associated with the breastpiece, which itself is a reflection [or, representation] and copy [ἀπεικόνισμα καὶ μίμημα] of the shining constellations [φωσφόρων ἄστρον]); and *Spec.* 1.84-85 (where Philo suggests that the high priestly ποδήρης is like a reflection [or, representation] and copy of the universe [ἀπεικόνισμα καὶ μίμημα τοῦ κόσμου]) and 1.94-96 (where it is a μίμημα τοῦ παντός [“copy of the All”] and is indicative of πᾶς ὁ κόσμος ministering with him). Cf. Philo *Mos.* 2.117 (where he compares the larger high priestly dress ensemble [ἐσθῆς] as a whole and in its parts to the ἀπεικόνισμα καὶ μίμημα τοῦ κόσμου [cf. 2.118-21 and 135]); and Josephus *A.J.* 3.184-87. See the discussion in Jean Laporte (“The High Priest in Philo of Alexandria,” *SPhilo* 3 [1991]: 74-77, 80) and Winston (*Wisdom of Solomon*, 321-22).

¹⁵⁶The text in *Fug.* 185 refers to the twelve jewels being placed on the breastpiece “in the sacred vestment of the full-length garment” (τῇ ἱερᾷ ἐσθῆτι τοῦ ποδήρους ἐνδύματος).

Sirach 27:8. The Hebrew text for this proverbial verse is unfortunately not extant, and this handicaps our investigation to some degree. Nevertheless, the LXX reads ἐὰν διώκης τὸ δίκαιον καταλήμψῃ καὶ ἐνδύσῃ αὐτὸ ὡς ποδήρη δόξης (“if you pursue justice you will attain and wear it as a foot-length robe of glory [or, glorious foot-length robe]”).¹⁵⁷ While any possible high priestly meaning is not obvious here, several lines of argumentation point in the direction of high priestly dress.

First, linguistic statistics relating to the primary term suggest high priestly dress. Since every other reference to ποδήρης in the LXX thus far discussed carries high priestly sartorial meaning, one would assume that this text carries the same meaning unless clearly shown otherwise.

Second, the term glory appears several times in relation to the high priest in Sirach.¹⁵⁸ In particular, LXX Sir 45:7 refers to Aaron’s glorious robe (περιστολήν δόξης), and 50:11 clearly refers to the high priest’s robe(s) of glory (στολήν δόξης).¹⁵⁹ Assuming the latter reference to be a singular collective, one could view ποδήρη δόξης in 27:8 as a reference to a specific dress item of the high priest.

¹⁵⁷The Hebrew lexemes related to the general concept of glory in the extant portions of Ben Sira—the nouns תפארת and כבוד, and the cognate verb התפאר—are frequently used in association with the concept of the priesthood (James K. Aitken, “The Semantics of ‘Glory’ in Ben Sira—Traces of a Development in Post-Biblical Hebrew?” in *Sirach, Scrolls, and Sages: Proceedings of a Second International Symposium on the Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls, Ben Sira, and the Mishnah, held at Leiden University, 15-17 December 1997*, ed. T. Muraoka and J. F. Elwolde, STDJ 33 [Leiden: Brill, 1999], 1-24).

¹⁵⁸Cf. Sir 45:7, 20; 50:7, 11.

¹⁵⁹See the singular use of στολή referring to the entire dress ensemble of Aaron (Exod 28:2, 3; Lev 16:23, 24, 32; cf. this use in Lev 6:11 for the common priest).

Third, the comparison of this sartorial item with judgment in Sir 27:8 is also suggestive of high priestly dress. Exodus clearly states that the breastpiece of the high priest was characterized by judgment (28:15, 29, 30; cf. Num 27:21). The foot-length robe of the high priest was metonymically associated with the breastpiece, apparently because of their close association both in terms of placement and viewing from a distance.¹⁶⁰ Consequently, when Sirach compares the pursuit of judgment to wearing a foot-length robe, it is not without meaning in terms of high priestly dress.

Despite the saying in Sirach being proverbial, there is no clear evidence that forces one to conclude that it cannot refer to high priestly dress. Consequently, Alexander A. Di Lella suggests that “the image here calls to mind the splendid robes of the high priest described in 45:7-13,” and he refers one’s attention also to the high priestly dress imagery of this term in Wis 18:24.¹⁶¹ Such an interpretation is eminently reasonable.

Sirach 45:8. In this text the term ποδήρης unquestionably appears as part of a catalog of ritual dress elements for Aaron. This text nevertheless presents another problem: the Hebrew text reads מְכַנְסִים כְּתָנוּת וּמַעִיל (“undergarments, tunic, and robe”), but the Greek text refers to the high priest being clothed with περισκελή καὶ ποδήρη καὶ ἐπωμίδα (“undergarments and a foot-length robe and an ephod”). Both the

¹⁶⁰Notice the apparent use of metonymy to describe the foot-length robe of the high priest in terms of other high priestly dress items in LXX Exod 25:7; 35:9; and Philo *Fug.* 185; *Her.* 176; *Leg.* 1.81; *Mut.* 43; *QE* 2.108; *Somn.* 1.214-15. See the discussion on these texts below.

¹⁶¹Skehan and Di Lella, *Wisdom of Ben Sira*, 356.

Hebrew and the Greek list high priestly dress elements in logical order, with each successive one being one that would be placed over the previous one. But while ποδήρης thus clearly refers to high priestly dress here, which dress item is it?

Despite the appearance that ποδήρη here translates כַּתְּנוֹת, one cannot conclude that it stands for any high priestly dress item other than מַעֲיֵל. To assume the former forces one to conclude that the translator compounded his unusual translation by translating the third element, מַעֲיֵל, as ἐπωμίς. But this simply makes even more questionable the dubious nature of the original hypothesis, since ἐπωμίς never translates מַעֲיֵל anywhere else in the LXX.¹⁶² The ποδήρης in Sir 45:8 was thus likely either a translation for מַעֲיֵל that the LXX translator saw in his now non-extant Hebrew text where the dress items are somewhat different and in a different order, or it is an anomalous and perhaps simply incorrect translation.¹⁶³

¹⁶²Contra Hollander and Jonge, *Testaments*, 152. Freedman and O'Connor contend that the LXX sometimes translated כַּתְּנוֹת with ποδήρης, but they provide no examples (“כַּתְּנוֹת,” 7:384). Sir 45:8 appears to be one potential case, but my discussion above argues against this (despite the assertion that it occurs in this verse by Hollander and Jonge, *Testaments*, 151). For the possibility that during the intertestamental period כַּתְּנוֹת became an inclusive term for any kind of outer garment (including the מַעֲיֵל), see (Freedman and O'Connor and) Fabry, “כַּתְּנוֹת,” 7:387; in my estimation, however, this evidence is not only sparse but ineffective.

While it does not appear likely that ἐπωμίς ever translates מַעֲיֵל, see my discussion below on Philo *Her.* 176, where it appears that he uses ποδήρης metonymically for the shoulder-straps of the high priest's ephod. Even if this latter usage were considered legitimate and applied to Sir 45:8, compounding it by assuming another unusual translation in this same verse (i.e., the prior ποδήρη translating כַּתְּנוֹת) violates Occam's razor and becomes ludicrous.

¹⁶³Assuming ποδήρης in Sir 45:8 translates מַעֲיֵל, it may be synonymous with the στολήν δόξης (“robe of glory,” or, “glorious robe”) that the high priest Simon wears in 50:11, since the Greek term there is also singular (cf. the glorious tunic [τὸν τῆς δόξης

The ποδήρης in post-Septuagintal literature
to ca. 150 CE

But what about the use of ποδήρης in post-Septuagintal literature up until ca.
150 CE?¹⁶⁴ Does it point to the dress of the high priest, or does it point to other types of

. . . χιτῶνα] in Philo *Leg.* 2.56; earlier in this text, Philo clearly describes this garment as the ποδήρης). Wisdom’s collar is like a “robe of glory” (στολήν δόξης) in 6:29 and is further worn like a “robe of glory” (στολήν δόξης) and put on like a “crown of joy” (στέφανον ἀγαλλιάματος) in 6:31. A specifically priestly adorning or garment “of glory” (δόξης) appears also in 45:7 (περιστολήν δόξης). This cognate term refers to a covering, cloak, or robe (cf. LSJ, s.v. “περιστολή,” [suppl.]; LEH, s.v. “περιστολή, -ῆς”). Exodus 33:5-6 indicates that it is synonymous to the στολή. Cf. Aitken, “Semantics of ‘Glory,’” 7.

On the other hand, στολή in Sir 50:11 may be either a collective singular, or it may stand synecdochically for the overall apparel of the high priest, since in Exod 28:2 Aaron’s overall dress (MT: plural יָבִיבָה; LXX: singular στολήν) was to be fabricated for glory (MT: יָבִיבָה; LXX: δόξαν). Cf. LEH, s.v. “στολή, -ῆς.” The same LXX translation of the plural Hebrew noun into a singular Greek noun occurs in Lev 16:23, 24, 32; Num 20:26; Sir 45:10. If στολή stood for the overall apparel of the high priest, however, the term itself would still initially refer to a single dress item, but its meaning would extend to the entire dress ensemble of the high priest.

¹⁶⁴Here I include texts from the *Letter of Aristeas*, Philo, Josephus, the *Epistle of Barnabas*, and the *Testament of Levi*. I do not consider the use of ποδήρης via a Coptic loanword (ΠΙΠΟΔΗΡΗ) in *Apoc. Pet.* 72:16 (which describes it as Peter’s robe), since this Gnostic work is dated as early as the beginning of the second century (S. Kent Brown and C. Wilfred Griggs, “Apocalypse of Peter,” *Coptic Encyclopedia* [1991], 1:161) and as late as the 4th century (Andrea Lorenzo Molinari, “The Apocalypse of Peter and Its Dating,” in *Coptica—Gnostica—Manichaica: Mélanges offerts à Wolf-Peter Funk*, ed. Louis Painchaud and Paul-Hubert Poirier, Bibliothèque Copte de Nag Hammadi, Section “Études,” no. 7 [Quebec City, QC: Les Presses de l’Université Laval; Louvain: Éditions Peeters, 2006], 583-605), but probably dated somewhere “at the end of the 2nd century or the beginning of the 3rd” (Andreas Werner, “The Coptic Gnostic Apocalypse of Peter,” in *New Testament Apocrypha*, rev. ed., ed. Wilhelm Schneemelcher, trans. R. McL. Wilson [Cambridge, UK: James Clarke & Co.; Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1989], 2:702). For the *Letter of Aristeas*, the *Epistle of Barnabas*, and the *Testament of Levi* I use the following Greek texts: André Pelletier, *Lettre d’Aristée à Philocrate: Introduction, texte critique, traduction et notes, index complet des mots grecs*, Sources chrétiennes 89 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1962); *The Apostolic Fathers: Epistle of Barnabas, Papias and Quadratus, Epistle to Diognetus, and the Shepherd of Hermas* (ed. and trans. Bart D. Ehrman, LCL); and M. de Jonge, *The Testaments of the*

role-related dress? Also, where it does point to the dress of the high priest, does it point to one element of his dress, or does the term refer to other elements of his dress as well?

Letter of Aristeas. Let. Aris. 96 is the only place within that work in which the term ποδήρης occurs. In the first part of this verse, the author expresses his great astonishment when he and the others with him saw the high priest Eliezar employed in liturgical ritual, not only with regard to the elements of his dress but also with regard to his glory, which was seen through the clothing of the tunic which he wore, as well as the stones surrounding (or, in association with) it. The high priestly tunic itself, however, did not have any precious stones associated with it. On the other hand, the robe, described as the foot-length tunic in Exod 29:5 and Philo *Somm.* 1.214, did have stones associated with it, but they were more precisely located on the shoulder-pieces of the ephod and on the breastpiece attached to the ephod, the ephod itself being placed over the foot-length robe. From a distance, however, one could reasonably conclude that the stones were associated with this particular foot-length tunic.

Following this note, the author then uses ποδήρης as a substantive in a compact description: χρυσοῖ γὰρ κώδωνες περὶ τὸν ποδήρη εἰσὶν αὐτοῦ (“for golden bells are around the hem of it”). This description—detailing the golden bells hung around or surrounding it—reveals that it is not the entire foot-length tunic that was in view here (since it had already been mentioned) but only the hem of that tunic at the level of the high priest’s feet. What this indicates is: (1) ancient descriptions of the high priest’s

Twelve Patriarchs: A Critical Edition of the Greek Text, Pseudepigrapha Veteris Testamenti Graece 1 (Leiden: Brill, 1978).

dress were fluid and consequently not necessarily as precise as one might wish; and (2) ποδήρης sometimes referred to the entire high priestly robe and sometimes to that robe's hem.

The author of *Aristeas* also knows that persons other than the high priest wore a long garment. *Let. Aris.* 87 indicates that the common priests wore tunics of fine linen reaching down to the ankles (μέχρι τῶν σφυρῶν βυσσίνουις χιτῶσιν).¹⁶⁵ A comparison with Exod 28:40, however, does not yield this particular information with regard to the common priests' tunics. It remains significant, however, that the author does not utilize the term ποδήρης in his description of these tunics of the common priests.¹⁶⁶ Though the linguistic evidence in *Aristeas* is indeed meager, this nevertheless may suggest that the substantival use of ποδήρης by *Aristeas* with reference to the high priest's robe substantiates the more restrictive and technical nature of this term for him.

Philo. To complicate matters further, Philo contradicts *Aristeas* in regard to the ankle- or foot-length tunics worn by the common priests.¹⁶⁷ In *Spec.* 1.83 Philo states

¹⁶⁵R. J. H. Shutt's translation, however, indicates that the priests were "swathed up to the loins in 'leather garments'" ("Letter of Aristeas," in *OTP* 2:18). Shutt utilized Thackeray's translation of *Aristeas* (see *OTP* 2:8), but the text is the same in this portion of the verse as that of Pelletier (cf. H. St. J. Thackeray, ed., "Letter of Aristeas," in Henry Barclay Swete, *An Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek*, rev. Richard Rusden Ottley [1902; repr., New York: KTAV, 1968], 567). Sanders wryly noted that this mistranslated reference to "leather loin cloths" was a "new description" (*Judaism: Practice and Belief*, 505, n. 1).

¹⁶⁶Cf. Philo *Mos.* 2.118-119, 121; the ποδήρης extends ἄχρι ποδῶν ("down to the feet"), while the pomegranates, floral imagery, and bells are "at the ankles" (κατὰ τὰ σφυρᾶ).

¹⁶⁷Furthermore, as I will demonstrate below, Philo has a different understanding of these tunics than Josephus exhibits later.

that the common priests wore not long but short tunics (χιτωνίσκοις) so that their ministry could be expedited (thus allowing for their undergarments to be seen).¹⁶⁸ Sanders opines that though this description appears “eminently reasonable,” it is apparently wrong.¹⁶⁹ Philo not much later (*Spec.* 1.85) describes the מְעִיל of the high priest in the HB as a ποδήρης χιτών.¹⁷⁰ It is clear in this text that Philo is speaking of this particular dress element and not the high priest’s כְּתֹנֶת, since he describes it in the same text as entirely bluish-purple or hyacinthine (ὄλων ὑακίνθινον) in color.

Second, Philo—unlike the LXX—favors usage of the term ποδήρης over ὑποδύτης in describing what the Hebrew text calls the מְעִיל. In all, he utilizes the former term seventeen times in works, whereas ὑποδύτης appears but three times.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁸Philo calls this a state of ἀνείμων—equivalent to being undressed or naked. See LSJ, s.v. “ἀνείμων” and its use in Philo *Somn.* 1.99. For more discussion by Philo on the undergarments (not the tunics) of the common priests being necessary to protect against accidental nakedness during their quick movements, see *Mos.* 2.144-45.

¹⁶⁹Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief*, 94. His argument here is largely based on the description of Josephus in *A.J.* 3.153, in which the priest wears a foot-length tunic (*ibid.*, 93). Sanders believes that the extensive description by Josephus of priestly dress “is a convincing description” and one “best explained as the memories of a man who wore the clothes” (*ibid.*, 94). On the other hand, Sanders believes that it is possible that Philo “had forgotten precisely what he had seen [on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem] and unconsciously ‘dressed’ the priests in costumes that he thought were reasonable; perhaps his view of priestly garments was shaped by having seen pagan priests in short tunics” (*ibid.*).

¹⁷⁰Cf. the discussion in Robertson, “Account,” 212-13.

¹⁷¹Philo uses ποδήρης in *Fug.* 185; *Her.* 176; *Leg.* 1.81; 2.56; *Mos.* 2.117, 118, 120, 121, 133, 143; *Mut.* 43; *Somn.* 1.214; *Spec.* 1.85 (2x), 93, 94; *Frg.* 117 on LXX Exod 28:27 (text in *Philo*, LCL, 12:257). In *QE* 2.107 it appears (despite the Greek being no longer extant) that the term might have occurred four or more times. For Philo’s use of ὑποδύτης, see *Migr.* 103; *Mos.* 2.109, 110.

What is intriguing about Philo is that he sometimes defines the ποδήρης in terms of other dress elements closely associated with it: the shoulder-pieces of the ephod, the ephod itself, or the breastpiece.

This brings up the probable use of metonymy again. In *Leg.* 1.81 Philo provides an intriguing reference to the ποδήρης in a discussion of Gen 2, and he begins by stating “when he [Moses] speaks about the foot-length robe” (ὅταν ἐπὶ τοῦ ποδήρους φῆ). In what immediately follows, Philo apparently quotes from Exod 28:17, where one finds the description of the stones that adorned the high priest’s breastpiece. At first glance it appears that Philo is substituting the term ποδήρης for reference to the breastpiece or—less likely—the ephod, since both dress items occur just a couple of verses earlier (28:15). But it is highly unlikely that he is equating the ποδήρης here with the breastpiece. Rather, his use of ποδήρης appears similar to the decision made by the LXX translator in Exod 25:7 and 35:9, namely, that the stones were considered to be on the robe via a metonymous understanding of the robe and the breastpiece.¹⁷²

¹⁷²On these verses, see the discussion above. The similarity between Philo and the LXX of these two verses may be a result of the Alexandrian location of both Philo and the LXX translation. His differences from Josephus may be partly explained by Josephus writing from a Judean perspective and following a tradition that understood the dress terminology differently.

The text Philo seems to quote from in Exodus is not exactly the same as the LXX (28:17); whether or not this is a free paraphrase or not is unknown. The differences between the unpunctuated texts are as follows (the LXX first, then Philo):

καὶ καθυφανεῖς ἐν αὐτῷ ὑφασμα κατάλιθον τετράστιχον στίχος λίθων ἔσται σάρδιον τοπάζιον καὶ σμάραγδος ὁ στίχος ὁ εἶς (LXX)

“And you shall interweave in/with it a web/texture set with stones in four rows; the first row of stones will comprise a sardius, a topaz, and an emerald.”

In *Somn.* 1.214-15 Philo comments that τὸν ποδήρη χιτῶνα is a close imitation of the whole heaven (τοῦ παντὸς ἀντίμιμον ὄντα οὐρανοῦ). But his real reason for this interpretative conclusion is that this dress item is associated with the breastpiece, which itself is a reflection (or, representation) and copy (ἀπεικόνισμα καὶ μίμημα) of the shining constellations (φωσφόρων ἄστρων).¹⁷³

One finds a clearer example of probable metonymy in *Her.* 176. There Philo states: “You also see the two emerald stones on the foot-length robe” (ὁρᾶς καὶ τοὺς ἐπὶ τοῦ ποδήρου δύο λίθους τῆς σμαράγδου).¹⁷⁴ The foot-length robe technically did not have two emerald jewels attached to it, a fact that Philo was well aware of (cf. *Mos.* 2.109-112). I would assert that it is incorrect to postulate that Philo is here defining the ποδήρης as the (shoulder-pieces of) the ephod. Rather, in *Mos.* 2.109 Philo understood that the sacred dress (ἱερὰν ἐσθήτα) of the high priest was twofold (διττὰ)

καὶ συνυφανεῖς ἐν αὐτῷ λίθων τετράστιχον στίχος λίθων
ἔσται σάρδιον τοπάζιον [] σμάραγδος ὁ στίχος ὁ εἶς (Philo)

“And you shall weave together in/with it [sets of] stone in four rows; the first row of stones will comprise a sardius, a topaz, an emerald.”

Philo also comments on the shoulder-pieces of the ephod in *QE* 2.108, but here he designates them as part of the sacred garment. While this work is extant only in Armenian, one can make assumptions on the underlying Greek. Philo is—at first glance—apparently speaking here of the ephod proper (cf. Exod 28:6-7). But he has just finished commenting on the sacred garment (*QE* 2.107), the hyacinthine robe (as opposed to the linen robe worn on Yom Kippur)—what he elsewhere calls the ὑποδύτης (e.g., *Mos.* 2.109), ποδήρης χιτῶν (*Spec.* 1.85) or ποδήρης (e.g., *Mos.* 2.121). This association would not, however, be out of line with his association of the shoulder-pieces with the ποδήρης in *Her.* 176 (see discussion below).

¹⁷³Cf. Philo *Mos.* 2.117 and *Spec.* 1.84-85, 94-96.

¹⁷⁴Cf. LXX Exod 28:9, where the two stones are located “on the shoulders of the ephod” (ἐπὶ τῶν ὤμων τῆς ἐπωμίδος).

in nature, comprised of both the ὑποδύτης and the ἐπωμίς. It was on the latter dress element that the two emerald stones were situated (*Mos.* 2.112). But note that in *Mos.* 2.109 Philo describes the foot-length robe and the ephod as two closely related¹⁷⁵ parts of one sacred vestment. Thus, it is not necessary for one to resort to the conclusion that Philo was either mistaken or redefining terms in *Her.* 176; from a visual standpoint, the precious stones were on (what looked like) the foot-length robe, and Philo described it in such a manner via the use of metonymy.¹⁷⁶

In another comment related to this topic in *Mut.* 43, Philo mentions that Moses gave the great priest two (διττὰς) robes (στολάς): One was a linen one to be worn “within [ἔνδον]” (i.e., within the Most Holy Place), while the other was the polychromatically embroidered one (τὴν . . . ποικίλην) “with the foot-length [μετὰ τοῦ ποδήρους]” (i.e., a hem or skirt down to the feet) to be worn “outside [ἔξω]” (i.e., outside the Most Holy Place).¹⁷⁷ But there was no polychromatic robe of the high priest, since the robe of the high priest was monochromatically hyacinthine in color.

Consequently, one may reasonably deduce from this that Philo is in actuality describing

¹⁷⁵The rare use of the term ὕφος here (τὰ δ’ ὕφη διττὰ ἦν [“but the web was twofold”]) would suggest such, since its primary meaning is “web,” but it can metaphorically refer to a “series” of numbers or an author’s “text” (LSJ, s.v. “ὕφος”). Philo does not use this term elsewhere in his corpus.

¹⁷⁶See also *QE* 2.108, where the two shoulder-pieces are part of the sacred garment, which he has just defined in 2.107 as the foot-length robe. Cf. *Fug.* 185, where the twelve jewels, engraved with inscriptions, are woven together on the breastpiece “in the sacred dress of the foot-length garment” (τῇ ἱερᾷ ἐσθῆτι τοῦ ποδήρους ἐνδύματος).

¹⁷⁷Cf. *Somn.* 1.216, where Philo similarly notes that the High Priest divests himself of the polychromatic robe (ποικίλην ἐσθῆτα) when he enters the Most Holy Place.

the latter robe as a combination of the polychromatic ephod along with what would look like a foot-long skirt but which technically was a separate garment under the ephod—the foot-length robe.

Thus, in all of Philo's corpus, all but two of his references to the ποδήρης refer to some element of the high priest's dress, the two exceptions being *Mos.* 2.118 and *Spec.* 1.85b. In both of these two texts he is comparing the "foot-length" characteristic of the air to the "foot-length" aspect of the high priest's robe that he has just mentioned. In all of the other references in his corpus, he uses ποδήρης to clearly point to the foot-length robe of the high priest, to metonymously associate it with other elements of the high priest's dress, or to refer to the skirt of the high priest's long robe and not the robe itself.

Josephus. An anomalous and surprising use of ποδήρης occurs in Josephus. In *A.J.* 3.153 Josephus describes the common priest's tunic as a foot-length tunic (ἔστι δὲ τοῦτο τὸ ἔνδυμα ποδήρης χιτῶν ["now this garment is a foot-length tunic"]). A bit later (*A.J.* 3.159) Josephus uses ποδήρης again and says the high priest puts on a "tunic made from hyacinth, and this also is foot-length" (ἐξ ὑακίνθου πεποιημένον χιτῶνα, ποδήρης δ' ἐστὶ καὶ οὗτος). That this latter tunic is clearly the מְעִיל of the HB and not the כְּתֹנֶת is obvious for two reasons: (1) it is bluish-purple or hyacinth in color; and (2) Josephus clearly identifies it as such in this same reference by transliterating the Hebrew term מְעִיל in order to show how it is spoken in their language (μέειρ καλεῖται

κατὰ τὴν ἡμετέραν γλῶσσαν [“it is called ‘meeir’ in our language”]).¹⁷⁸

On the basis of this latter statement by Josephus, Jean-Noël Guinot concludes that both the high priest’s tunic and robe are foot-length.¹⁷⁹ Thus, according to Josephus the high priest would be wearing two separate robes that reached to the feet. This is a striking conclusion, first, since Josephus is the only one who provides this information, and second, because in doing so Josephus contradicts what Philo has stated concerning the length of the common priest’s tunics.

As I have indicated earlier, there appears to be nothing in the HB that clearly indicates that the garments of the high priest or the common priests were foot-length.¹⁸⁰ This characteristic appears instead in Greek translations and literature.¹⁸¹ In fact, Exod 28:42-43 indicates that priestly undergarments were necessary to prevent indecency and thus incur guilt (וְעִוָּן) leading to death.¹⁸² It does not appear that this latter statement in the HB implies that the other garments were necessarily short—though that is possible.

¹⁷⁸Josephus appears to be tracking LXX Exod 29:5, which speaks of the τὸν χιτῶνα τὸν ποδήρη. Cf. MS B (Codex Vaticanus) of the Old Greek, which in Exod 28:4 witnesses τὸν ποδήρη χιτῶνα instead of τὸν ποδήρη καὶ χιτῶνα in translating the Hebrew מְעִיר.

¹⁷⁹Jean-Noël Guinot, “Sur le vêtement du grand prêtre: le δῆλος était-il une pierre divinatoire?” *Vetera Christianorum* 26 (1989): 23, n. 2.

¹⁸⁰So Robertson, “Account,” 211 (cf. p. 207).

¹⁸¹Again, it is possible that the Hebrew term for the high priest’s robe (מְעִיר) was more specific than we understand now and referred to a specific type of robe that descended to the feet. But then it may well have been necessary, in a different sartorial culture, for the Greeks to be more specific in order to differentiate such foot-length garments from other types of garments.

¹⁸²Cf. Robertson, “Account,” 211-12.

Certainly it states that areas of the priests' flesh could otherwise be seen.¹⁸³

In any case, it is possible that sartorial development took place over the centuries, so that the common priests as well as the high priest were clothed with foot-length tunics. Many elements of Josephus's description of priestly dress are clear (and sometimes extensive) additions to the HB,¹⁸⁴ and one would be hard-pressed to conclude that Josephus, a priest himself, was fabricating descriptions wholesale. At the same time, it is important to note that Josephus may well have creatively adapted aspects of the high priest's garments to his description of the dress of the common priests.¹⁸⁵

Despite Josephus's referring to the ποδήρης only five times,¹⁸⁶ one should note that the singular usage of ποδήρης in reference to the common priests is not substantival but attributive. In at least two of the other four references to ποδήρης, the term is used substantivally.¹⁸⁷ This suggests that ποδήρης—when used substantivally—refers to high

¹⁸³Cf. Propp, *Exodus 19-40*, 433 and figure 16 on p. 434.

¹⁸⁴See Feldman's many references to Josephus's "additions" to the text of the HB in *Judean Antiquities 1-4*, 272-79.

¹⁸⁵For example, Josephus's description (*A.J.* 3.156) of the neck opening of the common priest's tunic appears to track that of the LXX in its description of the high priest's long robe, particularly since he uses the word ὤα ("border, collar") only here for the dress of the common priests when, in contrast, this same word occurs only in LXX Exod 28:32, 36:30, and Ps 132:2—all in relation to the dress of the high priest. Cf. the discussion in Feldman, *Judean Antiquities 1-4*, 273, and Robertson, "Account," 214-15. Is it possible that Josephus was confused?

¹⁸⁶Josephus *A.J.* 3.153, 159; 8.93; 20.6; *B.J.* 5.231.

¹⁸⁷Josephus *A.J.* 8.93 and *B.J.* 5.231. *A.J.* 3.159 (ποδήρης δ' ἐστὶ καὶ οὗτος) could also reflect a substantival usage (as opposed to a predicate usage). *A.J.* 8.93 is highly unusual in that Josephus describes King Solomon as fabricating priestly garments for the high priests, including foot-length robes (ποδήρεσιν), shoulder-pieces / ephodim (ἐπωμίσι), a singular breastpiece (λογίω), and 1,000 precious stones (λίθοις χιλιάς). Is he here describing foot-length ephodim, merging the two dress elements like Philo

priestly garments, whereas an attributive usage infers length¹⁸⁸ and could refer to the dress of the common priests as well, as it does in *A.J.* 3.153.

Epistle of Barnabas 7:9. The singular use of the term ποδήρης by the *Epistle of Barnabas* (early second century CE¹⁸⁹) alludes to LXX Zech 3:5, thus supporting a high priestly understanding of the term. Placed between the book of Revelation and the *Shepherd of Hermas* in Codex Sinaiticus, *Barnabas* was apparently popular, respected, and influential in certain centers of Christianity.¹⁹⁰ *Barn.* 7:6-11 typologically interprets the ritual involving the two goats on Yom Kippur as pointing to both Jesus Christ's death on the cross and his second coming. In this passage *Barnabas* parallels traditions about the two goats not only in Rabbinic sources but also in Justin Martyr and Tertullian.¹⁹¹

More specifically, according to *Barnabas*'s understanding of the real, evident

did? In any case, the plural references to foot-length robes—in contrast to the singular breastpiece—are striking.

¹⁸⁸Cf. LXX Exod 28:31; 29:5; Wis 18:24; Philo *Fug.* 1.85, *Somn.* 1.214, *Spec.* 1.85a; Josephus *A.J.* 3.153 and 20.6.

¹⁸⁹According to a recent summary of scholarship with regard to this work, when one considers the issue of its date, “the developing consensus would seem to be for a Hadrianic date some time in the 130s” (James Carleton Paget, “The *Epistle of Barnabas*,” *ExpTim* 117 [2006]: 442-43).

¹⁹⁰*Ibid.*, 441.

¹⁹¹Cf. Helmut Koester, *Ancient Christian Gospels: Their History and Development* (London: SCM Press; Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1990), 224-25; James Carleton Paget, *The Epistle of Barnabas: Outlook and Background*, WUNT 64 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1994), 137-139; and Oskar Skarsaune, *The Proof from Prophecy: A Study in Justin Martyr's Proof-Text Tradition: Text-Type, Provenance, Theological Profile*, NovTSup 56 (Leiden: Brill, 1987), 307-308.

meaning of the OT,¹⁹² when Jesus returns from heaven he will be “wearing the scarlet foot-length robe” (τὸν ποδήρη ἔχοντα τὸν κόκκινον). This interpretation typologically derives from the ritual of the goat sent into the wilderness on Yom Kippur (Lev 16:10, 20-22), which extrabiblical sources indicate had scarlet wool bound about its head.¹⁹³ According to *Barnabas*, when those who despised, abused, and crucified Jesus see this long, scarlet robe on the returning Jesus, they will recognize him as the one they were violently opposed to on Earth. The reason they recognize him is because—according to Matt 27:28 (cf. v. 31)—Jesus was made to wear a crimson¹⁹⁴ cloak (χλαμύδα κοκκίνην) during his Passion: “It is precisely because Christ looks as he did when he was put to death that he will be recognised (7:10).”¹⁹⁵ While Matthew’s account—the only Gospel account that mentions κόκκινος—may be later than the

¹⁹²On *Barnabas*’s assertion of the importance of interpreting the OT correctly in 7:6—8:7, see Reidar Hvalvik, *The Struggle for Scripture and Covenant: The Purpose of the Epistle of Barnabas and Jewish-Christian Competition in the Second Century*, WUNT 82 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1996), 183-84.

¹⁹³Cf. *Barn.* 7:8a; *m. Yoma* 4:2, 6:6; Tertullian *Marc.* 3.7.7-8 and *Adv. Jud.* 14.9-10; Hippolytus *Fr. Prov.* 75. See Pierre Prigent, *Épître de Barnabé: Introduction, traduction et notes*, Greek text by Robert A. Kraft, Sources chrétiennes 172 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1971), 133-35; and Stökl Ben Ezra, *Impact of Yom Kippur*, 156-61.

¹⁹⁴With regard to Matthew’s account, Paget describes this robe as purple (*Epistle of Barnabas*, 139), but that is clearly incorrect. Jesus’ robe is purple not in Matthew but elsewhere: Mark 15:17, 20 (πορφύρα), John 19:2, 5 (πορφυροῦς), and *Gosp. Pet.* 3:7 (πορφύρα). For the Greek text of the *Gospel of Peter*, see Aurelio de Santos Otero, *Los Evangelios Apócrifos: Colección de textos griegos y latinos, versión crítica, estudios introductorios y comentarios*, 10th ed. (Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1999).

¹⁹⁵Paget, *Epistle of Barnabas*, 139. Cf. Skarsaune, *Proof from Prophecy*, 309.

interpretation or tradition referred to in *Barn.* 7:9,¹⁹⁶ when κόκκινος itself describes fabric it typically carries priestly and/or royal connotations,¹⁹⁷ and thus *Barn.* 7:9's reference to τὸν ποδήρη ἔχοντα τὸν κόκκινον could still indicate both royal and high priestly imagery for the returning Christ.¹⁹⁸

While this may well explain the reference in *Barnabas* to Jesus' robe being scarlet, from where did the reference to him wearing the ποδήρης derive? The consensus is that it derives from the use of ποδήρης for the high priest Joshua (LXX Ἰησοῦς)¹⁹⁹ in Zech 3:4.²⁰⁰ It is this text from Zechariah that implicitly provides the strongest evidence for a high priestly perspective for Jesus Christ in *Barn.* 7:9.²⁰¹

Testament of Levi 8:2. Finally, the term ποδήρης also occurs in *T. Levi* 8:2, likely the work of Christian authorship or redaction, probably in the late second century

¹⁹⁶See, e.g., John Dominic Crossan, *The Cross That Spoke: The Origins of the Passion Narrative* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988), 132-33, 142, 157; and Helmut Koester, *Ancient Christian Gospels*, 224-26.

¹⁹⁷See, e.g., LXX Exod 25:4; 26:1, 31, 36; 27:16; 28:5, 8, 15, 33; 31:4; 35:6, 25, 35; Num 4:8; 2 Sam 1:24; 2 Chr 2:6, 13; 3:14; Matt 27:28.

¹⁹⁸See Ferdinand R. Prostmeier, *Der Barnabasbrief*, Kommentar zu den Apostolischen Vätern 8 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1999), 311-12.

¹⁹⁹Stökl Ben Ezra asserts that there is no support for the assumption that Jesus Christ and the high priest Joshua/Jesus of Zech 3 were first associated in Greek literature (*Impact of Yom Kippur*, 196, n. 257).

²⁰⁰Cf. Cross (*The Cross That Spoke*, 120, 128), Paget (*Epistle of Barnabas*, 140), Prostmeier (*Der Barnabasbrief*, 310-11), Skarsaune (*Proof from Prophecy*, 309-10), and Stökl Ben Ezra (*Impact of Yom Kippur*, 160, 163, 165 [n. 95], 196). This is how Tertullian understood it in *Adv. Marc.* 3.7.6 (so Crossan [*The Cross That Spoke*, 132] and Skarsaune [*Proof from Prophecy*, 310, n. 155]).

²⁰¹Paget, *Epistle of Barnabas*, 216-17. On this text in *Barnabas*, see the detailed discussion in Stökl Ben Ezra, *Impact of Yom Kippur*, 147-65, particularly 152-54.

CE.²⁰² It uses ποδήρης as an articular substantive in its discussion of the priestly investiture of the patriarch Levi. The usage of the term in this verse occurs as the central item in a catalog of seven dress items, several of which were uniquely associated with the high priest: the robe (or, garments: τὴν στολήν) of the priesthood, the crown (τὸν στέφανον) of righteousness, the breastpiece (τὸ λόγιον) of understanding, the foot-length robe (τὸν ποδήρη) of truth, the head ornament (τὸ πέταλον) of faith, the turban (τὴν μίτραν) of the sign, and the ephod (τὸ ἐφούδ) of prophecy.

The reference to the foot-length garment in *T. Levi* 8:2 indicates a priestly investiture, but, as Stökl Ben Ezra indicates regarding the wider context of 8:1-18, “this investiture deviates widely from the biblical prescriptions for priestly vestments.”²⁰³ But while the investiture itself is problematic, the elements of dress in 8:2 are not as obtuse. Consequently, one cannot deny that the reference to the ποδήρης here must be understood as high priestly in nature.²⁰⁴ Furthermore, the most natural understanding of the ποδήρης in this work would be to see it as equivalent to the מַעֲיִל of the HB.

²⁰²Cf. M. de Jonge, “Defining the Major Issues in the Study of the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs” and “The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs as a Document Transmitted by Christians,” in M. de Jonge, *Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament as Part of Christian Literature: The Case of the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs and the Greek Life of Adam and Eve*, *Studia in Veteris Testamenti pseudepigrapha* 18 (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 71-83 and 84-106, respectively; and Michael E. Stone, “Aramaic Levi Document and Greek Testament of Levi,” in *Emanuel: Studies in the Hebrew Bible, Septuagint, and Dead Sea Scrolls in Honor of Emanuel Tov*, ed. Shalom M. Paul et al., *VTSup* 94 (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 429-30.

²⁰³Stökl Ben Ezra, *Impact of Yom Kippur*, 83, n. 20.

²⁰⁴Hollander and Jonge, *Testaments*, 150-55.

Summary of ποδήρης

The term ποδήρης—typically used in the LXX and other extrabiblical Jewish and Christian literature for the foot-length robe of the high priest—appears but once in the NT in a text that describes the visionary appearance of Jesus Christ (Rev 1:13). Despite its critical appearance there, it has not received the sustained discussion and analysis that it deserves in terms of its usage elsewhere.

In light of the preceding, detailed survey of each of the occurrences of ποδήρης in the LXX, the lexical data thus demonstrate that ποδήρης apparently translates not five but two Hebrew terms, מְעִיל and מַחְלָצוֹת, the former being the closest technical equivalency and the latter being the closest approximation. Other apparent translations of different Hebrew words are either attempts to approximate high priestly dress or possibly are incorrect translations. To assert that the term ποδήρης in the LXX does not have a specific or technical meaning because it translates so many concepts widely ignores the data that demonstrate that it translates either typical terms indicative of ritual high priestly dress or unusual dress terms nevertheless associated with high priestly dress. Furthermore, I would assert that when ποδήρης is used substantively, it describes high priestly dress, whereas when it is used in an attributive sense, it describes dress length and thus could refer to either priestly or high priestly dress.

Consequently, all LXX references to the ποδήρης point to high priestly dress or assume high priestly imagery on the basis of the metonymous use of this high priestly dress term. Putting it another way, using a static understanding of the ποδήρης as a high priestly dress item in all its occurrences in the LXX does not necessarily distort or

destroy the interpretation of any of the texts in which it occurs.

The situation is overwhelmingly similar in other post-Septuagintal writings, yet at the same time it is not unanimous that ποδήρης refers to high priestly dress. All of the references to the ποδήρης in the *Letter of Aristeas*, Philo, the *Epistle of Barnabas*, and the *Testament of Levi* refer directly or via a figure of speech to the dress of the high priest. All but one of the references in Josephus indicate that a ποδήρης was part of the daily ritual clothing of the High Priest.²⁰⁵ What this demonstrates is that an examination of the use of ποδήρης indicates that it nearly unanimously points to the actual dress—or the sartorial imagery—of the high priest.

The Ephod

Haran asserts that another high priestly dress item, the **עֲפֹד**,²⁰⁶ was “the most distinctive of the high priest’s exclusive garments.”²⁰⁷ Propp similarly agrees that the “ephod” was “the priestly vestment *par excellence*.”²⁰⁸ Ironically, it remains unclear as to just what exactly the ephod was.²⁰⁹ Biblical references to ephodim are not uniform,

²⁰⁵Consequently, the assertion that ποδήρης “always means the high priestly robe of Yom Kippur” (Stökl, “Yom Kippur,” 365, n. 61) is demonstrably false by its apparent restriction of the robe to usage on Yom Kippur.

²⁰⁶Various attempts at transliterating the term ephod occur in the LXX. Cf., e.g., εφωδ (Judg 17:5; 18:14, 18, 20), εφωθ (Judg 8:27), and εφουδ (1 Sam 2:18, 28; 14:3, 18; 22:18; 23:6, 9; 30:7)—all without breathers or accents.

²⁰⁷Haran, “Priestly Image,” 208.

²⁰⁸Propp, *Exodus 19-40*, 432.

²⁰⁹*Ibid.*, 431. The literature on the problematic nature of the ephod is extensive. See, e.g., George Dahl, “The Problem of the Ephod,” *Anglican Theological Review* 34 (1952): 206-10; Philip R. Davies, “Ark or Ephod in 1 Sam. XIV.18?” *JTS* 26 (1975):

and it appears that they occur in at least three basic contexts.²¹⁰

The Contexts of the Ephod

In the first context it appears primarily as a sacral garment. A number of texts describe it as part of the dress of the high priest, other priests, and non-Levitical personnel associated with the tabernacle and its rituals.²¹¹ These texts sometimes indicate that the ephod was made out of linen (1 Sam 2:18; 22:18; 2 Sam 6:14; 1 Chr 15:27) and on a few occasions specifically indicate that it was worn (גָּרַד, “to gird”: 1 Sam 2:18; 2 Sam 6:14; cf. Lev 8:7).²¹²

82-87; W. Dommershausen, “גִּזְרֵי,” *TDOT* (1977), 2:450-55; Theodore C. Foote, “The Ephod,” *JBL* 21 (1902): 1-47; Julian Morgenstern, “The Ark, the Ephod, and the ‘Tent of Meeting’ (Continued from Volume XVII): VII: The Ephod,” *HUCA* 18 (1943-44): 1-52; Anthony Phillips, “David’s Linen Ephod,” *VT* 19 (1969): 485-87; Alexander Rofé, “‘No Ephod or Teraphim’—*oude hierateias oude dēlōn*: Hosea 3:4 in the LXX and in the Paraphrases of Chronicles and the Damascus Document,” trans. Simeon Chavel, in *Sefer Moshe: The Moshe Weinfeld Jubilee Volume: Studies in the Bible and the Ancient Near East, Qumran, and Post-Biblical Judaism*, ed. Chaim Cohen, Avi Hurvitz, and Shalom M. Paul (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2004), 135-49; Diane M. Sharon, “Echoes of Gideon’s Ephod: An Intertextual Reading,” *JANES* 30 (2006): 89-102; Hermann Thiersch, *Ependytes und Ephod: Gottesbild und Priesterkleid im alten Vorderasien*, Geisteswissenschaftlichen Forschungen 8 (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1936); Tidwell, “The Linen Ephod,” 505-507; and Karel van der Toorn and Cees Houtman, “David and the Ark,” *JBL* 113 (1994): 209-31.

²¹⁰The following summary generally follows Propp, *Exodus 19-40*, 432 (cf. Morgenstern, “The Ark, the Ephod,” 2-3). Cf. Davies, who believes that there are four different objects being referred to (“Ark or Ephod,” 84-87).

²¹¹Cf. Exod 25:7; 28:4, 6, 12, 15, 25, 26, 27, 28, 31; 29:5; 35:9, 27; 39:2, 7, 8, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22; Lev 8:7; 1 Sam 2:28; 14:3; 21:10; 22:18; 23:6, 9; 30:7; 1 Chr 15:27. Samuel, born as an Ephraimite and not a Levite (1 Sam 1:1), ministered as a priest in the tabernacle and wore—girded, fastened, or bound (גָּרַד) on himself—a linen ephod (1 Sam 2:18), even as King David when he danced before YHWH (2 Sam 6:14)

²¹²It is unlikely that the ephod worn by David in 2 Sam 6:14 was the same dress item associated with the high priest, since the ephod of the high priest was worn over

In a second context, the ephod appears to be referred to in terms of it being a divinatory or oracular object.²¹³ The specific emphasis is that it is borne or carried in one's hand (בְּיָדָו) instead of being worn as an article of dress (1 Sam 23:6). Orders to bring the ephod to a particular locale support such a contextual interpretation (1 Sam 14:18-19; 23:9; 30:7)²¹⁴ without denying or negating its sartorial nature seen elsewhere, since such a sacred garment would not be worn but rather carried through non-sacred space. Reference to the sword of Goliath, wrapped in a cloth and kept “behind the

other garments (cf. Exod 29:5; Lev 8:7); why would David's wife Michal have been scandalized by him uncovering himself while wearing that type of ephod (2 Sam 6:20)? See Phillips, “David's Linen Ephod,” 486. Phillips suggests that the basic meaning of the ephod is “covering” (cf. Isa 30:22); it could then be used to describe a garment to cover one's loins, or “an empty case, like a stiffened garment, which could be used for obtaining an oracle by means of inserting one's hand,” as in 1 Sam 14:19 (ibid.). Since 1 Chr 15:27 insists that David wore both a linen ephod and a linen robe (מְעִיל), he concludes (ibid., n. 1) that the Chronicler probably understood David to have worn the high priest's “vestment”—an unlikely deduction, particularly since the high priestly מְעִיל, being entirely blue in color, was not made out of linen. Cf. Leopold Sabourin, *Priesthood: A Comparative Study*, Studies in the History of Religion (Supplements to *Numen*) 25 (Leiden: Brill, 1973), 151-52; and Tidwell, “The Linen Ephod,” 505-507.

²¹³Propp suggests that in this context the ephod was “an oracular device, probably containing the Urim and Thummim” (*Exodus 19-40*, 432).

²¹⁴The LXX of 1 Sam 14:18 has Saul command Ahijah to “bring the ephod” (προσάγαγε τὸ εφουδ), while the MT has Saul command Ahijah to “bring the ark of God” (הַגִּישָׁה אֶרֶן הָאֱלֹהִים). The LXX's mention that Ahijah ἤρεν τὸ εφουδ ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκέλευη (“he lifted / took up / carried the ephod in that day”) does not necessarily mean that Ahijah wore the ephod, since in the previous verse Jonathan's armor-bearer is similarly ὁ ἄρῳ τὰ σκεύη αὐτοῦ (“the one who carried his armor”; cf. 14:1, 3, 6, 7, 12, 13, 14). On the intriguing relationship between the ark of the MT and the ephod of the LXX, cf. discussion on the hypothetical development and possible interrelationship and/or substitution of the references to the ephod and the ark in William R. Arnold, *Ephod and Ark: A Study in the Records and Religion of the Ancient Hebrews*, Harvard Theological Studies 3 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1917); Davies, “Ark or Ephod,” 82-87; Morgenstern, “The Ark, the Ephod,” 1-52; Toorn and Houtman, “David and the Ark,” 209-31; and the literature the preceding authors cite.

ephod” (אֶפֹּדִי הָאֶפֹּדִי) at the sanctuary of Nob (1 Sam 21:9), also suggests that here the ephod was understood more in terms of it being an oracular object of truly iconic status rather than it having a distinct sartorial focus.²¹⁵ This does not, however, indicate that the ephod in this context was *not* a garment but rather that it had a specific cultic status at least apart from it being worn.

Finally, some passages in the HB indicate that ephodim were associated with idolatry outside of the accepted tabernacle complex. These texts indicate that they were golden and appeared in the context of shrines, teraphim, and other carved or cast images. For example, Gideon took gold plunder and made an ephod out of it,²¹⁶ one that ultimately became an idol (Judg 8:24-27). Micah, a man from Ephraim, placed an

²¹⁵Propp allows for the possibility that because the ephod was closely associated with the pouch that contained the Urim and Thummim, there may be an overlap between “carrying” and “wearing” (*Exodus 19-40*, 432). But cf. Davies, who disagrees and insists that נָשָׂא in these contexts means “carry” or “bear” and not “wear” (“Ark or Ephod,” 85). Even more strenuous is the assertion of Foote: “carry never means ‘wear’” (“The Ephod,” 13).

In line with the previous observation, in some texts that appear to refer to priestly figures wearing ephodim, it appears likely that they are bearing or carrying (נָשָׂא) them. Cf. 1 Sam 2:28 (with reference to priests) and 14:3 (with reference to Ahijah, grandson of the priest Eli). A problematic case here is 1 Sam 22:18 (with reference to priests), since it describes the ephod being “carried” yet made out of linen (נָשָׂא אֶפֹּדִי בָדַד [“they carried a linen ephod”]). Intriguingly, the LXX does not mention it as being fabricated from linen (ἀῤροῦταϛ ἐφουδ [“carrying an ephod”]). It is possible that the LXX has the correct reading here (Phillips, “David’s Linen Ephod,” 486, and the references he cites there).

²¹⁶Cf. the related word אֶפֹּדֵי in the context of gold-plated idols in Isa 30:22. The term occurs only twice elsewhere (in reference to the high priest’s dress: Exod 28:8; 39:5), and Propp suggests that it refers to the “system for binding on an ephod” (*Exodus 19-40*, 436).

ephod—along with teraphim²¹⁷ and other images—in a shrine (Judg 17:5; 18:14, 17-20; cf. Hos 3:4).²¹⁸ While these texts contain no indication that ephodim were worn, one cannot thus conclude that these ephodim never had sartorial significance.

The Ephod of the High Priest

While references to the ephod appear diverse, it is within the Pentateuch that the ephod appears only in reference to the high priest's dress.²¹⁹ In this particular corpus, the common priests do not wear ephodim. Thus, while Haran is correct to note that the ephod was exclusive to the high priest—he is correct only if one further specifies that this is the case only within the Pentateuch. Unlike the linen ephodim mentioned outside of the Pentateuch, the high priestly ephod was worn not against the skin but outside of other garments.²²⁰ It was suspended from the shoulders,²²¹ with two precious stones

²¹⁷Notice the ephod's association with teraphim again in Hos 3:4. On the checkered history of teraphim, cf. Gen 31:19, 34, 35; 1 Sam 15:23; 19:13, 16; 2 Kgs 23:24; Ezek 21:21; Zech 10:2.

²¹⁸Hos 3:4 associates the ephod with sacrifices, sacred pillars (מַזְבְּחֵי), and teraphim.

²¹⁹In the Pentateuch it occurs in Exod 25:7; 28:4, 6, 12, 15, 25, 26, 27, 28, 31; 29:5; 35:9, 27; 39:2, 7, 8, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22; Lev 8:7. The term is also mentioned in the Pentateuch in Num 34:23, but there the Hebrew word is the name of one of the leaders of the tribe of Manasseh. Propp concludes: "Because of its association with idolatry, divination and priestly legitimacy, the ephod was controversial in ancient Israel. The Priestly Writer coopted this symbolic vestment by limiting its use to the Aaronid priesthood and to Yahweh's cult" (*Exodus 19-40*, 432).

²²⁰So Propp, *Exodus 19-40*, 432.

²²¹While Sanders plays off of this term's typical non-biblical definition as referring to the upper part of a woman's tunic and consequently identifies the ephod as the high priest's "third tunic" (*Judaism: Practice and Belief*, 99), such an identification unnecessarily furthers a linguistic confusion of dress terms.

engraved with the names of Israel on the shoulder straps.²²² Furthermore, the ephod was made of a combination of dyed wool and twisted linen²²³ utilizing the same workmanship (אֲשֵׁרֶת) by which the inner veil was made (Exod 26:31; 28:6). This material of wool and linen was also an artistic mixture deriving from animals and plants and thus forbidden to the rest of the Israelites,²²⁴ “since according to Old Testament tradition the appearance of a heterogenous mixture is taken as a hallmark of holiness.”²²⁵ This distinction underscores the fact that though the HB knows of ephodim worn by the high priest and others, the high priest’s was—by nature of its unique textile makeup forbidden to other Israelites—more sacred than the others.

But there are at least two more reasons why the high priest’s ephod was unique among the Israelite priesthood. The first reason further substantiating its uniqueness is

²²²On these two stones, see Jeffrey H. Tigay, “The Priestly Reminder Stones and Ancient Near Eastern Votive Practices,” in *Shai le-Sara Japhet: Studies in the Bible, Its Exegesis and Its Language* (Heb. and Eng.), ed. Moshe Bar-Asher et al. (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 2007), 339-55. In Josephus’s discussion of these two stones (*A.J.* 3.214-218), he mentions that the one clasped to the high priest’s right shoulder shone with a flashing radiance (3.215), unknown to the HB.

²²³Exod 28:6; 39:2 (LXX 36:9); cf. 28:15; 39:8 (LXX 36:15).

²²⁴See Deut 22:11; cf. Lev 19:19 and Deut 22:9.

²²⁵Haran, *Temples and Temple-Service*, 160; cf. *ibid.*, 167. Haran notes that in Deut 22:9 the result of a mixing of agricultural produce would become—not “defiled,” “devoted,” or “forfeit,” as in many translations—but “holy” (*ibid.*). Applying this dictum to priestly fabrics indicates why non-Levitical personnel were not to mingle such material. While Haran attempts to differentiate the ephod from the veil because the ephod lacked ornamented cherubim and contained a large amount of gold (*ibid.*, 167-68), Deborah W. Rooke argues that the “fabric mixture apart from the gold is still the superlatively holy blend of all kinds of wool and linen with general ornamentation” (*Zadok’s Heirs: The Role and Development of the High Priesthood in Ancient Israel*, Oxford Theological Monographs [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000], 17).

the fact that one of the elements of the ephod was gold.²²⁶ This precious element was never used in connection with the dress of the common priests. Furthermore, not only was gold utilized in the ephod, but this gold was the primary ingredient, being listed first.²²⁷ Since the gold was interwoven into the other material of the ephod, it consequently resulted in a garment of considerable weight.²²⁸

Second, the ephod was fabricated with three colors of wool—blue, purple, and crimson,²²⁹ listed in order of preeminence after the gold.²³⁰ Again, in the HB these colors were never used in the dress of the common priests. But well into the Second Temple period, they were being utilized in the dress of the common priests as well.²³¹

Thus, even if one would suggest that both the high priest and the common priests wore ephodim, the HB is clear that the high priest's ephod was of a superior quality for five reasons regarding its fabrication and position: (1) the use of a unique material forbidden to other Israelites; (2) the use of gold; (3) its vibrant, polychromatic coloring; (4) it being worn over another dress item; and (5) it being suspended from the shoulders. The high priest's ephod could not be mistaken for that of an ordinary priest's (whose ephodim, as mentioned earlier, appear only in non-Pentateuchal sources).

²²⁶Exod 28:6; 39:2-3; cf. 28:8, 15; 39:8.

²²⁷Exod 28:6; 39:2; cf. 28:8, 15; 39:8.

²²⁸For a discussion of the fabrication and weaving of the gold into the garment, see Haran, *Temples and Temple-Service*, 167-68.

²²⁹Exod 28:6; 39:2; cf. 28:8, 15; 39:8.

²³⁰Haran, *Temples and Temple-Service*, 160.

²³¹See their use in the sash of the common priests in Josephus *A.J.* 3.154.

Associated with the high priest's ephod was an article of dress described variously, for example, as the "artistic" (NASB), "decorated" (NRSV), or "skillfully woven" band of the ephod (הַשֵּׁב הָאֵפֹד).²³² The term הַשֵּׁב derives from the verb הָשַׁב, which means "to think, plan, reckon, calculate, devise, design, decorate."²³³ One suggestion is that this object was similar to a "woven corset" or "cummerbund."²³⁴ Indeed, Lev 8:7 indicates that it was tied around Aaron at his ordination after the ephod was placed on him. Since the ephod itself was made of such decorated work (Exod 28:6; 39:3), was the הַשֵּׁב הָאֵפֹד distinguishable from it? A realistic solution is that the ephod itself was comprised of both the shoulder-pieces and the band/corset/cummerbund that was bound to the high priest's body.²³⁵ Consequently, it would not be seen as a separate dress item.

The Breastpiece

The third article of dress exclusive to the high priest was the breastpiece or breastplate (חֹשֶׁן).²³⁶ Despite the etymological confusion surrounding the Hebrew term,

²³²Exod 28:27, 28; 29:5; 39:20, 21; Lev 8:7; cf. הַשֵּׁב אֵפֹדָה (Exod 28:8; 39:5). See the discussion in Propp, *Exod 19-40*, 436, and Milgrom, *Leviticus 1-16*, 511.

²³³The participle הַשֵּׁב used in reference, for example, to the ephod and the inner veil (see, e.g., Exod 26:31; 28:6), also derives from this verb.

²³⁴Propp, *Exod 19-40*, 436.

²³⁵"It is also possible, even likely, that the two shoulder-pieces plus the 'woven band' simply constitute the Ephod" (ibid.). Cf. Milgrom, *Leviticus 1-16*, 511.

²³⁶In the HB, see Exod 25:7; 28:4, 15, 22, 23, 24, 26, 28, 29, 30; 29:5; 35:9, 27; 39:8, 9, 15, 16, 17, 19, 21; Lev 8:8. See also Sir 45:10. For references at Qumran, see, e.g., 11Q17 IX, 6. See the summary discussion in Dommershausen, "חֹשֶׁן," 5:259-61.

Exod 28:16 and 39:9 indicate that it was square-shaped when folded double, perhaps like a pouch, since the “Urim” and “Thummim” were placed inside (28:30; Lev 8:8).²³⁷

The breastpiece was closely associated with the another high priestly dress element, the priestly ephod. The fabrication of the breastpiece, for instance, was compared to that of the ephod, utilizing gold in combination with blue, purple, and scarlet wool and linen, crafted in a **חֹשֶׁב** style (Exod 28:15; 39:8). The breastpiece was securely attached to the ephod via three pairs of “gold rings” (**טַבְּעוֹת זָהָב** [28:23, 26-27]), “twisted chains, corded work of pure gold” (**שִׁרְשֵׁת גְּבֻלַת מַעֲשֵׂה עֵבֶת זָהָב טָהוֹר**) [28:22; cf. 28:24]), “two (filigree) settings of gold” (**מִשְׁבְּצַת זָהָב** [28:13; cf. 28:14, 25; 39:6, 16, 18]), and a “blue cord” (**בְּפִתִּיל תְּכֵלֶת**) [28:28; 39:21; cf. 28:37; 39:31]).²³⁸

In contradistinction to the two **אֲבִנֵי-שֹׁהַם** (“onyx stones”) that protruded from the shoulder-pieces of the ephod, twelve precious stones and gems were set or sunk into the breastpiece in gold filigree (28:20), their nomenclature consequently being described as “stones for setting” (**מִלְאִים וְאֲבִנֵי מִלְאִים**) [25:7; 35:9; cf. 35:27]). Whereas each of the two

²³⁷Cf. Dommershausen (“חֹשֶׁב,” 5:259), Haran (*Temples and Temple-Service*, 168), Houtman (*Exodus*, 3:492), and Propp (*Exodus 19-40*, 439). Rooke indicates that this was the first of three dress elements that have been regarded as royal, the other two being the headgear or turban and the head ornament; nevertheless, she denies that such an association is necessary (*Zadok’s Heirs*, 18-19; cf. idem, “Kingship as Priesthood,” 204-205).

²³⁸Notice Dommershausen’s succinct summary of the complex fabrication: “Four rings were sewn to [the breastpiece], two to the upper corners and two to the lower. From the upper rings, two golden cords led up to the shoulder-pieces of the ephod, where they were attached to rosettes. Through the lower rings, which were fastened to the rear of the *hōšēn*, a blue lace was passed; attached to two additional rings on the lower portion of the shoulder-pieces of the ephod, it bound the two vestments tightly together, preventing the *hōšēn* from shifting” (“חֹשֶׁב,” 5:260).

אֲבִי־שֵׁהָם attached to the shoulder-pieces had six tribal names engraved on them, the twelve precious stones and/or gems had but one name on each (28:21).²³⁹

The actual nature of all of these twelve precious stones and/or gems in Exod 28 remains unclear and—in some cases—impossible to determine today, as table 3 of sample translations makes clear.²⁴⁰ Wevers speaks for the consensus of those who have carefully looked into the issue when he concludes that “apparently there was no clear idea among the ancients as to the names and identification of semi-precious stones.”²⁴¹

²³⁹Haran thus suggests that the twelve stones were smaller than the other two (*Temples and Temple-Service*, 168).

²⁴⁰For other references to these precious stones/gems, cf., e.g., *L.A.B.* 26.10-11; Philo *Leg.* 1.81 (whose list ends after five stones/gems); Josephus *A.J.* 3.168 and *B.J.* 5.234. On Pseudo-Philo’s implicit identification of the wearing of the priestly ephod with its twelve stones as indicative that the priesthood was to the God of Israel as a pagan idol or statue was to its god, see the provocative essay by Crispin H. T. Fletcher-Louis, “Humanity and the Idols of the Gods in Pseudo-Philo’s *Biblical Antiquities*,” in *Idolatry: False Worship in the Bible, Early Judaism and Christianity*, ed. Stephen C. Barton (London: T & T Clark, 2007), 58-72, particularly 70-71.

²⁴¹Wevers, *Greek Text of Exodus*, 394. On the problems with the color and overall identification of these gems, cf. also Athalya Brenner, *Colour Terms in the Old Testament*, JSOTSup 21 (Sheffield: JSOT, 1982), 165-67; Bullard, “Stones, Precious,” 4:623-30; Louis H. Feldman, “Prolegomenon,” in *The Biblical Antiquities of Philo*, trans. M. R. James (1917; repr., The Library of Biblical Studies; New York: KTAV, 1971), cxii-cxiii; E. L. Gilmore, “Which Were the Original Twelve Gemstones of the First Biblical Breastplate?” *Lapidary Journal* 22 (1968): 1130-1134; John S. Harris, “An Introduction to the Study of Personal Ornaments of Precious, Semi-Precious and Imitation Stones Used Throughout Biblical History,” in *The Annual of Leeds University Oriental Society 4 (1962-63)*, ed. John Macdonald (Leiden: Brill, 1964), 49-83; Saul Lieberman, *Greek in Jewish Palestine: Studies in the Life and Manners of Jewish Palestine in the II-IV Centuries C.E.* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1942), 56-59 (particularly p. 59: “When we compare our list to those of the Septuagint and the glossaries [which on the whole followed the latter], we see how greatly it differs from them. The Rabbis drew from an old Greek translation of the Bible, which widely diverged from the Septuagint”); and Wurzbürger, “Precious Stones,” 16:475-78.

Table 3. Various translations of the precious stones in Exodus 28:17-20

	MT	LXX	JPSA	NRSV	Harris	Bullard	Propp
17	אַרְדָּם	σάρδιον ^a	carnelian	carnelian	bloodstone	sardius	chalcedony? ^b
	פְּטוֹרֵהָ	τοπάζιον	chrysolite (topaz)	chrysolite	uncertain	peridot (topaz)	green-yellow “chrysolith”?
	בְּרֻקָּתָהּ	σμάραγδος	emerald (smaragd)	emerald	amazonite	carbuncle (garnet)	emerald
18	נִפְיָךְ	ἄνθραξ	turquoise (carbuncle)	turquoise	moonstone	emerald	turquoise or malachite
	סַפִּיר	σάπφειρος	sapphire	sapphire	lapis lazuli	sapphire	lapis lazuli
	יְהֵלֵם	ἵασπις	amethyst (emerald)	moonstone	rock crystal	diamond	unknown
19	לְשֵׁם	λιγύριον	jacinth	jacinth	unknown	jacinth	unknown
	שָׁבוּ	ἀγάτης	agate	agate	agate	agate	not designated
	אַחֲלָמָה	ἀμέθυστος	crystal (amethyst)	amethyst	garnet	amethyst	red-brown jasper
20	תְּרֻשִׁישׁ	χρυσόλιθος	beryl	beryl	yellow serpentine	beryl	unknown
	שֵׁהָם	βηρύλλιον	lapis lazuli (onyx)	onyx	onyx	onyx	carnelian
	יִשְׁפָּה	ὄνυχιον	jasper	jasper	uncertain	jasper	jade

NOTE: The same list of terms for these precious stones/gems appears later in Exodus (MT = 39:10-13; LXX = 36:17-20). The JPSA (Jewish Publication Society of America) data are taken from Uri Shraga Wurzbarger, “Precious Stones and Jewelry: In the Bible,” *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 2nd ed. (2007), 16:476. I have utilized studies by J. S. Harris with an additional note by John Macdonald (“The Stones of the High Priest’s Breastplate,” in *The Annual of Leeds University Oriental Society 5 [1963-65]*, ed. John Macdonald [Leiden: Brill, 1966], 40-62), R. C. Bullard (“Stones, Precious,” *ISBE* [1988], 4:625-30), and Propp (*Exodus 19-40*, 439-440) as exemplars for commentary information on the translation of these precious stones and/or gems.

^aThe order of precious stones and/or gems in the LXX is the same order as found in Ezek 28:13 (even though silver and gold are inserted in the latter list). The MT list there, however, does not include לְשֵׁם, שָׁבוּ, and אַחֲלָמָה, and even the rest of its list is not in the same order as the MT list in Exod 28. It appears that in Ezek 28 the LXX has attempted to replicate the list of the precious stones and/or gems in Exod 28. Hector M. Patmore wagers that the consonantal text of MT Ezek 28:12-19 has been misread and vocalized and accented in an anomalous fashion (“Did the Masoretes Get It Wrong? The Vocalization and Accentuation of Ezekiel xxviii 12-19,” *VT* 58 [2008]: 245-57).

^bNotice Propp’s actual translation (*Exodus 19-40*, 314), where he translates into English only the בְּרֻקָּתָהּ, נִפְיָךְ, סַפִּיר, אַחֲלָמָה, שֵׁהָם, and יִשְׁפָּה, indicating those gems about which he is most certain.

As mentioned earlier, the LXX apparently used several different terms to translate the obscure Hebrew gem known as קִרְשֵׁי .²⁴² Readers should consequently not be surprised, then, when the same term is translated in different ways, even within just one English translation.²⁴³

The Urim and Thummim

Associated with the breastpiece were the Urim (אֲרִי־אֲבִיבִים) and Thummim (תְּמוּנִים).

Typically understood to be contained within the pouch of the breastpiece, one finds them infrequently mentioned either singularly or in tandem both within the HB and the LXX²⁴⁴ as well as extrabiblical Jewish literature of the Second Temple period.²⁴⁵

²⁴²Cf. LXX Gen 2:12 (ὁ λίθος ὁ πράσινος); Exod 25:7, 35:9 (λίθους σαρδίου); 28:9, 35:27, 36:17 (λίθους [τῆς] σμαράγδου); 28:20, 39:13 (βηρύλλιον); Job 28:16 (ὄνυχι); and the revealing transliteration found in 1 Chr 29:2 (λίθους σοομ). Some of these may not be translations at all (owing to the possible transposition or substitution of terms); see Ezek 28:13 for an example of where the Hebrew does not match the expanded and edited LXX.

²⁴³A good example of this is the NLT. It translates שִׁשְׁבִּיטִי in Exod 28:20 (LXX: χρυσόλιθος), 39:13 (LXX: χρυσόλιθος), and Ezek 28:13 (the LXX has a radically changed list) as a beryl. But it translates the same Hebrew term in Sol 5:14 (LXX: θαρσις), Ezek 1:16 (LXX: θαρσις), and 10:9 (LXX: ἄνθρακος) as a chrysolite, while in Dan 10:6 (θαρσις [OG/Θ]) it translates the term as “a dazzling gem.”

²⁴⁴Exod 28:30; Lev 8:8; Num 27:21 (no Thummim); Deut 33:8 (Thummim listed first); 1 Sam 28:6 (no Thummim); Ezra 2:63; Neh 7:65. In 1 Sam 14:41 the MT text is pointed תְּמוּנִי instead of the typical תְּמוּנִים . On the Hebrew punning in this verse, see Propp, *Exodus 19-41*, 442. For the Urim the LXX uses forms of several terms: δῆλωσις (“Manifestation”) in Exod 28:30, Lev 8:8, 1 Esd 5:40; δῆλος (“Evident”) in Num 27:21, Deut 33:8, 1 Sam 14:41 and 28:6, Sir 45:10 (here the Hebrew has אֶפֶד [ephod] and אֲזִיבֵי [belt, waistband] instead); and the participial form of φωτίζω (“I give light”) in Ezra 2:63, Neh 7:65. For the Thummim the LXX uses: ἀλήθεια (“Truth”) in Exod 28:30, Lev 8:8, Deut 33:8, 1 Esd 5:40, Sir 45:10; and τέλειος (“Complete, Perfect”) in Ezra 2:63, Neh 7:65. As for 1 Sam 14:41, the NJB (“if the fault lies with me or with my son Jonathan, give urim: if the fault lies with your people Israel, give

Nevertheless, they were perhaps the most mysterious dress element of the high priest. Anne Marie Kitz notes that “Israelite cultic life has produced no puzzle as intriguing as the Urim and Thummim.”²⁴⁶ Michael A. Harbin sufficiently summarizes the confusing state of their identity: “Their actual identity has puzzled scholars for centuries. They are not described. Their method of use is not explained. The etymology of the terms is at best uncertain. Even their mention in the OT is somewhat haphazard.”²⁴⁷

Even though these objects—whether one, two, or many²⁴⁸ lots or jewels²⁴⁹—were described in the HB both with and without reference to the breastpiece, they appear to have been understood solely as objects bound up with the ministry of the high priest alone,²⁵⁰ even as the breastpiece was.²⁵¹ In some way YHWH communicated

thummim”), the RSV (“If this guilt is in me or in Jonathan my son, O LORD, God of Israel, give Urim; but if this guilt is in thy people Israel, give Thummim”), and the NRSV (“If this guilt is in me or in my son Jonathan, O LORD God of Israel, give Urim; but if this guilt is in your people Israel, give Thummim”) are closer to the LXX than the MT, but in the LXX the counterpart to the δῆλος is ὁσιότητα (“holiness”).

²⁴⁵See, e.g., 1Q291 1 2-4; 1Q29 2 2; 4Q164 4-5; 4Q376 1 I, 3; 11Q19 LVIII, 18-21; *Tg. Ps.-J. Exod* 28:30; *Tg. Ps.-J. Num* 31:6; Philo *Mos.* 2.113, 128-29, *QE* 2.116, *Spec.* 1.88-89; *L.A.B.* 22:8-9, 25:5, 46:1, 47:2; *Liv. Pro.* 22:2, 23:2.

²⁴⁶Kitz, “*The Plural Form of ’ûrîm and tummîm*,” *JBL* 116 (1997): 401.

²⁴⁷Michael A. Harbin, review of *The Urim and Thummim: A Means of Revelation in Ancient Israel*, by Cornelis Van Dam, *JETS* 42 (1999): 492.

²⁴⁸For example, Draper notes that by the first century BCE, the Urim and Thummim had been “thoroughly confused with the twelve gemstones” (“The Twelve Apostles,” 56 [cf. p. 58]). Cf. Fletcher-Louis, *Glory of Adam*, 222-51; Mathewson, “Foundation Stones,” 495-96; and Poirier, “Symbols of Wisdom,” 66.

²⁴⁹Going in another direction, Philo identifies this dress item as comprised of two pieces of embroidered, woven, or weblike work in *Spec.* 1.88.

²⁵⁰Notice how Ezra 2:63 and Neh 7:65 state that decisions regarding the validity of those of the returned exiles who claimed to be descended from the priests could not

by means of these objects to the Israelites via the high priest.²⁵² Some OT texts indicate that the Urim and Thummim provided oracular judgments²⁵³ and that two alternatives were indicated through them.²⁵⁴ How the alternatives were revealed (e.g., casting lots? glowing jewels?) is a point of continuing debate.

Scholars have debated not only this but a number of other aspects of the Urim and Thummim, and even a brief description would go beyond the reasonable bounds of this study.²⁵⁵ Nevertheless, in terms of dress imagery, even though the Urim and

be made until a priest arose with Urim and Thummim. In Nehemiah the reference is to “the priest” (הַכֹּהֵן),” whereas in Ezra the reference is grammatically indefinite. Reference to “Eliashib the great priest” in Nehemiah (אֱלִישִׁיב הַכֹּהֵן הַגָּדוֹל [3:1, 20; 13:28]) is equivalent to his being called “the priest” in 13:4, although the term “the priest” does not necessarily equate to the high priest in all occurrences. On this, see the discussion by VanderKam, *From Joshua to Caiaphas*, 45-48.

²⁵¹Pseudo-Philo is significant in its discussion of the Urim and Thummim, in that it clearly dissociates them from the dress of the high priest and instead associates them with the tabernacle and the ark (Robert Hayward, “Pseudo-Philo and the Priestly Oracle,” *Journal of Jewish Studies* 46 [1995], 44-45, 52-53). Cf. *L.A.B.* 11:15; 13:1; 22:8; 25:5; 46:1; 47:2; etc. Hayward suggests a reason: “The notion that Urim and Thummim, or jewels of divine origin which gave God’s guidance or light to Israel, might have fallen into the hands of pagan idolaters [i.e., the Romans] was not to be countenanced. Thus Pseudo-Philo adopts a radical approach: Urim and Thummim have nothing to do with the high priests’s robes” (“Pseudo-Philo,” 53).

²⁵²See 1 Sam 28:6, where no answer came to King Saul via dreams, prophets, or Urim. Aaron’s son Eleazar was to ask or inquire “by the judgment of the Urim before YHWH” (בְּמִשְׁפַּט הָאוּרִים לְפָנַי יְהוָה) [Num 27:21]). On the aspect of judgment in association with these objects, cf. Exod 28:30.

²⁵³Cf. Exod 28:30; Num 27:21; 1 Sam 28:6; Sir 45:10.

²⁵⁴See 1 Sam 14:41.

²⁵⁵For lengthy examinations of these ritual objects, cf. Douglas Dale Bookman, “The Urim and Thummim in Relation to the Old Testament Theocracy” (PhD diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 2001), and Van Dam, *Urim and Thummim*, 1997 (originally a 1988 dissertation submitted to the Theologische Universiteit at Kampen, the Netherlands). For other relatively recent, shorter studies on the Urim and

Thummim were associated with the breastpiece, texts from the HB appear to indicate they possibly had some kind of quasi-independent status as dress equipment. This raises the question of where one draws the line between independent dress items and quasi-independent ones. When one investigates the occurrences of these items in the HB, one discovers that while they are mentioned without reference to other high priestly dress items in the majority of cases,²⁵⁶ when they are clearly mentioned as dress items it is solely in association with the breastpiece.

Nevertheless, while it may seem prudent to consider them here as not fully independent of the breastpiece, it seems more realistic to conclude that they did have an independent status apart from the breastpiece,²⁵⁷ thus suggesting that the “eight”

Thummim, see, e.g., Christophe Batsch, “Ourîm et toummîm, un oracle de guerre dans le judaïsme du second temple,” in *Zwischen Krise und Alltag: Antike Religionen im Mittelmeerraum—Conflict et normalité: Religions anciennes dans l’espace méditerranéen*, ed. Christophe Batsch, Ulrike Egelhaaf-Gaiser, and Ruth Stepper, Potsdamer altertumswissenschaftliche Beiträge 1 (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1999), 43-56; I. L. Finkel, “In Black and White: Remarks on the Assur Psephomancy Ritual,” *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie* 85 (1995): 271-76; Fletcher-Louis, *Glory of Adam*, 222-51; Lisbeth S. Fried, “Did Second Temple High Priests Possess the *Urim* and *Thummim*?” *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures* 7, art. 3 (2007), http://www.jhsonline.org/Articles/article_64.pdf (accessed March 8, 2012); Guinot, “Sur le vêtement,” 23-48; Victor Avigdor Hurowitz, “True Light on the Urim and Thummim,” review essay of Cornelis van Dam, *The Urim and Thummim: A Means of Revelation in Ancient Israel*, *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 88 (January-April 1998): 263-74; Wayne Horowitz and Victor (Avigdor) Hurowitz, “Urim and Thummim in Light of a Psephomancy Ritual from Assur (LKA 137),” *JANES* 21 (1992): 95-115; John C. Poirier, “Symbols of Wisdom in James 1:17,” *JTS* 57, n.s. (2006): 57-75; and Rofé, “No *Ephod* or *Teraphim*,” 135-149.

²⁵⁶Num 27:21 (no Thummim); Deut 33:8 (Thummim listed first); 1 Sam 28:6 (no Thummim); Ezra 2:63; Neh 7:65. The only texts in which they are clearly listed along with other dress items are Exod 28:30 and Lev 8:8.

²⁵⁷Cf. 1 Esd 5:40, which describes a future high priest “wearing the Urim and the Thummim” (ἐνδεδυμένος τὴν δήλωσιν καὶ τὴν ἀλήθειαν). The parallels in Ezra 2:63 and Neh 7:65 do not use this dress verb.

garments of the high priest were truly idealistic and stereotypical. A parallel may be drawn with the breastpiece itself, which was understood to be inseparable from the ephod²⁵⁸ and yet was considered a separate dress item. According to Vicary, the Urim and Thummim would not be considered dress tools because they are not utilized solely in the hand.²⁵⁹ While they may have been manipulated—they were certainly observed—they may correlate more closely to dress equipment, such as pocketbooks, since the latter are kept in one’s pants or purse and then pulled out to be looked at or manipulated.²⁶⁰

The Headgear

The next article of the high priest’s exclusive ritual dress is that of the high priest’s headgear. Here I use the term with the meaning of “any covering for the head,” such as a bonnet, cap, hat, etc., and not with reference to any ornamentation on such headgear.²⁶¹ Usually described as a turban, the terminology in the HB for this dress item is not the same as that for the headgear of the common priests.

²⁵⁸Propp, *Exodus 19-41*, 443.

²⁵⁹Vicary includes “tools” in her catalog of “artefactual additions” to the concept of “clothing” (“Signs of Clothing,” 293-94). Her listed examples for tools (“knives, combs, mirrors, scissors, pens, toothpicks, fans”) are apparently comprised of what one typically holds primarily in one’s hand (*ibid.*).

²⁶⁰Vicary includes “equipment” as another “artefactual addition,” and her list of such dress equipment includes “eyeglasses, watches, ice skates, pocketbooks, cameras, pipes, backpacks, masks, handkerchiefs, gloves, crutches” (“Signs of Clothing,” 293-94).

²⁶¹For that particular article of the high priest’s dress, see the discussion below.

Two Hebrew terms (מִצְנֶפֶת and צְנִיף) are used for the high priest’s turban,²⁶² but neither refers exclusively to high priestly headgear.²⁶³ On the one hand, the high priest daily wore a turban (מִצְנֶפֶת [Exod 28:4, 37; 29:6; 39:31; Lev 8:9; cf. 16:4]), sometimes described as a fine linen turban (שֵׁשׁ מִצְנֶפֶת [Exod 28:39; 39:28]). Zechariah 3:5 uses a cognate (צְנִיף) of the usual term for the high priest’s turban (מִצְנֶפֶת) to describe his headgear.²⁶⁴ Because both the terms מִצְנֶפֶת and צְנִיף derive from the verb צָנַף (“to wrap, wrap or wind up”), one can conclude that the turban was wound snugly around the head of the high priest.

On the other hand, the common priests wore headgear²⁶⁵ described in three possible ways: (1) a “hat” (מִגְבַּעַת [Exod 28:40; 29:9; Lev 8:13]);²⁶⁶ (2) “splendor-hats” (פְּאֹרֵי הַמִּגְבַּעַת)²⁶⁷ made out of fine linen (שֵׁשׁ [Exod 39:28]); or (3) a

²⁶²Greek terms for the high priest’s headgear in the LXX are μίτρα (Exod 28:37; 29:6; 36:35 [MT 39:28], 38 [MT 39:31]; Lev 8:9 [2x]; cf. Isa 61:10; Ezek 26:16; Jdt 10:3; 16:8; Bar 5:2; *Pss. Sol.* 2:21) and κίβρις (Exod 28:4, 39; 29:9; 16:4; Zech. 3:5 (2x); Sir 45:12; cf. Exod 28:40; 36:35 [MT 35:38]; Lev 8:13; Ezek 21:31; 44:18; 1 Esd 3:6; Jdt 4:15).

²⁶³In Ezek 21:25-26 מִצְנֶפֶת is used for royalty. Cf. the non-priestly use of צְנִיף in Job 29:14; Isa 3:23; 62:3. The term צְנִיף is used in Isa 3:23 for headgear on a woman and in Isa 62:3 for a royal turban.

²⁶⁴See the discussion in Sweeney, *Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk*, 597-98.

²⁶⁵Haran uses the term “caps” for the headgear of the common priests (*Temples and Temple-Service*, 170). This is the same term used in the NASB, whereas the NIV utilizes “headband” and the NJB and the NRSV use “headdress.”

²⁶⁶See the discussion of the meaning of this in Propp, *Exodus 25-40*, 450-51.

²⁶⁷See the discussion in *ibid.*, 669, where he suggests that such headgear was so designated because it glorified or exalted its wearer.

“splendor-” (hat) (פִּאֵר)²⁶⁸ made of linen (פִּשֶׁת [Ezek 44:18]).²⁶⁹ With such a clear linguistic distinction between the headgear of the high priest and the common priests,²⁷⁰ it is impossible from the standpoint of the HB to effectually collapse the high priest’s headgear and the priests’ headgear into one dress item and equate them, anymore than one could linguistically equate a beret, a baseball cap, a hard hat, and a sombrero today. Furthermore, this observation denies the traditional claim that the high priest wore four daily ritual garments that the common priests wore, since one of these—the headgear—was simply not the same.²⁷¹

The high priest’s מִצְנֶפֶת was of a superior nature to the common priest’s מִגְבַּעַת. The reason for this was that it was linked—unlike the latter item of dress—with royal headgear by means of parallelism between the מִצְנֶפֶת and the royal crown or עֲטָרָה (Ezek 21:26; cf. Isa 62:3; Sir 45:12).²⁷² Furthermore, Greek texts associate a “crown”

²⁶⁸Ezekiel the priest (Ezek 1:3) was to put on his פִּאֵר when his wife died (24:17), but it is unlikely that this was dress worn in the role of priest, since he was not serving in the temple; other exiles were to follow his example with their identical headgear (24:23). On the non-priestly use of this term elsewhere, see Isa 3:20; 61:3, 10. Cf. Platt, who mistakenly identifies the פִּאֵר in Exod 39:28 of the common priests as that which the high priest also wore (“Jewelry, Ancient Israelite,” 3:831).

²⁶⁹This word occurs in a number of places in the OT (Lev 13:59; Deut 22:11; Josh 2:6; Judg 15:14; Prov 31:13; Isa 19:9; Jer 13:1; Ezek 40:3; 44:17-18; Hos 2:5, 9), often referring to the flax out of which linen was made.

²⁷⁰So, e.g., Ahearn-Kroll, “LXX/OG Zechariah 1-6,” 182.

²⁷¹VanderKam lists the turban as one of the four unique dress elements of the high priest (“Joshua the High Priest,” 161).

²⁷²So Haran, *Temples and Temple-Service*, 170.

(στέφανος²⁷³) with the turban of the high priest.²⁷⁴

By the time of Josephus, the same Greek term came to describe both the headgear of the high priest and the common priests. In *A.J.* 3.157 Josephus transliterates מִצְנֵפֶת to describe the headgear of the common priests (μασναεφθης).²⁷⁵ Furthermore, the description of the high priest's headgear had become quite elaborate. Josephus provides a lengthy, botanically related description that describes the headgear in relation to a number of plants (*A.J.* 3.172-78), which I will not attempt to discuss at any length in this study. There he states that over the ordinary turban (πίλλος) that the common priests wore (cf. *A.J.* 3.157, 172), the high priest wore a second turban, embroidered in hyacinth (i.e., bluish purple). Encircling this second turban of the high priest's headgear was a third piece of headgear—a golden, three-tiered crown, which itself had a golden calyx on top similar to the petaled crown of a flower known by the

²⁷³On this term, see Walter Grundmann, “στέφανος,” *TDNT* (1971), 7:615-36; and Stevenson, “Conceptual Background,” 257-72.

²⁷⁴The LXX of Sir 45:12, for example, reads στέφανον χρυσοῦν ἐπάνω κιδάρεως, referring to the “golden crown on [the] turban” of the high priest. See Ahearne-Kroll, “LXX/OG Zechariah 1-6,” 191. Cf. also *Let. Aris.* 98, where it is a μίτρα on the turban of the high priest. On the interchangeability of the terms κίδαρις and μίτρα in the LXX to describe the high priest's turban, see the discussion in Ahearne-Kroll, “LXX/OG Zechariah 1-6,” 182. She suggests that the Greek manuscripts associated the commissioning of Joshua in Zech 3 with the ordination of Aaron in Lev 8 (*ibid.*, 183).

While the high priest Jonathan wears a purple robe and a golden crown (στέφανον χρυσοῦν) in 1 Macc 10:20, this apparel appears to be different from his occupational regalia, since King Alexander Balas sent them to him. But cf. Kooij, “The Septuagint of Ezekiel,” 49, who also suggests that LXX Isa 22:17 and Ezek 21:25-27 indicate the use of this Greek term for the high priest (*ibid.*, 46-51).

²⁷⁵See the discussion in Robert Hayward, “St Jerome,” 92.

Greeks as the deadly “black henbane” (*hyoscyamus niger*).²⁷⁶

What does material from Josephus indicate? It first demonstrates that there was a later merging of terminology with regard to the dress items of the common priests and the high priest. Furthermore, there was also an elaborate development in fabrication of high priestly dress items over the centuries since the time described by reference to the high priest’s headgear in the Pentateuch. Not only is the “what” of the high priestly dress important, the “when” is often crucial to determine as well.

The Head Ornament

Finally, the last distinguishable article of ritual dress that was restricted to the use of the high priest was the צִיץ.²⁷⁷ Translators have used a number of other terms in their attempts to find English equivalents for this object: “frontlet,” “plate,” “ornament,” “polished disc,” “rosette,” or “diadem” of either gold (Lev 8:9) or pure gold (Exod 28:36; 39:30). Though the high priest wore it in spatial relationship to his head and headgear, it was clearly differentiated (Exod 28:36-37; 39:30-31; Lev 8:9).

The golden head ornament in the HB was attached to the front of the high priest’s turban via a blue cord or thread (פְּתִיל תְּכֵלֶת [Exod 28:37 and 39:31]), just as the breastpiece was attached to the ephod with a blue cord (פְּתִיל תְּכֵלֶת [Exod 28:28;

²⁷⁶See Feldman, *Judean Antiquities 1-4*, 277-78, and Thackery, *Josephus: Jewish Antiquities* (LCL), 4:398-403. Cf. Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief*, 100.

²⁷⁷Exod 28:36; 39:30; Lev 8:9; Sir 40:4; 45:12. See the detailed discussion in G. Steins, “צִיץ,” *TDOT* (2003), 12:365-72. Steins believes that the term is alluded to in MT Num 17:16-26 (Eng. 17:1-11) in the discussion of the sprouting of Aaron’s rod (ibid., 12:370). He also suggests that Ps 132:18 uses the verbal form of the word (צִיץ [“to sprout, bloom”]) and uses wordplay to refer to this dress item of the high priest (ibid., 12:367).

39:21]). While the Israelites had a blue cord (פְּתִיל תְּכֵלֶת) attached to the fringes or corners of their garments (Num 15:38), nothing further associates these two items in terms of their form, and one can conclude that they were not understood as identical dress signifiers. Rather, the high priest’s cord served a utilitarian purpose by tying two objects together, while the Israelite’s blue cord hung loosely from the fringe or corner of their garment, attaching nothing.

The Hebrew term for the head ornament itself (זִיָּיִ) typically refers to flowers or to their blossoms,²⁷⁸ and some have consequently suggested that the head ornament was flower-shaped or had flowers engraved on it.²⁷⁹ The LXX, however, translated it in two ways: (1) as πέταλον (Sir 40:4), which refers to a metal leaf;²⁸⁰ and (2) as στέφανος,

²⁷⁸See 1 Kgs 6:18, 29, 32, 35; Job 14:2; Ps 103:15; Isa 28:1; 40:6, 7, 8; Jer 48:9. In most of these texts, the extant LXX translates with forms of ἄνθος (“flower”) or πέταλον (“leaf”); it is missing in 1 Kgs 6:18 and 29, and Jer 48:9 yields σμῆμα. Cf. the discussion in James Edward Hogg (“A Note on Two Points in Aaron’s Head-Dress,” *JTS* 26 [1924]: 72-74) and Steins (“זִיָּיִ,” 12:365-72). Cf. Num 17:23 (Eng. 17:8); 1 Kgs 6:18, 29, 32, 35; Job 14:2; Ps 103:15; Isa 28:1; 40:6, 7, 8. In Jer 48:9 the term is variously translated as “salt” (NIV, NRSV) or “wings” (KJV, NASB, NJB, RSV). On the ANE background to the floral symbolism, see A. de Buck, “La fleur au front du grand-prêtre,” *Oudtestamentische Studiën* 9 (1951): 18-29.

²⁷⁹Cf. de Vaux (*Ancient Israel*, 399), Rooke (*Zadok’s Heirs*, 18), and Steins (“זִיָּיִ,” 12:367). Attempts to see the head ornament referenced in Zech 3:9, where a stone with seven “eyes” is set before the high priest Joshua, while intriguing, are not compelling. Cf., e.g., Sweeney, *Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk*, 602-603; VanderKam, “Joshua the High Priest,” 168-76; and Adam S. van der Woude, “Zion as Primeval Stone in Zechariah 3 and 4,” in *Text and Context: Old Testament and Semitic Studies for F. C. Fensham*, ed. W. Claassen, JSOTSup 48 (Sheffield: JSOT, 1988): 243-45.

²⁸⁰Exod 28:36; 36:37 (MT 39:30); Lev 8:9. This term also occurs in Exod 29:6, where it translates the זָרָה; Exod 36:10 (MT 39:3), where it refers to a thin plate (פֶּתַח) of gold; and 1 Kgs 6:32 and 35, where it refers to floral decorations on the temple doors.

By the time of the Christian era, πέταλον had become recognized as a symbol of high priestly ministry (whether such ministry itself was understood literally or symbolically). Polycrates, Bishop of Ephesus in the late second century, associated this

“wreath” or “crown” (Sir 45:12). Bauckham suggests that during the Second Temple period there appear to have been two perspectives on interpreting the $\gamma\prime\prime\text{ז}$: (1) interpreting it in relation to the high priest’s overall crown;²⁸¹ and (2) interpreting it more narrowly in terms of the golden plate on which the sacred name was inscribed.²⁸²

The most extensive ancient description relative to the head ornament occurs in Josephus,²⁸³ who—unlike other Jewish and Christian writers—falls into the former camp. Intriguingly, Josephus is familiar with the term $\acute{\pi}\acute{\epsilon}\tau\alpha\lambda\omicron\nu$ but does not use it in his description of the high priest’s dress.²⁸⁴ He apparently understands this high priestly

object with the Beloved Disciple (as quoted by Eusebius of Caesarea in *Hist. eccl.* 3.31.3; 5.24.3), Epiphanius did so with James the Just (*Panarion* 29.4; 78.13-14), and a later Christian legend associated Mark with it. See the discussion in J. Vikjær Andersen, “L’apôtre Saint-Jean grand-prêtre,” *Studia Theologica* 19 (1965): 22-29; Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, 445-51; idem, “Papias and Polycrates,” 33-72, particularly 39-49 (originally published in a slightly different form in *JTS*, n.s., 44 [1993]: 24-69, particularly 31-42); Bernard, *Gospel According to St. John*, 2:595-96; Eisenman, *James the Brother of Jesus*, 256, 310-313, 322-23; 344-47, 478-79, 565-66; Gunther, “The Elder John,” 12; Rigato, “L’«apostolo ed evangelista Giovanni»,” 451-83, particularly 461-64; and Stökl Ben Ezra, *Impact of Yom Kippur*, 244-50, 256-57. See also the unique reference to the $\acute{\pi}\acute{\epsilon}\tau\alpha\lambda\omicron\nu$ ’s removal from the high priest’s head at the altar of incense on Yom Kippur in the later *Exc.* 27:1-2. On the disputed authorship and meaning of this latter reference, see Stökl Ben Ezra, *Impact of Yom Kippur*, 240-43.

²⁸¹LXX; Josephus *A.J.* 3.172-78; Philo *Mos.* 2.114-116, 132; *T. Levi* 8:9-10 (on this latter text, so Bauckham, “Papias and Polycrates,” 43).

²⁸²MT Sir 45:12 (cf. MT 40:4); *Let. Aris.* 98; Josephus *B.J.* 5.235; cf. *T. Levi* 8:2. See the discussion in Bauckham, “Papias and Polycrates,” 42-43. Cf. Stevenson, “Conceptual Background,” 257, n. 3, and 263.

²⁸³Josephus “provides a detailed description of the high priest’s headdress, with which all other briefer descriptions and allusions are entirely consistent” (Bauckham, “Papias and Polycrates,” 42). In Bauckham’s *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, however, there are slight—but significant—differences: he states that Josephus’s description is “the most detailed we have” and that the other descriptions are “quite consistent” with it (p. 445).

²⁸⁴Cf. Josephus *A.J.* 8.136; 12.73, 82.

ornament, however, in floral terms. At the end of his lengthy, floral description (A.J. 3.172-78), he states that the high priest had a *τελαμών* or “band” over his forehead bearing the tetragrammeton (A.J. 3.178).²⁸⁵

In Exod 39:30 and Lev 8:9 one finds *קִרְיָט* associated with the term *קִרְיָט* (typically translated as “crown/diadem” or “consecration/separation”).²⁸⁶ While this could refer to

²⁸⁵Bauckham’s remark that “Josephus seems to have taken it [the *קִרְיָט*] to refer to the whole of the golden crown, which had the shape of a flower” (*Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, 445) does not appear totally correct, since Josephus himself states that only the top part was shaped like a calyx. Bauckham’s earlier statement on this, however (“Josephus, with his elaborate explanation of how the crown has the shape of a flower, seems dependent on a tradition that understood the *קִרְיָט* to be the whole crown” [“Papias and Polycrates,” 42]), is more cautious and rings truer. Cf. Feldman, *Judean Antiquities 1-4*, 278, n. 468.

²⁸⁶Cf. *קִרְיָט* in Exod 29:6; Lev 21:12; Num 6:7. In Exod 39:30 and Lev 8:9, the two terms are apparently identified. For the term referring to a royal crown, cf. 2 Sam 1:10; 2 Kgs 11:12; 2 Chr 23:11; Pss 89:39; 132:18; Prov 27:24; Zech 9:16. Cf. the discussion in, e.g., Rooke, *Zadok’s Heirs*, 18, and Steins, “*קִרְיָט*,” 12:369. De Vaux denies that the term “diadem” is an adequate translation, since the shape of the *קִרְיָט* dress item is clearly floral (*Ancient Israel*, 399, 465). Propp indicates that the etymology of *קִרְיָט* is still unclear (*Exodus 19-40*, 456). Notice the use of this term with the shaved hair of “the Nazirite” (*הַנְּזִירִי*) in Num 6:13, 18, 19, 20, 21 (cf. Jer 7:29).

Uncial M translates the term as *στέφανον* in Lev 8:9 (see John William Wevers, *Leviticus*, Septuaginta: Vetus Testamentum Graecum, vol. 2/2 [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986], 101). Martha Himmelfarb states that Sirach’s reference to Aaron’s high priestly dress follows that of Exodus, but with reference to the golden crown (*στέφανον χρυσοῦν*) in Sir 45:12, “the crown is ben Sira’s own contribution” (*A Kingdom of Priests: Ancestry and Merit in Ancient Judaism*, Jewish Culture and Contexts [Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006], 35). This is a strange remark, in that the Hebrew uses a word that is translated in some contexts as “crown.” Furthermore, a silver and gold crown is made for the high priest Joshua in Zech 6:11 (in the LXX, two crowns; in the MT, one crown, apparently of both silver and gold; for the interpretation that this crown is symbolic of the temple and its reconstruction and thus not any kind of literal, high priestly dress, see Rooke, *Zadok’s Heirs*, 146-49). Himmelfarb asserts (*Kingdom of Priests*, 35) that the “golden crown” imagery is drawn from Ps 21:4, but that text is in error; it should be 21:3 (LXX 20:4). In any case the terminology there (*στέφανον ἐκ λίθου τιμίου* [“crown of precious stone”]) does not match Sir 45:12.

a “head ornament of the crown,”²⁸⁷ it could also indicate that the head ornament was considered a holy or sacred sign or emblem of consecration. Leviticus 21:12 suggests that there was no literal or separate crown whatsoever; the reference to the “crown/consecration, oil, anointing of his God on him” (נִזְרֹתַי שְׁמֵן מִשְׁחַת אֱלֹהָיו עָלָיו) instead indicates that the anointing oil was considered a symbol of consecration.²⁸⁸

Thus, it is likely that the head ornament was also so considered.

The golden head ornament was similar to the two gems of the shoulder-pieces of the ephod and the twelve gems and precious stones of the breastpiece in that it bore seal-like engravings (פְּתֻיֵי הַתָּם [Exod 28:36; 39:30]). But rather than being inscribed with tribal names, the golden head ornament was instead engraved with the inscription “Holy to YHWH” (קֹדֶשׁ לַיהוָה).²⁸⁹ Later Hellenistic writers, however, described it as

LXX terminology for נִזְרֹתַי in reference to the dress is varied: ἁγίασμα (“holiness”: Ps 88:40 [MT 89:39]; 131:18 [MT 132:18]); ἀφόρισμα? (“that which is set apart”: Exod 36:37 [MT 39:30]); βασιλείον (“tiara, crown”: 2 Sam 1:10; 2 Chr 23:11); καθηγιασμένον (“consecrated/dedicated”: Lev 8:9); νεζερ (transliterated; 2 Kgs 11:12 [parallel to 2 Chr 23:11]); πέταλον (Exod 29:6); no reference (Prov 27:24; Zech 9:16). On these definitions, cf. LEH and LSJ.

²⁸⁷Exod 39:30: אֶת־צִיץ נִזְרֹתַי־הַקֹּדֶשׁ זָהָב טָהוֹר (“the head ornament of the holy crown [out of] pure gold”); Lev 8:9: אֶת צִיץ הַזָּהָב הַנִּזְרֹתַי־הַקֹּדֶשׁ (“the golden head ornament, the holy crown”). But the term can also refer to one’s hair (Jer 7:29) or to separation/consecration, and one typically finds this latter meaning in reference to the “Nazirites” (Num 6:4-5, 7-9, 12-13, 18-19, 21), who were not to cut their hair (Num 6:5). Furthermore, the symbol of a Nazirite’s consecration was on his head (Num 6:7).

²⁸⁸The holy anointing oil was poured on the high priest’s head after the נִזְרֹתַי had been placed on his mitre (Exod 29:6-7 and Lev 8:9, 12; cf. 21:10).

²⁸⁹Exod 28:36; 39:30.

being engraved with apparently nothing but the sacred name or tetragrammaton.²⁹⁰

The golden head ornament was to be always (תְּנִיף) on the high priest's forehead (Exod 28:38), but he did not wear this when he entered the Most Holy Place on Yom Kippur.²⁹¹ In this text the purpose of the תְּנִיף is so that "Aaron shall take on himself any guilt incurred in the holy offering that the Israelites consecrate as their sacred donations; it shall always be on his forehead, in order that they may find favor before the LORD" (NRSV).²⁹² Despite the fact that the high priest did not wear it when he entered the Most Holy Place on Yom Kippur, Second Temple writers considered the πέταλον to be the most important item of the high priest's dress; it climaxed the description of the high priest's dress in Aristeas, Ben Sira, and Josephus.²⁹³ Furthermore, Josephus mentions

²⁹⁰Wis 18:24; Josephus *A.J.* 3.178, 187 and *B.J.* 5.235; *Let. Aris.* 98; Philo *Mos.* 2.114-15, 132 (cf. *QE* 2.122). See the discussion in, e.g., F. C. Burkitt, "A Further Note on Aaron's Head-Dress," *JTS* 26 (1924): 180; Hogg, "Note on Two Points," 72-75; idem, "The Inscription on Aaron's Head-Dress," *JTS* 28 (1927): 287-88; Pelletier, *Lettre d'Aristée*, 151-52, n. 4; and James R. Royse, "Philo, ΚΥΠΙΟΣ, and the Tetragrammaton," *SPhilo* 3 (1991): 178-83. Fletcher-Louis remarks that "this Name is a prominent feature of the high priest's garb in post-biblical descriptions" ("Alexander the Great's Worship," 87). Cf. Kim, "Dream of Alexander," 437-38. On rabbinic discussions regarding this dress item, cf. *b. Sanh.* 12b; *b. Šabb.* 63b; *b. Sukkah* 5a.

²⁹¹See *Exc.* 27:1-2: the πέταλον was removed on Yom Kippur at the altar of incense. Cf. *b. Yoma* 31b-32b on the stripping of the "golden garments" before entry into the Most Holy Place.

²⁹²Notice its rare use in *Prot. Jam.* 5:1 as an oracle in determining the presence of sin in Joachim's life when he goes up to the temple to offer his gifts (versification according to Ronald Hock, *The Infancy Gospels of James and Thomas: With Introduction, Notes, and Original Text Featuring the NEW Scholars Version Translation*, The Scholars Bible 2 [Santa Rosa, CA: Polebridge, 1995]). See also the story in *b. Qidd.* 66a, in which King Yannai (Alexander Jannaeus) tests the Pharisees with the תְּנִיף. See the discussion in Bauckham ("Papias and Polycrates," 44-45) and VanderKam (*From Joshua to Caiaphas*, 298-301).

²⁹³*Sir* 45:8-12; *Let. Aris.* 96-99; Josephus *A.J.* 3.159-78 and *B.J.* 5.231-35.

that despite the fact that Solomon had made numerous high priestly garments, the στεφάνη (he does not use the word πέταλον) upon which the name of God was written was unique and had survived unto his time (*A.J.* 8.93).²⁹⁴ Thus, to wear the head ornament was tantamount to officiating as high priest and indicated the identity function of the sacred object in defining the occupation of its wearer.²⁹⁵

Summary of the High Priest's Daily Ritual Dress

While the basic contours of the high priest's daily ritual dress are generally understood, the meaning of some dress items are still conjectural (e.g., how many sashes, the actual nature of the ephod and the Urim and the Thummim). Nevertheless, one can make a number of reasonably accurate summary statements about his dress. First, it included the basic forms of the daily dress of the regular priests. Second, it was more complex and weighty than the dress of the regular priests with the addition of the "golden garments." Third, it included color: the blue, purple, and crimson yarns, not to mention the gold and precious stones, added both visual stimuli, lustre, and a breathtaking aura to the high priest's overall dress ensemble. Fourth, it frequently included mixed textiles (e.g., linen and wool) forbidden to other Israelites, further setting aside the dress of the high priest as more sacred than other priestly dress linguistically similar to his dress.

The proverbial "eight" daily ritual garments of the high priest cannot be neatly

²⁹⁴See the discussion of the climactic nature of this dress item in Bauckham, "Papias and Polycrates," 43-44.

²⁹⁵*Ibid.*, 44. Cf. modern evaluations of the ephod as noted earlier in this study.

divided into four garments that the common priests wore and four garments that the high priest uniquely wore. First, each element would not adequately fall under the definition of a garment (here, the head ornament is a clear example of one that does not consist of a garment). Second, the high priest did not technically wear four articles of dress that the common priests wore (e.g., the linguistic and conceptual differences between his and the common priests' headgear). And third, even garments that the high priest wore but the common priests did not wear were not necessarily unique to the high priest (e.g., the robe).

While the Pentateuch sets out foundational descriptions of the high priest's dress, sartorial development clearly took place over time. By the time of the Second Temple, many dress items were described differently, and some sartorial distinctions between the common priests and the high priest had been erased. Nevertheless, while high priestly dress elements were then not necessarily as distinguishable either sartorially or linguistically from those of the common priests, the one who wore the daily ritual dress of the high priest was identifiably the high priest.

Yearly Ritual Dress of the High Priest

Leviticus 16 is the only place in the HB that provides directions for the annual rites of the Yom Kippur observances, the most solemn of the sacred calendar in Israel. These directions in 16:2-34 constitute the central divine speech of Leviticus, with eighteen divine speeches on either side.²⁹⁶ It is within this central speech of the thirty-

²⁹⁶Wilfried Warning, *Literary Artistry in Leviticus*, BIS 35 (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 86 (cf. pp. 38-41).

seven divine speeches that one finds in 16:4 directions as to what dress elements the high priest was to wear on this annual observance. Only four items of dress for the high priest are listed: (1) the holy linen tunic (כְּתֹנֶת־בָּד קֹדֶשׁ); (2) the linen undergarments (וּמְכַסֵּי־בָד); (3) the linen sash (וּבְּאַבְנֵט בָּד); and (4) the linen turban (וּבְּמִצְנֶפֶת בָּד). Despite the fact that the first item is clearly described as holy, 16:4 (cf. 16:32) makes it clear that all of these were considered “sacred garments” (בְּגָדֵי־קֹדֶשׁ).²⁹⁷

Furthermore, these day-specific dress items of the high priest were crucial to the initiation and completion of the Yom Kippur rituals. Wilfried Warning asserts that “the high priestly linen vestments—a detailed description of which is given in vs. 4—constitute . . . an important prerequisite for the ritual of Yom Kippur.”²⁹⁸ In other words, the successful enactment of the high priestly rituals on Yom Kippur would be impossible without the use of the high priest’s specified liturgical dress.

Besides their sacred state, the common element in all of these garments worn by the high priest on Yom Kippur was the utilization of ordinary linen (בָּד). This is radically different from the daily ritual dress of the high priest, since that dress included dyed yarn, gold, and precious stones—none of which are mentioned in this once-a-year dress ensemble. Furthermore, nowhere in the Pentateuch is the dress of the common priest described as including a tunic of ordinary linen, although a linen “garment” and

²⁹⁷Exod 28:38 indicates that the head ornament was to be worn “on his forehead continually” (עַל־מִצְחוֹ תָמִיד). While it might appear that it was thus worn on Yom Kippur, Rooke provides convincing arguments why this should not be considered the case (“Day of Atonement,” pp. 353-54, n. 35). That תָּמִיד refers to the daily rites instead of “continually” is one of the key arguments here (ibid.).

²⁹⁸Warning, *Literary Artistry in Leviticus*, 87.

linen undergarments (מִדְּרוֹ בֵּד וּמִכְנִסֵּי־בֵּד) are mentioned in Lev 6:3 (Eng. 6:10).

Instead, the tunic of the common priest is described as fabricated from “fine linen” (שֵׁשׁ [Exod 39:27]). Sanders suggests, however, that “it is doubtful that we can distinguish *bad* in Leviticus from *shesh* in Exodus.”²⁹⁹ This is a difficult issue, since it could indicate that the high priest wore clothes on Yom Kippur that the common priests either did or did not wear.³⁰⁰

Are these four garments the only ones that the high priest wore on Yom Kippur? No. On Yom Kippur the defining dress of the high priest for a portion of that day’s ritual activities was what is found in Lev 16:4, but it remains clear that he also wore his daily ritual dress for other aspects of that day’s rituals (Lev 16:4, 23-24, 32-33).³⁰¹ While Leviticus indicates that this latter ritual dress was worn on this particular day, ancient sources indicate that these “golden garments” and the other daily dress were not worn in the Most Holy Place.³⁰²

²⁹⁹Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief*, 101; cf. pp. 98-99. Rooke, however, makes more of a distinction between the two (“Day of Atonement,” 351).

³⁰⁰According to the Mishnah, the high priest first wore his ornate regalia, and then he wore Pelusian linen from lower Egypt in the morning and Indian linen in the afternoon (*Yoma* 3.7; cf. 3.1-6). Cf. Schürer, *History*, 2:276.

³⁰¹See Roy Gane, *Cult and Character: Purification Offerings, Day of Atonement, and Theodicy* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2005), 189-90; Frank H. Gorman, Jr., *The Ideology of Ritual: Space, Time and Status in the Priestly Theology*, JSOTSup 91 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990), 90; Baruch A. Levine, *Leviticus: The Traditional Hebrew Text with the New JPS Translation*, The JPS Torah Commentary (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989), 101, 108; and Milgrom, *Leviticus 1-16*, 1016, 1046-48.

³⁰²Contra Treiyer, *Day of Atonement*, 79-94. Notice what Philo says in *Leg.* 2.56 in regard to the high priest’s entry into the Most Holy Place: οὐκ εἰσελεύσεται ἐν τῷ ποδῆρει: Philo is adamant that the high priest “does not enter into [the Most Holy

Overlooked Dress Elements of the High Priest

As I have indicated earlier in this chapter, virtually all scholarly discussions of the daily ritual dress of the high priest focus solely on the “eight garments” of the high priest. I would suggest, however, that not only should some elements of the high priest’s dress be separated from other elements (the Urim and Thummim from the breastpiece), but that there were also other, overlooked dress elements that one should associate with the high priest. These dress elements further demonstrate that the number of dress items was more than the stereotypical eight.

The Feet

The first of these dress elements focuses on the feet of the high priest. The lack

Place] with the foot-length robe.” He then calls this garment “the glorious tunic” (τὸν τῆς δόξης . . . χιτῶνα) which is left behind, and he states that without this dress item the high priest is (the same as) naked (γυμνός). See also Philo *Mut.* 43 (where he states that the linen robe is worn in the inner tabernacle [i.e., the Most Holy Place] while the polychromatic [robe] with the foot-length [skirt] is worn in the outer tabernacle [i.e., the Holy Place]), *Somn.* 1.216 (where he states that the high priest divests himself of the polychromatic garment or robe [ποικίλην ἐσθῆτα] when he enters the Most Holy Place), and *QE* 2.107. Cf. *b. Yoma* 31b-32b and the removal of the πέταλον in *Exc.* 27:1-2.

Prot. Jas. 8:6, however, appears to imply that the high priest wore the robe when he entered the Most Holy Place on a certain day other than Yom Kippur; while the specific garment is not mentioned in the Greek, the Greek refers to him “taking the twelve bells into the Most Holy Place” (λαβὼν τὸν δωδεκακώδωνα εἰς τὰ ἅγια τῶν ἁγίων; Greek text from Hock, *Infancy Gospels*, 46). These would have been the golden bells on the skirt of the high priestly robe. This note lacks credibility, since: (1) the high priest did not enter the Most Holy Place except on Yom Kippur; (2) when the high priest entered, records from Philo and Josephus indicate he did not wear this robe; (3) if the high priest did enter with the bells alone, no other extant source indicates this was a regular practice; and (4) even if the high priest, on the other hand, entered with the bells being attached to the robe, the bells themselves were not considered the most significant part of the garment, and thus it would be unusual to singularly point to them instead of the robe.

of dress on a part of the body where it would normally be expected is paradoxically dress, but in this sense a form of “negative” dress. As such, lack of clothing on one’s feet—whether it be socks, shoes, sandals, or other footwear—would be classified by grammarians of dress as an element of dress.³⁰³

In the HB there is no mention of footwear for the high priest—or for any priest—nor that they are to go about barefoot in sacred places. In fact, what remains particularly important is the absence of any mention of footgear at all in the detailed description of the high priest’s dress in Exod 28.³⁰⁴ This seemingly insignificant nonappearance nevertheless implies that there is none, since the description of various other aspects of his dress is quite detailed.

But one is not left to a potential *argumentum ex silencio* regarding this sartorial element. For one thing, the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place of the tabernacle and temple were clearly classified as holy spaces, but even the Court was understood in this basic way (Lev 6:16, 26 [MT: 6:9, 19]).³⁰⁵ For those who served in these sacred

³⁰³Cf. Hamel, *Poverty in Clothing*, 75, n. 134.

³⁰⁴Cf. Tigchelaar, “Bare Feet,” 21. Tigchelaar notes “the paucity of explicit literary references to ritual barefootedness in Biblical and Jewish texts” (ibid., 36).

³⁰⁵See the discussion in Milgrom, *Leviticus 1-16*, 392-94. Here Milgrom also notes ancient discussion over which parts of the Court were considered more holy than other parts. Cf. David P. Wright, *The Disposal of Impurity: Elimination Rites in the Bible and in Hittite and Mesopotamian Literature*, Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series 101 (Atlanta: Scholars, 1987), 232-35. Nevertheless, there was a significant distinction: the Court was not anointed with oil like the tabernacle proper, but its furniture, the laver, and the altar of burnt offering were (Lev 8:10-11; cf. Exod 29:36; 30:25-29; 40:9-11). This is why sprinkling on Yom Kippur took place on the altar of burnt offering itself (Lev 16:18-19)—not in front of it, on the ground of the Court (cf. 16:14-15). On this see Milgrom, *Leviticus 1-16*, 513-17, 1036-37. On which altar is mentioned in 16:18, see Gane, *Cult and Character*, 77; idem, *Leviticus, Numbers*, 272; Heger, *Development of Incense Cult*, 232-33, n. 140, and 233-34, n. 141.

precincts, bare feet were required (cf. Exod 3:5; Josh 5:15; Acts 7:33).³⁰⁶ Even today it is not uncommon for many religious groups—such as Karaite Jews and Samaritans in their synagogues, and Muslims when they enter a mosque—to have the custom of removing footgear upon entry into a holy site or place of worship.³⁰⁷ Consequently, the high priest ministered barefoot in these sacred arenas.

Furthermore, Eibert Tigchelaar suggests that the approach (from קרב) of the priests in the sacred places found its theological foundation in the story of Moses. Moses himself was ordered not to further approach the burning bush (again, from קרב) but instead to remove his sandals when he encountered YHWH there (Exod 3:5). Thus the priesthood approached YHWH in the sanctuary after removing footgear.³⁰⁸

³⁰⁶On rabbinic sources indicating that the high priest served barefoot or explaining religious policies prohibiting the wearing of sandals on the Temple mount, cf. the discussion in: Yaron Z. Eliav, “The Temple Mount, the Rabbis, and the Poetics of Memory,” in *God’s Mountain: The Temple Mount in Time, Place, and Memory* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005), 189-236, particularly pp. 229-30 (originally published in *HUCA* 74 [2003]: 49-112); Hamel, “Poverty in Clothing,” 75-76; D. M. Howard, Jr., “Shoe; Sandal,” *ISBE* (1988), 4:491; Haran, “Priestly Vestments,” 16:513; Edna Nahshon, “Jews and Shoes,” in *Jews and Shoes*, ed. Edna Nahshon (Oxford: Berg, 2008), 6; Ora Horn Prouser, “The Biblical Shoe: Eschewing Footwear: The Call of Moses as Biblical Archetype,” in *Jews and Shoes*, 43; Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief*, 94; Schürer, *History*, 2:294; Swartz, “Semiotics,” 63, n. 16; Tigchelaar, “Bare Feet,” 28-36; and Tvedtnes, “Priestly Clothing,” 670-71. See also Francis I. Anderson, “Feet in Ancient Times,” *Buried History* 35 (1999): 10. Hamel is one who suggests that Jesus’ command for his disciples to not take sandals with them on their mission (Matt 10:10; but cf. Mark 6:9) was because the whole land was considered like the precincts of the temple in terms of its purity (“Poverty in Clothing,” 68-69).

³⁰⁷Tigchelaar, “Bare Feet,” 17. For numerous rationales for following such a practice, cf. *ibid.*, 23; and William H. C. Propp, *Exodus 1-18: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 2 (New York: Doubleday, 1998), 200.

³⁰⁸Tigchelaar, “Bare Feet,” 21-22. Tigchelaar suggests that YHWH’s commands in Exod 3:5 “probably mean: ‘do not come closer, before you have first removed your

The barefoot nature of priestly ministry was not exclusive to the high priest; common priests were also barefoot in their ministry.³⁰⁹ This indicates that the barefoot nature of the high priest's ministry would not in and of itself identify him to others as the high priest. Thus, one could consider this element of the high priest's dress to be similar to that of wearing a tunic, since both the high priest and the common priests wore such a garment.

The Censer³¹⁰

Another element of the high priest's ritual dress is a dress tool that the high priest would on occasion hold in his hand—the censer.³¹¹ While both common priests and the high priest utilized censers at various times in the history of the priesthood, it was the high priest whose ritual role was most memorably attached to the use of the censer as a ritual tool, both in relation to his entrance into the Most Holy Place³¹² as well

sandals” (ibid., 22). Cf. Propp, *Exodus 1-18*, 192: “Surely the sense is ‘Do not approach hither *until* you have pulled your sandals. . . .’”

³⁰⁹Schürer asserts that “it may be regarded as certain that the priests officiated barefoot” (*History*, 2:294). Cf. Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief*, 94.

³¹⁰In this and the next section my canonical approach does not take into consideration developmental and conjectural reconstructions such as that by Paul Heger (*The Development of Incense Cult in Israel*, Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 245 [Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1997]).

³¹¹While some translations utilize the term “firepan” (or, “fire pan”) for this object, I prefer the more common term “censer” for the purposes of this study.

³¹²See Lev 16:12. Cf. Philo *Spec.* 1.84, where he states the high priest entered the Most Holy Place in order to offer incense.

as his daily ritual ministry at the altar of incense³¹³ in the Holy Place.

The Ritual Use of the Censer

What were the ritual parameters of the use of the censer? The HB vocabulary for censers is limited to two terms, **מִזְחָתָה** and **מִקְטָרֶת**, with the former term predominating³¹⁴ and deriving from the verb **חָתָה** (“to convey, take away, or snatch up”).³¹⁵ Haran identifies this censer as a long-handled one, as opposed to the **מִקְטָרֶת**, which he defines as an upright censer.³¹⁶ I will focus on the more prominent **מִזְחָתָה**, which had more than one ritual usage and more than one ritual locus.

In terms of ritual locus, the material out of which the **מִזְחָתָה** was made apparently qualified the primary locale in which it was used. In the HB one finds

³¹³This altar is referred to as a golden one (Exod 39:38; 40:5; 1 Chr 28:18; Heb 9:4). In Lev 4:7, however, it is referred to as the altar of sweet or fragrant incense (**קְטָרֶת הַסּוּמִים**; reference to the sweet or fragrant incense occurs in Exod 25:6; 30:7; 31:11; 35:8, 15, 28; 39:29, 38; 40:27; Lev 4:7; 16:12; Num 4:16; 2 Chr 2:4; 13:11). The heavenly counterpart of this golden altar of incense appears in Rev 8:3. Texts that simply refer to it as an altar of incense or an altar for burning incense are more frequent; cf. Exod 30:1-9, 27; 31:8; 35:15; 37:25; Lev 4:7; 1 Kgs 9:25; 1 Chr 6:49; 28:18; 2 Chr 26:16, 19; Luke 1:11.

³¹⁴For **מִזְחָתָה**, see Exod 25:38; 27:3; 37:23; 38:3; Lev 10:1; 16:12; Num 4:9, 14; 16:6, 17, 18; 17:2, 3, 4, 11 [Eng. 16:37, 38, 39, 46]; 1 Kgs 7:50; 2 Kgs 25:15; 2 Chr 4:22; Jer 52:19. The other term, **מִקְטָרֶת**, occurs in just two texts: (1) 2 Chr 26:19, in which it describes the censer used by King Uzziah in his attempt to burn incense in the temple; and (2) Ezek 8:11, in which YHWH censures the seventy idolatrous elders holding their censers. In both of these latter cases the term is used in a negative, polemical context that conveys the meaning of illegitimacy to the act.

³¹⁵Propp, *Exodus 19-40*, 404. See its usage in the context of moving fire/embers (Prov 6:27, 25:22; Isa 30:14). A more generic sense of the verb occurs in Ps 52:7.

³¹⁶Haran, *Temples and Temple-Service*, 238.

bronze censers associated with the bronze altar of burnt offering, but these are in descriptions of the tabernacle.³¹⁷ On the other hand, while there were bronze items associated with Solomon’s Temple,³¹⁸ it is apparent that the censers primarily associated with the temple proper (i.e., not the Court) were made of gold.³¹⁹ Within tabernacle descriptions one does not find any golden **מִזְבְּחֵי** clearly utilized with incense.³²⁰

There were two basic ritual usages of the **מִזְבְּחֵי**.³²¹ First, the term infrequently describes gold utensils apparently unrelated to incense; these objects are frequently (mis?)translated as “trays” and were used in association with the lampstand.³²² But how were they used with the lampstand? Propp briefly but compellingly suggests that they were used to convey fiery coals for kindling flames—the flames here being in the lamps of the lampstands—although he does not absolutely rule out their use with incense.³²³

³¹⁷Exod 27:3; 38:3; Num 4:14.

³¹⁸E.g., 1 Kgs 7:14-16, 27, 30, 38, 45; 2 Kgs 25:13-17; etc.

³¹⁹1 Kgs 7:50; 2 Chr 4:22; cf. 2 Kgs 25:15; Jer 52:19. Victor Avigdor Hurowitz and Carol Meyers are two who question whether the censers mentioned in Jer 52:19 were used in association with the altar of incense in Solomon’s Temple. See Hurowitz, “Solomon’s Golden Vessels (1 Kings 7:48-50) and the Cult of the First Temple,” in *Pomegranates and Golden Bells*, 151-64; and Meyers, “Realms of Sanctity: The Case of the ‘Misplaced’ Incense Altar in the Tabernacle Texts of Exodus,” in *Texts, Temples, and Traditions: A Tribute to Menahem Haran*, ed. Michael V. Fox et al. (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1996), 41 and 42.

³²⁰“The surprising aspect of the firepans is . . . their absence in the tabernacle description” (Hurowitz, “Solomon’s Golden Vessels,” 158). This conclusion, of course, does not include reference to the golden **מִזְבְּחֵי** used in association with the lampstand.

³²¹See the discussion in *ibid.*

³²²See Exod 25:38; 37:23; Num 4:9. This is how translations such as the NASB, NIV, NJB, and NRSV translate the term.

³²³Cf. Propp, *Exodus 19-40*, 404, 514.

Second, mention of **מִזְבֵּחַ** more commonly occurs as an instrument for offering incense.³²⁴ Victor Avigdor Hurowitz summarizes: “In the Yom Kippur service (Lev 16:12) they serve as censers, as they do in the Nadab and Abihu story (Lev 10:1), the contest with Korah (Num 16-17), and the plague incident (Num 17).”³²⁵ Hurowitz is not entirely correct here, however, since the text he adduces for Yom Kippur (Lev 16:12) indicates that the **מִזְבֵּחַ** initially played the role of the firepan, bringing smoldering coals or embers from the altar of burnt offering into the Holy Place. It subsequently took on the role of the censer once inside the Most Holy Place, since it was there that the incense was poured onto the smoldering coals on the firepan (16:13).

The role of the **מִזְבֵּחַ** in relation to the ritual use of incense was thus not singular: When the censers were not being used to burn incense, they carried coal and were thus equivalent in function to firepans. As on Yom Kippur, the **מִזְבֵּחַ** carried out this role in association with no other article of sanctuary furniture. But on most other occasions this role as firepan was accomplished as an accessory to the altar of incense. This understanding is, however, only implicit in the HB, since it never explicitly associates such firepans with the altar of incense.³²⁶ It is extrabiblical texts that indicate

³²⁴Exod 27:3; 38:3; Lev 10:1; 16:12; Num 4:14; 16:6, 17-18; 17:2-4, 11; 1 Kgs 7:50; 2 Kgs 25:15; 2 Chr 4:22; Jer 52:19.

³²⁵Hurowitz, “Solomon’s Golden Vessels,” 158. The censers were not the only implements utilized for burning incense, however, since incense was also burned on the altar of incense (ibid.).

³²⁶Ibid.

that gold firepans brought coal or fire from outside into the temple.³²⁷ Hurowitz concludes: “At the very least, the later sources show that in order to offer incense on the inner altar, firepans would have been necessary.”³²⁸

The Censer as Ritual Dress Tool

At least three texts identify the censer as an element of dress used on important occasions in the ritual life of the Israelites. First, on Yom Kippur the high priest brought a “censer full of burning coals of fire” (מִלֵּאֵי הַמִּזְבֵּחַתָּה גִּזְלֵי־אֵשׁ [Lev 16:12]) from the altar of burnt offering into the Most Holy Place of the sanctuary, after which he would place the incense upon the firepan, causing it to billow up in fragrant smoke. The fragrant cloud of smoky incense that arose covered the “golden slab”³²⁹ (הַכַּפֹּרֶת [16:13]) attached to the top of the ark of the covenant, and it ultimately shielded him from the presence of YHWH. The high priest could not enter the Most Holy Place unless he carried the censer along with the incense.

According to Vicary’s analysis, the censer would thus be classified as a dress tool, part of an overall dress ensemble that would help communicate identity along with other elements of the ensemble.³³⁰ While the censer was clearly a ritual instrument or

³²⁷Cf. 11QT^a III, 12-13; *m. Yoma* 4:4; and the discussion in Hurowitz, “Solomon’s Golden Vessels,” 158.

³²⁸*Ibid.*

³²⁹So Gane, *Leviticus, Numbers*, 272.

³³⁰Vicary’s examples of dress tools (“knives, combs, mirrors, scissors, pens, toothpicks, fans”) are apparently comprised of what one typically holds primarily in one’s hand (“Signs of Clothing,” 293-94). On the difference between dress tools and dress equipment, see *ibid.*

tool, that fact does not negate the validity of seeing it as a part of the high priest's dress ensemble on certain occasions. It is true that the high priest did not carry a censer with him at all times, but dress classification does not depend on permanency.³³¹ And while classification of an object as a dress tool does not indicate that that particular object is required to be carried or held in one's hand,³³² on Yom Kippur the censer was ritually required to be carried by the high priest in his hand. Thus it is legitimate to view the censer as a crucial dress tool ritually utilized by the high priest on the most solemn observance of the Israelites each year.

Later Jewish traditions also understood the censer as a dress tool, but here in terms of ritual actions not on Yom Kippur. In Wis 18:21-22 the author refers to the dramatic story in which Aaron ran through the camp of the Israelites with a censer and made atonement for them (Num 16:46-47 [MT 17:11-12]). The language is overtly martial, comparing the use of incense with the use of a weapon: Aaron "fought in front with the weapon of his own ministry, prayer and atoning incense" (προεμάχησεν³³³ τὸ τῆς ἰδίας λειτουργίας ὄπλον³³⁴ προσευχὴν καὶ θυμιάματος ἔξιλασμὸν [18:21]).

³³¹For instance, one's eyeglasses may communicate personal or social identity, but this does not imply that one must wear them at all times for this dress classification to be valid.

³³²Numerous items of dress are not required to be worn or associated with a person, but they nevertheless communicate identity when seen. For example, there was no requirement for Sherlock Holmes to wear either the deerstalker cap, caped traveling coat, or the smoking pipe, but their combination communicates his personal identity.

³³³προμαχέω is a *hapax legomenon* in the LXX and can be translated as "fighting in front" or "fighting as one's champion." See LSJ, s.v. "προμαχέω."

³³⁴In the LXX ὄπλον refers to a weapon that translates the Hebrew terms for a shield (1 Kgs 10:17; 14:26-27; Jer 26:9; Pss 5:13; 90:4) or a spear (Nah 3:3; Hab 3:11). In the plural it is more generic, referring to arms, armor, or weapons (cf. 1 Sam 17:7; 2

Thus, he withstood (or, confronted [ἀντέστη])³³⁵ the wrath (τῶ θυμῶ), ultimately conquering it not through the use of the typical “weapons of force” (ὀπλων ἐνεργεία) but through the use of the weapon of his word (λόγῳ)—prayer (symbolized by the incense)³³⁶—comprised of appeals to the oaths and covenants given to his ancestors (18:22). The use of martial imagery here, in particular, weaponry that would have been considered part of one’s dress ensemble,³³⁷ underscores the idea that the incense could be understood as an item of dress as well. While this text in Wis 18 does not refer to the censer per se, that dress tool can be implicitly understood via a metonymic reference to the incense.

What is furthermore significant in this text from Wisdom is that the use of the incense (in the censer) in defeating the enemy is parallel to three dress elements to which the Destroyer (ὁ ὀλεθρεύων) yielded in fear (18:25). These three dress elements (18:24) were: (1) Aaron’s foot-length garment, in which the whole world was depicted

Kgs 10:2; 2 Chr 21:3; 23:9-10; 32:5; Neh 4:11; Jdt 6:12; 14:11; Wis 18:22; 1 Macc 1:35; 5:43; 6:2, etc.; cf. John 18:3; Rom 13:12; 2 Cor 6:7; 10:4). In non-biblical Greek it can also refer to a tool or implement, e.g., rope or cable (Homer *Od.* 14.346, 21.390), ship’s tackling (Homer *Od.* 2.430), blacksmith’s tools (Homer *Il.* 18.409, 412), etc. See LSJ, s.v. “ὄπλον.” Weapons were, of course, tools or implements of warfare.

³³⁵For ἀντίστημι in a martial context, see, e.g., the following texts in the LXX: Lev 26:37; Deut 7:24; 9:2; 11:25; 25:18; 28:7; Josh 1:5; 7:13; 23:9; Judg 2:14; 2 Chr 20:6, 12; Esth 9:1; Dan 11:15-16 (OG); Jdt 2:25; 6:4; 11:18; 1 Macc 6:4; 8:11; 11:38; Wis 11:3; Sir 46:6; etc.

³³⁶Cf. Ps 141:2 (LXX 140:2); Jdt 9:1; Rev 5:8; 8:3-5.

³³⁷On weaponry as part of one’s dress ensemble, see 1 Sam 18:4. For instance, one would “gird” (ἰσθῆμι) on various types of clothing (e.g., sashes [Exod 29:9; Lev 8:7, 13; 16:4]; a linen ephod [1 Sam 2:18; 2 Sam 6:14]; sackcloth [2 Sam 3:31; 1 Kgs 20:32; Isa 15:3; 22:12; 32:11]) as well as weaponry and armor (Deut 1:41; 1 Sam 17:39; 25:13; 2 Sam 20:8; 21:16; 1 Kgs 20:11; 2 Kgs 3:21).

(ἐπὶ γὰρ ποδήρους ἐνδύματος ἦν ὅλος ὁ κόσμος [“for on the foot-length garment was the whole world”]); (2) the four rows of jewels on the breastpiece, engraved with the glorious names of the tribal patriarchs (πατέρων δόξαι ἐπὶ τετραστίχου λίθων γλυφῆς [“glories of the ancestors on stones of engraving, arranged in four rows”]); and (3) Aaron’s diadem, revealing the majesty of God (μεγαλωσύνη σου ἐπὶ διαδήματος κεφαλῆς αὐτοῦ [“your majesty on a diadem on your head”]). From this perspective, the censer was metonymically recognized in conjunction with the incense rising from it as a dress tool of the high priest, even as a sword would be the dress tool of a warrior.

Finally, in an encomium on the martyr Eliezar in 4 Macc 7:11, the author compares Eliezar’s defeat of his enemies in death (7:4) to this same story of Aaron, whom the author describes as being “armed with the censer” (τῷ θυμιατηρίῳ καθωπλισμένος [7:11]). In this text the emphasis is not—as in Wis 18:24—on the incense but on the censer which held the incense. Yet the martial idea is the same as in the latter text.³³⁸ Instead of being armed with a sword or a spear, Eliezar was armed with the censer. According to this text, the censer-as-weapon was crucial enough that Aaron ultimately “conquered the fiery angel” (τὸν ἐμπυριστὴν ἐνίκησεν ἄγγελον).³³⁹ Consequently, in this verse—as well as in the previous two texts mentioned—it remains evident that the censer was understood by the ancients as a dress tool used in spiritual

³³⁸The term καθοπλίζω in 4 Macc 7:11 is a term frequently found in martial contexts, used to describe a person, group, or animate force armed for battle. Cf. Jer 46:9; 2 Macc 4:40; 15:11 (here, symbolically armed, but described in contrast to military armor); 3 Macc 5:38 (here, elephants); 4 Macc 3:12; 4:10; Luke 11:21. Cf. 4 Macc 11:22 and 13:16, where the martial imagery is primarily symbolic.

³³⁹The implicit story here is presumably the same one connected with the revolt of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram (cf. Num 16:46-47).

battle. In the arena of spiritual conflict, the high priest did not wield the dress tool of a sword but rather that of an incense-bearing censer.

The Censer's Association with the High Priest

But was the censer as a ritual dress tool seen only in association with the high priest? No. The HB tabernacle narratives, however, focus on Aaron, the high priest, as the one who was allowed to minister within the Holy Place. While other priests could serve at the altar of burnt offering and in other areas of the courtyard, the only person these narratives mention who ritually entered the tabernacle proper was the high priest. For instance, in the initial description of the altar of incense in Exod 30:1-10, Aaron was designated as the one who would burn incense on it when he tended the lamps every morning and evening (Exod 30:7-8). On the basis of this, Rooke asserts that

the duties in question are burning incense on the incense altar and trimming the Tabernacle lamps (Exod. 30.1-10); arranging the shewbread each Sabbath (Lev. 24.5-9); atoning for his own sin or for that of the whole community where necessary (Lev. 4.1-21); and officiating on Yom Kippur (Lev. 16). The other priests serve the altar outside in the courtyard, but do not enter the Tabernacle itself.³⁴⁰

But Rooke is not alone in her conclusion that the ministry of offering incense on the golden altar of incense was a rite reserved for the high priest.³⁴¹ For instance, Jacob

³⁴⁰Rooke, "Kingship as Priesthood," 200. Cf. idem, "The Day of Atonement," 345, 350.

³⁴¹Cf. also, e.g., Pancratius C. Beentjes, "'They Saw That His Forehead Was Leprous' (2 Chr 26:20): The Chronicler's Narrative on Uzziah's Leprosy," in *Purity and Holiness: The Heritage of Leviticus*, ed. M. J. H. M. Poorthuis and J. Schwartz (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 70; Nigel Groom, *Frankincense and Myrrh: A Study of the Arabian Incense Trade* (London: Longman; Beirut: Librairie du Liban, 1981), 4; Haran, "Complex of Ritual Acts," 274, 298-89; idem, "Priestly Image," 221; idem, *Temples and Temple-Service*, 181, 243-244; Heger, *Development of Incense Cult*, 81-83; and Rivka Nir, "The Aromatic Fragrances of Paradise in the *Greek Life of Adam and Eve*

Milgrom, in comparing the high priest to the common priests, stated that the ordinary priest “may not officiate inside the Tent but only on the altar,”³⁴² and Sara Japhet asserted that the rite of offering incense on the altar of incense was “the most exclusive priestly function”³⁴³—one that naturally fell to the high priest.³⁴⁴

While the overriding model in the tabernacle narratives for the use of the censer and incense, despite infractions and attempts to change it,³⁴⁵ revolved around “Aaron, the priest,”³⁴⁶ one cannot make the case that the censer was uniquely associated with the high priest throughout the history of the priesthood.³⁴⁷ The possibility of high priestly

and the Christian Origin of the Composition,” *NovT* 46 (2004): 23. For others who disagree with this interpretation, cf., e.g., William Johnstone, *2 Chronicles 10-36: Guilt and Atonement*, vol. 2 of *1 and 2 Chronicles*, JSOTSup 254 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 167. For those whose argumentation is more nuanced and thus less absolute, see, e.g., Julian Morgenstern, “Amos Studies II: The Sin of Uzziah, the Festival of Jerobeam and the Date of Amos,” *HUCA* 12 (1937): 4.

³⁴²Milgrom, *Leviticus 1-16*, 549.

³⁴³Sara Japhet, *1 & 2 Chronicles: A Commentary*, OTL (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1993), 884.

³⁴⁴This connection between the high priest and the tabernacle proper is also underscored by the fact that two articles exclusive to the high priest’s dress—the ephod and the breastpiece—were made out of the same material (אֲשֵׁרֶת) as the veil of the tabernacle (Exod 26:1, 31; 28:6, 15; 36:35; 39:3, 8). Cf. Rooke, “Day of Atonement,” 350; idem, “Kingship as Priesthood,” 200; and Treiyer, *Day of Atonement*, 86-90.

³⁴⁵Note the stories of Aaron’s two sons Nadab and Abihu in Lev 10:1-2. Also, after the rebellion of Korah against Aaron (cf. Num 16:3, 5, 7, 11), the role of offering incense was explicitly restricted to the “descendants of Aaron” (בְּנֵי אַהֲרֹן) [Num 16:40]. The two-day, two-part rebellion that began with censers being utilized by many (16:1, 6) approaches its conclusion with the censer being utilized only by Aaron (16:46-48 [MT/LXX 17:11-13]).

³⁴⁶Aaron is so described in, e.g., Exod 31:10; Lev 7:34; Num 18:28.

³⁴⁷See, e.g., Schürer, *History*, 2:302: “It was the daily duty of the priests to attend to the altar of incense and the candelabrum inside the Temple” (cf. *ibid.*, 2:305-306).

impurity and the need for a substitute to perform rituals³⁴⁸ and the priestly defense against King Uzziah attempting to burn incense on the altar³⁴⁹ certainly raise questions

Cf. Heger, *Development of Incense Cult*, 67-68, 83, n. 74, and 240-41.

³⁴⁸See, e.g., Lev 21.

³⁴⁹In 2 Chr 26:16-18 King Uzziah attempted to burn incense on the altar of incense. But the priest Azariah (“We have no information whatsoever about the chief priest Azariah in 2 Chr 26:17-20” [Beentjes, “His Forehead Was Leprous,” 65]) and eighty other priests quickly confronted him and insisted that the king could not burn incense. Instead of a royal personage being allowed to take on this responsibility, this role was reserved “for the priests, the sons of Aaron, who are consecrated to burn incense” (לְכֹהֲנַיִם בְּנֵי־אַהֲרֹן הַמְקַדְּשִׁים לְהַקְטִיר) [2 Chr 26:18]). At first glance this response indicates that the incense ritual was not restricted to the high priesthood but rather available to all priests.

The term “sons of Aaron” (e.g., Exod 28:1; Lev 1:5, 7-8, 11; Num 3:2-3; Josh 21:4, 10, 13, 19; 1 Chr 6:3, 35, 50, 54, 57; 2 Chr 13:9-10; Neh 12:47), however, does not necessarily mean any descendants of Aaron. This terminology sometimes clearly refers only to the high priestly successors of Aaron (cf. Exod 28:4; 29:29; 1 Chr 6:50-53 [MT 6:35-38]). On the interpretation of the phrase “sons of Aaron” in the latter text, see the discussion in James T. Sparks, *The Chronicler’s Genealogies: Towards an Understanding of 1 Chronicles 1-9*, Academia Biblica 28 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2008), 63-83, 107-22. Cf. also Sir 45:13 and 45:24, where reference to descendants means high priestly successors. Notice the similar understanding of sonship referring to royal successors of King David in 2 Chr 13:5.

This demonstrates that when reference is made to the use of a censer by the “sons of Aaron,” one cannot automatically assume that this includes all of the priests. From the standpoint of Exodus and Numbers, it would appear more reasonable to see it instead as a reference to the high priest and his successors (so Haran, “Ritual Acts,” 274-79, 298-99; idem, *Temples and Temple-Service*, 206-21, 226-27; and Rooke, *Zadok’s Heirs*, 21-22). Consequently, one must conclude that 2 Chr 26:18 does not necessarily demand that common priests used the censer.

It is unlikely that King Uzziah was taking on the role of a common priest in his rebellious act (cf. Morgenstern, “Amos Studies II,” 6, n. 8). It would appear, rather, that he was attempting to take on the role of the high priest in offering incense at the altar. On this, cf. Johnstone, *2 Chronicles 10-36*, 168-69. Consequently, Uzziah may have transgressed a high priestly ritual when he attempted to offer incense. Steven James Schweitzer, while noting that Chronicles does not identify offering incense as an explicit high priestly privilege, observes that the same word used in association with the high priest’s engraved golden ornament (i.e., his forehead: מִצְחָ [Exod 28:38]) is also used in 2 Chr 26:19-20 to locate the leprosy that developed on Uzziah (“The High Priest in Chronicles: An Anomaly in a Detailed Description of the Temple Cult,” *Bib* 84

about the exclusive ministry of the high priest in the Holy Place. But at least two pieces of data explicitly point away from the exclusive ministry of the high priest in the Holy Place before the time of Jesus: (1) in 2 Chr 13:9-11 King Abijah indicated that the priests who are descendants of Aaron (אֲתֶּבְנֵי אֶהְרֹן [13:9]; בְּנֵי אֶהְרֹן [13:10]) do ministry in the Holy Place by setting out the bread on the golden table and by caring for the golden lampstand;³⁵⁰ and (2) Philo noted that the ordinary or common priests had been delegated the responsibility of tending the lampstand because of the indolence and

[2003]: 396). But he indicates that this connection is not absolute since the same word is used in association with non-priestly persons (*ibid.*, n. 22). Cf. Beentjes (“His Forehead Was Leprous,” 67), Johnstone (*2 Chronicles 10-36*, 169), and Rooke (“Day of Atonement,” 359). Whether or not the linguistic connection with the term “forehead” is indicative of high priestly motifs, one can still make the argument from a thematic standpoint: “Uzziah is permanently invalidated as the community’s chief mediator, since he has the sign not of holiness but of defilement on his forehead” (*ibid.*).

Josephus’s version of the story (*A.J.* 9.222-225a) further muddies the waters. He indicates in 9.223 that the infraction took place “on the occasion of a notable day which was a public festival (ἐνστάσης δ’ ἡμέρας ἐπισήμου καὶ πάνδημον ἑορτὴν ἐχούσης)” and furthermore that Uzziah “put on the priestly garment (ἐνδύς ἱερατικὴν στολήν).” Christopher T. Begg observes that there are a number of parallels between this story and Josephus’s version of the story of Jeroboam I (“Uzziah [Azariah] of Judah According to Josephus,” *Estudios bíblicos* 53 [1995]:15-16). For instance, Jeroboam’s sacrifice also took place at a festival (*A.J.* 8.230), and while Uzziah put on the priestly garment, Jeroboam made himself a high priest (*ibid.*). While the “priestly garment” Uzziah puts on does not appear to be uniquely high priestly in nature (cf. 1 Esd 4:54 [ἱερατικὴν στολήν]; 5:44 [στολὰς ἱερατικὰς]; 2 Macc 3:15 [ἱερατικαῖς στολαῖς]), if it were worn on Yom Kippur, the high priest would be wearing the equivalent of the garment of the common priest. While Yom Kippur was considered a sacred time and a solemn assembly (מוֹעֵד), cf. texts in which the LXX writes ἑορτῆς (“festival/feast”) when the MT reads מוֹעֵד (“appointed time, fixed day”), e.g., Lev 23:2, 4, 37, 44 and cf. vss. 26-32.

³⁵⁰All of the references to the priesthood in Jerusalem in these three verses are plural. Abijah’s statement that King Jeroboam had driven out YHWH’s priests, the “descendants of Aaron” (13:9), indicates this is not speaking of the high priest. The second reference to the descendants or sons of Aaron (13:10) should be understood similarly, and these priests are the ones who do the ministry in the Holy Place (13:11).

negligence of the high priests (*QE* 2.105).³⁵¹

The clearest biblical example of ministry in the Holy Place by those other than the high priest remains that told in Luke 1:8-11, where a common priest named Zacharias—the future father of John the Baptist—was “chosen by lot to offer incense” (ἔλαχε τοῦ θυμιᾶσαι [Luke 1:9]) on the altar of incense (θυσιαστηρίου τοῦ θυμιάματος [1:11]).³⁵² While Luke does not mention the censer here, the implications of the narrative clearly point to its use by priests other than the high priest. That being the case, can one make a case that the censer was seen to be a dress tool typically associated with the high priest?

I would suggest that while one may not be able to make a compelling case that the censer was typically associated with the high priest, both text and ritual underscored the close association between the high priest and this dress tool. Two pieces of evidence demonstrate this assertion: (1) the iconic story of the wilderness rebellion of

³⁵¹One could also mention another text that supposedly indicates that the burning of incense was not restricted to the high priest. In 2 Chr 29:11, King Hezekiah spoke to the Levites (29:5) and stated that they had been chosen to do four things: (1) stand before YHWH; (2) to serve him; (3) to minister before him; and (4) to burn incense (וַיִּמְקְטְרוּם). The Levites certainly did not burn incense in the Holy Place of the temple, and so this text appears instead to support the use of the term קָטַר to refer more generally to burning sacrifices. Cf. Diana Edelman, “The Meaning of *QITT R*,” *VT* 35 (1985): 395-404; and Haran, *Temples and Temple-Service*, 233.

Cf. also 2 Macc 10:3, which does not necessarily refer to the common priests offering incense, since the third-person plural forms could well refer to the Jewish people as a whole.

³⁵²Cf. *m. Tam.* 3 and 5:2, and *m. Yoma* 2:4. The tradition that Zecharias was a high priest appears as early as mid- to late-second century CE (see *Prot. Jas.* 8:6-7; 10:2-9 [versification according to Hock, *Infancy Gospels*; on the dating, see *ibid.*, 11-12]), but the tradition is probably older (Stökl Ben Ezra, *Impact of Yom Kippur*, 250-51). Could this tradition have arisen from the association of the offering of incense with the role of the high priest? See *ibid.*, 252.

Korah ben-Izhar and his associates, and Aaron’s subsequent atonement for the plague resulting from the grumbling Israelites in the wilderness; and (2) the yearly ritual of the high priest entering the Most Holy Place on Yom Kippur.

The story of the rebellion of Korah ben-Izhar, Dathan ben-Eliab, Abiram ben-Eliab, and On ben-Peleth begins in Num 16:1. The text’s first two words, “And they took” (וַיִּקַּח קֹרַח), do not have a direct object, and exegetes have supplied numerous interpretations in order to fill this gap.³⁵³ The verb לִקַּח occurs seven times in this narrative,³⁵⁴ and except for the first and last occasions, it always has one or more censers as its object. The last occurrence (17:12 [Eng. 16:47]) clearly refers, in the context of the immediately preceding verse, to the censer as the direct object. Roy Gane concludes that “it appears that the lack [of a direct object] in verse 1 is an intentional literary strategy to get the reader/listener thinking about what Korah wants to take, which we find out later is the censer of Aaron that represents his high priestly function.”³⁵⁵

While the initial description of this rebellion did deal with the priesthood in general,³⁵⁶ it specifically revolved around the one who would be considered “the holy one”—that is, the one who is YHWH’s, who is holy, and who has been chosen to be the

³⁵³See the translations and commentaries.

³⁵⁴Num 16:1, 6, 17, 18; 17:4, 11, 12 (Eng. 16:39, 46, 47). The “conclusion” to the narrative (17:14-15 [Eng. 16:49-50]) details those who died from Korah’s initial rebellion and the subsequent plague.

³⁵⁵Gane, *Leviticus/Numbers*, 633. See also the fuller discussion relating the use of the censer to the high priesthood in Jonathan Magonet, “The Korah Rebellion,” *JSOT* 24 (1982): 3-25, particularly 3-4, 22-23.

³⁵⁶See the charge that the Levites wanted the priesthood (קִהְיֶה לָהֶם) in 16:10. The term refers to more than Aaron’s priestly role (cf., e.g., Exod 29:9; Num 3:10; 18:1, 7).

(high) priest (16:4-5). Consequently, Moses ordered the rebels to engage in a censer duel³⁵⁷—their censers vs. the censer of Aaron (16:6-7, 16-17).³⁵⁸ When Aaron “won” the duel, he became understood as “the holy one” and the one who was to be the (high) priest. The censer he consequently utilized would ritually and iconically represent the identity and role of the high priest as mediator and intercessor. Aaron himself used this dress tool—now identified as “the censer” (אֶת־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ [MT 16:46]; τὸ πυρεῖλον [LXX 17:11]) instead of “his censer” (מִזְבֵּחַתּוֹ; τὸ πυρεῖλον αὐτοῦ [16:17, 18])³⁵⁹—in his atoning work to stop the plague which had broken out because of the grumbling of the Israelites over the death of the rebels (17:11-13 [Eng. 16:46-48]), consequently illustrating that he truly was the chosen (high) priest. Thus, this narrative in Numbers fundamentally shows that the rightful use of the (bronze)³⁶⁰ tabernacle censer was tightly associated with the ministry of Aaron as (high) priest.

The censer adhered to the role of the high priest in another way, this one involving a sanctuary ritual that took place every year. The regulations and rituals for the most sacred day of the Israelite religious year, Yom Kippur, as found in the HB,

³⁵⁷So Gane, *Leviticus/Numbers*, 635.

³⁵⁸The indication is that the censers of the rebel crowd were their own censers and were not ones used in the cult, since they were not holy; these censers became holy only when the fire of YHWH consumed the rebels (Num 16:35-38 [LXX 16:35—17:3]).

³⁵⁹See the discussion in Raz Kletter and Irit Ziffer, “Incense-Burning Rituals: From Philistine Fire Pans at Yavneh to the Improper Fire of Korah,” *Israel Exploration Journal* 60 (2010): 180-81.

³⁶⁰The fact that afterward he returned to the entrance of the tabernacle but did not enter it implies that he took this censer from the bronze altar (*ibid.*, 181); the assumption is that it was a bronze censer.

stipulate that the high priest was to enter from the Holy Place into the Most Holy Place of the sanctuary with the censer, filled with burning coals from the altar (Lev 16:12).³⁶¹ He would then place two handfuls of incense on the censer, the billowing clouds of which would protect him from the wrath of YHWH (16:12-13).³⁶²

The censer was thus the one and only dress tool that the high priest took with him when he entered into the Most Holy Place and encountered the holy presence of YHWH. Since this particular ritual was enacted but once a year during the most sacred

³⁶¹The text does not indicate which altar this was. Meyers states that it is “possible” that this altar is the golden altar of incense, while she insists that the altar “before YHWH” six verses later in 16:18 is the golden altar of incense (“Realms of Sanctity,” 42-43). Ranko Stefanovic states that the altar in 16:12 is the altar of burnt offering and agrees that the altar in 16:18 is the golden altar of incense (“The Angel at the Altar [Revelation 8:3-5]: A Case Study on Intercalations in Revelation,” *AUSS* 44 [2006]: 81, 87). Those who believe the altar in 16:18 is the golden altar of incense are following the general rabbinic viewpoint (cf., e.g., *m. Yoma* 5:5).

But Gane disagrees and states that the altar in both 16:12 and 18 is the altar of burnt offering (*Cult and Character*, 77; idem, *Leviticus, Numbers*, 272). This is also the viewpoint of Milgrom (*Leviticus 1-16*, 1025 and 1036). See also the discussion by Heger, who indicated in 1997 that Levine’s commentary on Leviticus, in which he identified the altar in 16:18 as the incense altar (Levine, *Leviticus*, 103-105), was “contrary to all other modern scholars with whose works I am familiar, and contrary to the simple understanding of the text” (Heger, *Development of Incense Cult*, 232-33, n. 140, and 233-34, n. 141).

It is clear from the use of **צָא** (“to go out”) in both 16:17 and 18 that the high priest is going out of the Holy Place, and thus the altar in 16:18 must be the altar of burnt offering; this is the altar mentioned two verses later in 16:20. See the discussion in Gane, *Cult and Character*, 76-77.

³⁶²The Sadducees believed the incense was applied to the coals of fire at the altar of burnt offering, while the Pharisees believed that the incense could only be added once inside the Most Holy Place (*t. Yoma* 1:8; *b. Yoma* 19b; 53a; *y. Yoma* 1:5, 39a). See the discussion about this controversy in, e.g., Crispin H. T. Fletcher-Louis (“The High Priest as Divine Mediator in the Hebrew Bible: Dan 7:13 as a Test Case,” in *Society of Biblical Literature 1997 Seminar Papers*, Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers 36 [Atlanta: Scholars, 1998], 181-86) and Jacob Zallel Lauterbach (“A Significant Controversy between the Sadducees and the Pharisees,” *HUCA* 4 [1927]: 173-205).

observance of the Israelites, on this point alone the *מִזְבֵּחַ* as censer and as dress tool would have been inextricably tied to the high priest.

Incense

Another overlooked dress item, closely related to the use of the censer, is the incense itself. With regard to the significance of incense in the temple cult, Susan Ashbrook Harvey observes: “In their representations of the ideal temple and its ideal use, the biblical texts set incense among a complex of fragrances that served to demarcate sacred space, sacred action, and sacred identity.”³⁶³ Incense thus played a key role in the formulation of identity.

Incense was closely attached to rituals performed by the high priest. Just as with the censer, the sacred incense used with it remained integral to the high priest’s entrance into—and rituals within—the Most Holy Place on Yom Kippur. Thus the incense was attached to his ritualistic ministry, particularly on this most holy day of the year. Fletcher-Louis consequently concludes that the relationship between the high priesthood and incense was an “enduring association.”³⁶⁴

While on other days of the year censers could be used both within the tabernacle proper and outside in the Court, Haran advanced the idea that two different kinds of

³⁶³Susan Ashbrook Harvey, *Scenting Salvation: Ancient Christianity and the Olfactory Imagination*, *The Transformation of the Classical Heritage* 42 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 15.

³⁶⁴Fletcher-Louis, *Glory of Adam*, 365.

incense were used: one for the Court, and one for within the tabernacle proper.³⁶⁵ While the outer incense was designated as קִטְרֹת, the inner incense was designated differently, utilizing the additional term סַם (e.g., as in קִטְרֹת הַפְּנִימִים).³⁶⁶ According to Haran, the Pentateuch relegates this latter, inner incense specifically to the Holy Place (Exod 31:11), and it was to be offered by “Aaron,” that is, the high priest (Exod 30:7-8).³⁶⁷

³⁶⁵Haran, “Complex of Ritual Acts,” 276-77; idem, *Temples and Temple-Service*, 208, 241-43; idem, “The Uses of Incense in the Ancient Israelite Ritual,” *VT* 10 (1960): 113-29. Cf. Milgrom, *Leviticus 1-16*, 1025-26. But see Kjeld Nielsen, *Incense in Ancient Israel*, VTSup 38 (Leiden: Brill, 1986), 52-53, who suggests—on the basis of Exod 35:37—that קִטְרֹת by itself may indicate this “inside” incense (ibid., 53). Nielsen nevertheless mounts a series of arguments against Haran’s incense thesis (ibid., 69-71), but while I believe several of them insightful, I do not find his arguments ultimately compelling. For a more detailed and sustained critique of Haran’s thesis, see also Heger, *Development of Incense Cult*, 48-96, whose ultimate judgment is that Haran’s thesis, “without acknowledging a theory of development, is doomed to failure and cannot be sustained” (ibid., 96).

³⁶⁶The two terms occur together in Exod 25:6; 30:7; 31:11; 35:8, 15, 28; 37:29; 39:38; 40:27; Lev 4:7; 16:12; Num 4:16; 2 Chr 2:3 [Eng. 2:4]; 13:11. Exod 30:34-35 indicates that this incense was made by combining “pure frankincense” (לְבֹנָה זָכָה) with three other aromatic or pungent substances: stacte or gum resin (נֹטְףָה), onycha (שִׁחֲלֹת), and galbanum (חֶלְבֵּנָה); finally, salt was added. On frankincense, see Groom, *Frankincense and Myrrh*; and Gus W. Van Beek, “Frankincense and Myrrh,” *The Biblical Archaeologist* 23 (1960): 70-95. Milgrom asserts that frankincense was “the main ingredient burned on the inner altar” (*Leviticus 1-16*, 180). Cf. discussion in Haran, *Temples and Temple-Service*, 242-43; idem, “Uses of Incense,” 125-126; Nielsen, *Incense in Ancient Israel*, 65-66; and Propp, *Exodus 19-40*, 484-86. While English translations frequently translated this inner incense as “sweet” or “fragrant incense,” Nir concludes that it literally means “drug incense,” since it “is not made from materials known for their pleasant fragrance, but rather from strong-smelling medicinal drugs used by the physician or the apothecary (דְּרוֹקִים)” (Nir, “Aromatic Fragrances,” 23). On this, cf. Yehuda Feliks, “The Incense of the Tabernacle,” in *Pomegranates and Golden Bells*, 125-49; and Cornelis Houtman, “The Incense Offering in Its Biblical Context,” *Mid-America Journal of Theology* 7 (1991): 180-82.

³⁶⁷Haran insisted that the so-called Priestly Source (“P”) indicates that the high priest was the only person who could perform the cultic acts inside the sanctuary (*Temples and Temple Service*, 181; idem, “Uses of Incense,” 127). Cf. Heger,

Nevertheless, this was also the only incense that the high priest carried with him when he went into the Most Holy Place and into the presence of YHWH on Yom Kippur (Lev 16:12-13).³⁶⁸ For that occasion it was not offered on the altar of incense but burned in his censer once he entered the Most Holy Place in order to shield against YHWH's glory.³⁶⁹

Pentateuchal legislation assigns Aaron the role of performing ritual ministry in the tabernacle. As such, any incense would cling to his dress. Furthermore, the high priest could not enter the Most Holy Place simply on the basis of the dress mentioned in Lev 16:4. His dress ensemble included more than garments, headgear, and having bare feet. Not only the censer—but also the incense—must go with him into the presence of YHWH. I have already shown how the censer could be considered a dress tool. But in what way would incense be considered a part of the high priest's dress?

Cornelis Houtman has indicated that the function of the holy incense was part of a wider understanding of “the Israelite conception of odours, exhalations and vapors, and emanations in general.”³⁷⁰ Each person's personal odor classified him, allowed him

Development of Incense Cult, 67-68, and Nielsen, *Incense in Ancient Israel*, 69, 86.

³⁶⁸Milgrom refers to a “tripartite gradation” with regard to incense: (1) ordinary incense offered on the altar of burnt offering (cf. Lev 2:2, 15-16); (2) perfumed incense offered on the golden altar of incense (Exod 30:7; cf. Exod 30:36); and (3) perfumed incense ground “extra fine” (Lev 16:12) offered in the Most Holy Place (*Leviticus 1-16*, 1025-26). All of the incense used within the sanctuary is “sweet,” “fragrant,” or “perfumed” incense and has frankincense as its main ingredient (ibid., 180), but that of the Most Holy Place is the most refined.

³⁶⁹See Haran, *Temples and Temple-Service*, 244, and idem, “Uses of Incense,” 128.

³⁷⁰Houtman, “On the Function of the Holy Incense (Exodus XXX 34-8) and the Sacred Anointing Oil (Exodus XXX 22-33),” *VT* 42 (1992): 458.

to be identified, and indicated his social status and well-being.³⁷¹ Such odiferous emanations pervaded one's clothing and could indicate life or death, purity or impurity. Accordingly, cultic vestments were purposefully made out of material that inhibited or prevented sweating (cf. Ezek 44:18).³⁷²

All of this is socially significant for the high priest. The holy incense was exclusive to YHWH and became an expression of his personality, being pure, exquisite, and unique.³⁷³ Not only did it fill the sanctuary, it must have permeated the dress of the high priest and became identified with him.³⁷⁴ Houtman suggests that in order for the high priest to survive the presence of YHWH in the Most Holy Place, his dress purity was "not sufficient. He has to be enveloped in a protecting and screening cloud of incense (Lev. xvi 13), to prevent a collision between holiness and unholiness in case, unfortunately, any impurity still adheres to him at his meeting with YHWH."³⁷⁵

Consequently, the incense emanating from the censer that the high priest utilized as a dress tool can also be understood as a (sacred) odor or fragrance. Within the

³⁷¹Ibid., 459. Cf. Propp, *Exodus 19-40*, 514. See also Dominika A. Kurek-Chomycz, "The Fragrance of Her Perfume: The Significance of Sense Imagery in John's Account of the Anointing in Bethany," *NovT* 52 (2010): 344: "In the ancient world there was a clear relationship between one's social status and scent, hence between power and scent."

³⁷²Houtman, "On the Function," 462-63.

³⁷³Ibid., 462-63.

³⁷⁴The biblical accounts do not mention this, but that does not negate the reasonable hypothesis. Cf. Fletcher-Louis, *Glory of Adam*, 364: "A building which is constantly filled with clouds of incense does become, over time, infused with its odour. The same goes for garments whose use is reserved for ceremonies where the wearer is surrounded by incense."

³⁷⁵Houtman, "On the Function," 464.

classification scheme of Vicary, this would probably best be understood as a cosmetic.³⁷⁶ Such a dress cosmetic was comprised of a powder, oil, or perfume that produced a fragrance and adhered to one's body or dress.³⁷⁷ While the high priest did not use the incense for the purpose of it being a cosmetic, it effectively became one in a secondary sense.

As I have indicated above, at various times in the history of Israel and Judah, the high priest was the focus of legislation regarding ritual ministry in the Holy Place. During such high priestly ministry this cosmetic of inner incense thus implicitly constituted a dress item for the high priest. This helps explain the close affiliation between the incense and the high priest in LXX Sir 50:9, where the high priest emerges from the "house of the curtain" (οἴκου καταπετάσματος)" and is compared to "fire and frankincense in a censer" (πῦρ καὶ λίβανος ἐπὶ πυρείου).³⁷⁸ This comparison may

³⁷⁶Vicary, "Signs of Clothing, 294.

³⁷⁷For the use of various types of incense used as cosmetics in ancient Israel, see Nielsen, *Incense in Ancient Israel*, 89-94. Notice the warning attached to the directions about making the specially compounded tabernacle incense: One was not to use a similar kind of incense for one's personal use (Exod 30:34-38).

³⁷⁸The Hebrew of Sir 50:9 does not refer to the censer like the LXX does. Cf. the discussion in Heger, *Development of Incense Cult*, 186, n. 32, and Mulder, *Simon the High Priest*, 136-38.

For a recent, summary discussion of the question over which sacrificial offering is implied here in Ben Sira based on the locative terminology (Yom Kippur or Tamid offering), see Daniel M. Gurtner, "The 'House of the Veil' in Sirach 50," *JSP* 14 (2005): 187-200; Gurtner concludes that the Hebrew text refers to the Yom Kippur sacrifice, while the Greek does not. For an argument that denies either Yom Kippur or the Daily Whole Offering but instead posits Rosh Hashanah, see Mulder, *Simon the High Priest*, 168-75, 248-49, 332. Stökl Ben Ezra (*Impact of Yom Kippur*, 32, n. 81) suggests a "best of both worlds" approach: It might have referred to an evening Tamid offering at the end of Yom Kippur. Cf. Brutti (*Development*, 269-70), Fearghas Ó Fearghail ("Sir 50,5-21: Yom Kippur or the Daily Whole-Offering?" *Bib* 59 [1978]: 301-316), and Skehan and Di Lella (*Wisdom of Ben Sira*, 550-552).

have resulted from both visual and olfactory sensation: The polychromatic fire in the censer reflected the polychromatic sparkling of the gems in the high priest's breastpiece, while the dress of the high priest was saturated with the fragrance of incense.

Ben Sira also earlier associated incense with the high priest in a more implicit manner. Sir 24:15 describes Wisdom in terms of the components of the inner incense and three other spices. Scholars have noted numerous parallels between the description of Wisdom in this chap. and the high priest as depicted in chap. 50.³⁷⁹ Wisdom ministered in the tabernacle (24:10) even as the high priest ministered in the sanctuary. Also, the arboreal language characterizing Wisdom in 24:12-17 "is mirrored in the account of Simon [the high priest] in the very same terms in 50.8-12."³⁸⁰ Consequently, the aromatic description of Wisdom in 24:15 in terms of the various spices that constitute incense³⁸¹ finds its later reflection in the simple comparison between the high priest and fire and frankincense (πῦρ καὶ λίβανος) in 50:9. This implies that the spices that themselves constituted the sacred inner incense were ritually and theologically associated not only with Wisdom but also with the high priest.

It appears that well before the time of Jesus, however, this dress equipment and

³⁷⁹Cf. Fletcher-Louis, *Glory of Adam*, 73-81; idem, "The Cosmology of P and Theological Anthropology in the Wisdom of Jesus ben Sira," in *Ancient Versions and Translations*, vol. 1 of *Of Scribes and Sages: Early Jewish Interpretation and Transmission of Scripture*, ed. Craig A. Evans, Studies in Scripture in Early Judaism and Christianity 9, Library of Second Temple Studies 50 (London: T & T Clark, 2004), 69-113; and C. T. R. Hayward, *The Jewish Temple*, 52-53, 78.

³⁸⁰Fletcher-Louis, "Cosmology of P," 73.

³⁸¹I.e., galbanum, onycha, and stacte, as well as the smoke of frankincense (cf. LXX 24:15: λιβάνου ἄτμις—the latter word used with reference to incense in LXX Lev 16:13 and Ezek 8:11).

cosmetic would have been applicable to all priests who officiated at the golden altar of incense. Nevertheless, cultic legislation, cultic praxis, and cultic association (e.g., LXX Sir 24:15; 50:9) appear to have attached more weight to the cosmetic being associated with the role-related status of the high priest rather than that of the common priest. Thus, from the standpoint of the modern discussion of dress, it should be considered a part of high priestly dress.

Summary of Overlooked Elements

I have focused attention on some items associated with the high priest that legitimately could be considered elements of his ritual dress. While footgear is never explicitly mentioned as an element of dress for the high priest in the HB, later observers indicated that this lack of footgear was the standard. Since it was not typical to walk barefoot outside of sacred places, this would be a significant—though not unique—aspect of the high priest’s dress. The ritual use of the censer within the sanctuary, while narratively focused on the high priest in the Pentateuch if not in later years, was certainly an iconic part of his dress at that time. Finally, the associated fragrance of the special ritual incense could not but identify him as the one who “wore the garments” and had the status of high priest. It would be easy to see why these would not be considered part of the traditionally recognized “eight garments” of the high priest, since they are not garments or clothes by any stretch of the popular imagination. Nevertheless, they were aspects of his ritual dress that I suggest one should seriously consider. Augmenting the dress ensemble of the high priest with these elements would enrich our understanding of his ritual, social, and theological roles.

There may be other overlooked dress items associated with the high priest.³⁸²

Bruce Chilton, for example, describes another possibly overlooked dress element during the time of Caiaphas:

He himself removed from its special compartment his sceptered staff for his walk home. He really didn't like anyone else touching it, especially the priests who might succeed him. It was his rod and his staff, the emblem of his power, topped by a precious stone of seven facets that symbolized his capacity to remove sin by his sacrificial actions (see Zechariah 3:4-9).³⁸³

³⁸²One item that should be mentioned here, though with great caution, is the notorious "Ivory Pomegranate," which is supposedly written with the inscription, "Belonging to the Tem[ple of the Lor]d, holy to the priests." It may—or may not—have been utilized as some kind of scepter (i.e., a dress tool, held in the hand). The controversy has not abated over its authenticity since its initial scholarly presentation. Cf., e.g., Nahman Avigad, "The Inscribed Pomegranate from the 'House of the Lord,'" *Biblical Archaeologist* 53 (September 1990): 157-66; Yuval Goren et al., "A Re-examination of the Inscribed Pomegranate from the Israel Museum," *IEJ* 55 (2005): 3-20; André Lemaire, "Une inscription paléo-hébraïque sur grenade en ivoire," *Revue biblique* 88 (1981): 236-39; idem, "Probable Head of Priestly Scepter from Solomon's Temple Surfaces in Jerusalem: Name of God Incised on Ivory Pomegranate," *Biblical Archaeology Review* 10 (January-February 1984): 24-29; André Lemaire, with an appendix by Amnon Rosenfeld and Shimon Ilani, "A Re-examination of the Inscribed Pomegranate: A Rejoinder," *IEJ* 56 (2006): 167-77; Shmuel Ahituv et al., "The Inscribed Pomegranate from the Israel Museum Examined Again," *IEJ* 57 (2007): 87-95; and Biblical Archaeology Society, "Leading Israeli Scientist Declares Pomegranate Inscription Authentic: BAR Special News Report: Updated December 16, 2008," *Biblical Archaeology Review Online*, <http://www.bib-arch.org/news/news-ivory-pomegranate.asp> (accessed March 8, 2012). Several caveats are in order: (1) the use of this by the Jewish priests is unknown from ancient literature; (2) even if used by the priests, it is unknown if the high priest used it the most—if at all; and (3) it may not even be a representation of a pomegranate (see J. Andrew McDonald, "Botanical Determination of the Middle Eastern Tree of Life," *Economic Botany* 56 [2002]: 113-29, particularly 121-22, who suggests throughout his article that it is a representation of a lotus).

³⁸³Bruce Chilton, *Rabbi Jesus: An Intimate Biography*, Image Books (New York: Doubleday, 2000), 222. In *T. Levi* 8:4, as part of Levi's investiture as priest, he is anointed and then given a staff, while later in 8:8 he is given a branch of olive wood. The text combines the roles of priest, king, prophet, judge, and scribe (8:12-17), and so it is difficult to be conclusive here with some of the sartorial imagery (cf. Barker, *Great High Priest*, 128). As indicated earlier in this chapter, "this investiture deviates widely from the biblical prescriptions for priestly vestments" (Stökl Ben Ezra, *Impact of Yom*

While this is a scintillating suggestion, convincing and compelling evidence for this possible dress element remains absent.³⁸⁴

Summary and Conclusions

The Israelite high priest wore a number of ritual dress items that indicated his social status and assisted him in accomplishing his ritual duties in the sanctuary complex. These elements did not remain understood or even described in the same way over the centuries, and sometimes ancient sources and interpreters appear confused over how to describe and identify them. The situation is not necessarily better today, since scholars do not universally agree as to how to understand or classify them.

The traditional understanding of the high priest's dress is not clearcut, and biblical catalogs of high priestly ritual dress items do not necessarily list them in the same way or even list all of them. In addition, I suggest that the high priest's dress ensemble be augmented with ritual dress elements that have frequently been overlooked or ignored. In spite of this, one can basically divide these ritual dress items into those he wore during the year and those he wore once a year on Yom Kippur. In addition, one can compare and contrast both of these ritual catalogs of dress with the dress of the

Kippur, 83, n. 20). See also Barker, who concludes that *Apoc. Ab.* 11:1-4, in describing the angel Iaoel/Yaoel, refers to the "turban, robe, and staff of the high priest" (*Great High Priest*, 128). The text of *Apoc. Ab.* 11:3 does refer to a golden staff or scepter (so R. Rubinkiewicz, "Apocalypse of Abraham: A New Translation and Introduction," in *OTP*, 1:694), but the high priestly interpretation is Barker's.

³⁸⁴The rod or staff (מִזְבֵּחַ) of Levi was used to prove the priestly leadership of Aaron in the wake of a leadership revolt and was consequently kept in the Most Holy Place of the tabernacle (Num 17:1-11 [MT 17:16-26]). Intriguingly, it produced blossoms (רִיחַן רִיחַן) [17:8; MT 17:23]), and as we have seen, the head ornament of the high priest's dress was called a רִיחַן (e.g., Exod 28:36).

common priests, with some elements being identical, some similar, and others unique. At the same time, even those high priestly dress elements that were unique within the priesthood were not necessarily unique within Israelite society.

With regard to the daily ritual dress of the high priest, some items—like the ephod—were apparently fabricated of two or more elements. This underscores again the difficulty one has in ascertaining the correct meaning of terminology used in the HB. Ancient sources also seemed to move with ease in identifying or substituting, in varying ways, other dress elements; the fluidity in describing aspects of the robe, the ephod, and breastpiece in Philo, for example, illustrates this well and suggests that metonymy and synecdoche may be at play when various dress items are mentioned.

All of this indicates that the subject of the high priest's dress is not only rich and complex, but it can also be confusing and exasperating at times. Nevertheless, the social role of the dress of the high priest was powerful in identifying his status and occupation within the Israelite cultus. And it is that which drives one's attention to the book of Revelation, one of the two most cultic works in the NT, in search of further sartorial information that might help interpret the redemptive role of Jesus Christ there.

CHAPTER 5

THE DRESS IMAGERY OF JESUS CHRIST IN REVELATION 1 AS AN INDICATOR OF HIGH PRIESTLY STATUS

Introduction

The question of whether or not the book of Revelation contains priestly or high priestly imagery with reference to Jesus Christ is a controversial one. Exegetes have both promoted and denied the idea that Jesus appears as a (high) priest in Revelation, and these arguments have typically revolved around the dress imagery associated with the one John designates as “like a son of man” (ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου) in 1:12-16.¹ Gerald L. Stevens astutely observes that John, in describing the dress of the one ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου, was essentially indicating that “clothes make the man”:

Clothes often represent fashion, but they also can represent function—the kaki [*sic*] outfit of a soldier, the green scrubs of a physician, the white collar of a priest, or the blue uniform of a policeman. Function is John’s point in describing the clothes of the Son of Man.²

The dress descriptions in chap. 1 describe not just how the one ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου

¹The Greek terminology is not definite. From here on I will use this specific Johannine designation when referring to the character described in Rev 1:13 and/or 14:14, but any use of the English article “the” is simply to point to this usage in these two texts, not to indicate that the Greek is definite.

²Gerald L. Stevens, “One Like a Son of Man: Contemplating Christology in Rev 1:9-20,” in *Essays on Revelation: Appropriating Yesterday’s Apocalypse in Today’s World*, ed. Gerald L. Stevens (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2010), 22.

looks but what role he plays. Interpretation of the dress imagery in this chapter is thus critical to an understanding and appreciation of the rich description of the one ὅμοιον υἷὸν ἀνθρώπου seen by John in his inaugural vision in chap. 1. Furthermore, it is also absolutely critical to a resolution of the question of a possible high priestly identity and role for Jesus in Revelation, for it is in this chapter that the strongest case can be made for or against such imagery.

Other than texts referencing the dominant and pervasive Lamb (ἀρνίον) motif found in Revelation,³ there are only three other textual units in Revelation in which there is widespread acknowledgment that John is visually describing Jesus Christ, despite the fact that neither “Jesus” nor “Christ” nor a combination of those two terms appears:⁴ (1) John’s inaugural vision in Rev 1:12-16, in which the ὅμοιον υἷὸν

³Outside of Revelation the same Greek term for the Lamb only occurs but once in the NT (John 21:15) and five times in the LXX (Ps 113:4, 6; Jer 11:19; 27:45; and *Pss. Sol.* 8:23). Within Revelation this term occurs twenty-eight times out of its twenty-nine occurrences as a clear metaphor for Jesus (Rev. 5:6, 8, 12, 13; 6:1, 16; 7:9, 10, 14, 17; 12:11; 13:8; 14:1, 4 [2x], 10; 15:3; 17:14 [2x]; 19:7, 9; 21:9, 14, 22, 23, 27; 22:1, 3). The one remaining occurrence in 13:11 is anarthrous and thus appears generic in nature: the Land Beast had “two horns like a lamb” (κέρατα δύο ὅμοια ἀρνίῳ), but it “was speaking like a dragon” (ἐλάλει ὡς δράκων). Since John has portrayed the Dragon as a key character in both chaps. 12 and 13 (12:3, 4, 7, 9, 13, 16, 17; 13:2 and 4), and since the Dragon is the key opponent of God, it would appear that the reference to the Land Beast speaking like a dragon is more readily a comparison with the aforesaid Dragon as opposed to a generic dragon; as such, the Land Beast would also appear to have horns like the Lamb—i.e., Jesus. Osborne thus concludes that the land beast “parodies the description of Christ as the Lamb with seven horns in 5:6” (*Revelation*, 511), since “the combination of ‘lamb’ and ‘horn’ is too similar to 5:6 to be ignored” (*ibid.*, n. 1).

⁴The very first verse of Revelation explicitly describes this work as the “apocalypse of Jesus Christ” (Ἀποκάλυψις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ), but the only other references to Jesus Christ in Revelation occur in the same chapter (vss. 2 and 5 [Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ]). References to the name “Jesus” alone occur only sporadically (1:9 [2x]; 12:17; 14:12; 17:6; 19:10 [2x]; 20:4) and in a textual cluster in chap. 22 (vss. 16, 20,

ἀνθρώπου appears; (2) John’s vision of one ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου sitting on a cloud in 14:14-16; and (3) John’s vision of the Rider on the White Horse in Rev 19:11-16 (cf. 19:19, 21). Since the one designated by John in chap. 1 as ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου describes himself later in the same chapter as having died and come back to life (1:18), it appears unequivocal that he is Jesus Christ.⁵ Consequently, in this chapter I will investigate whether or not any of the dress imagery in Rev 1 with regard to the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου communicates a high priestly identity and role for Jesus.

and 21). While ὑπομονῆ ἐν Ἰησοῦ (“perseverance in Jesus”)—the second reference to Jesus in 1:9—is the reading of *NA*²⁷ and *UBS*⁴ (witnessed by **N*** C P 1611 2050 2053^{vid} *pc* *gig* *vg* *sy*^{ph} *bo* [all ms. references in this chapter are per *NA*²⁷ unless otherwise noted]), some mss. include Χριστῶ as part of their textual tradition: ὑπομονῆ ἐν Χριστῶ (*A pc*); ὑπομονῆ ἐν Χριστῶ Ἰησοῦ (**N**² 1006 1841 2351 **M**^k *ar* *h* *vg*^{cl}); and ὑπομονῆ ἐν Ἰησοῦ Χριστῶ (2329 **M**^A *sy*^{h**} [*sa*]). Also, in 17:6 the name Ἰησοῦ is omitted here by 1854 *al* (*ar*).

On the other hand, references to the term χριστός (indicating the anointed one or Messiah) apart from the name of Jesus occur in 11:15 and 12:10, while the appearance of χριστός in 20:4 (καὶ ἔζησαν καὶ ἐβασίλευσαν μετὰ τοῦ [this article is omitted by 051 2062 **M**^A] Χριστοῦ [“and they came to life and reigned with Christ”]) and 6 (ἔσονται ἱερεῖς τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τοῦ Χριστοῦ [“they will be priests of God and of Christ”]) contextually does refer to Jesus (who has just been earlier mentioned in 20:4).

Another term used in the Gospels in reference to Jesus Christ during his earthly ministry, Lord (κύριος), clearly describes Jesus on one occasion in 11:8 (referring to his crucifixion), while it is combined with the name Jesus on two other occasions (22:20-21). The term also occurs in 1:8; 4:8, 11; 7:14; 11:15, 17; 14:13; 15:3, 4; 16:5, 7; 17:14; 18:8; 19:1, 6, 16; 21:22; 22:5, 6. But in none of these cases does the text make it clear that it refers to Jesus Christ (although this can be deduced in some instances from other texts within Revelation). All of these references to Jesus are either literary or theological in nature, describing one who is narratively “not there.”

⁵Cf., e.g., Fee (*Revelation*, 19), Hoffmann (*Destroyer and the Lamb*, 219), and Lenski (*Interpretation*, 73-74).

The Context and Content of John’s Initial Vision in Revelation 1:12-16

After identifying himself and explaining the reason for his presence on the island of Patmos (1:9), John indicated in v. 10 the time of his ecstatic experience in the Spirit⁶ and then described an audition he experienced that sounded like a trumpet.⁷ The trumpet-like voice spoke and commanded John to write what he saw and send it to seven church communities: Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea (1:11). John’s subsequent, inaugural vision includes a visual description of two objects (seven golden lampstands and the awe-inducing ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου [1:12-16]), followed by John’s initial reaction (1:17a), Jesus’ encouraging response to John (1:17b), Jesus’ initial self-revelation (1:17c-18), Jesus’ writing commission to John (1:19), and finally Jesus’ interpretation of two of the symbols that John had seen in his inaugural vision—the seven stars and the seven golden lampstands (1:20). It is the initial visionary description of the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου in 1:12-16 that I will focus on in this section, since it is here that visual dress imagery appears.

It is apparent that John begins Revelation with a cultic perspective. One can perceive this from two blocks of material: (1) the introductory material before John’s

⁶ἐγενόμην ἐν πνεύματι ἐν τῇ κυριακῇ ἡμέρᾳ (“I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day”).

⁷ἤκουσα ὀπίσω μου φωνὴν μεγάλην ὡς σάλπιγγος (“I heard behind me a loud sound like [the sound of] a trumpet”). One cannot ignore the auditory aspects of John’s visions. John himself concluded that he was “the one who hears and sees these things [ὁ ἀκούων καὶ βλέπων ταῦτα]” (22:8). Cf. Maier, *Apocalypse Recalled*, 91-122.

inaugural vision (1:1-11); and (2) the inaugural vision itself (1:12-20). With reference to the introductory material in 1:1-11, at least two concepts inform John’s audience of a cultic perspective. First, in the second of his three descriptive attributes of Jesus, John writes of Jesus as “the firstborn of the dead” (ὁ πρωτότοκος τῶν νεκρῶν [1:5]). This attribute parallels the second of three actions of Jesus of which John reminds his audience: He “freed us from our sins by his blood” (λύσαντι⁸ ἡμᾶς ἐκ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν ἐν τῷ αἵματι αὐτοῦ [1:5]).⁹ The reference to Jesus’ blood as the means of release from sin, pointing to the sacrificial death of Jesus on the cross, refers to the priestly function of the sprinkling of blood in the sanctuary cult.¹⁰ The motif of death and resurrection arises again in John’s subsequent vision, in which ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου proclaims: “I was dead, but behold, I am alive forever and ever” (ἐγενόμην νεκρὸς καὶ ἰδοὺ ζῶν εἰμι εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων [1:18]). It is this latter verse that nails the identity of the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου as the one who died on the cross but was gloriously resurrected—Jesus. This particular type of death, with its implicit reference to the salvific agency of the blood of Jesus, refers to the pervasive sacrificial system in Judaism, and this sacrificial system was centered on the sanctuary

⁸This word (λυσαντι) is witnessed by \mathfrak{P}^{18} \aleph A C 1611 2050 2329 2351 \mathfrak{M}^A h sy Primasius. The variant λουσσαντι is witnessed by P 1006 1841 1854 2053 2062 \mathfrak{M}^K lat bo. The former text is considered the harder reading or *lectio difficilior* (Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, 42, n. 5d.d.).

⁹See Jacques B. Doukhan, *Secrets of Revelation: The Apocalypse Through Hebrew Eyes* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2002), 19.

¹⁰Gregory K. Beale and Sean M. McDonough, “Revelation,” *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, ed. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; Nottingham: Apollos, 2007), 1090.

and its cultic rituals for the forgiveness of sins.¹¹

Second, in the third of his three descriptive attributes of Jesus, John writes of Jesus as “the ruler of the kings of the earth” (ὁ ἄρχων τῶν βασιλέων τῆς γῆς [1:5]). This attribute would parallel the third of the three actions John mentions: “He made us to be a kingdom, priests [serving] his God and father” (ἐποίησεν ἡμᾶς βασιλείαν, ἱερεῖς τῷ θεῷ καὶ πατρὶ αὐτοῦ [1:6]).¹² This latter action, reflecting the ancient story of the Exodus,¹³ is the first of three references by John to the priesthood of the believers (cf. also 5:10; 20:6).¹⁴ The fact that the kingdom is comprised of priests assumes that the ruler over the kings is also not only royal but priestly.¹⁵

With regard to John’s inaugural vision itself (1:12-20), the first thing John sees

¹¹Cf. Beale, *Revelation*, 191.

¹²Doukhan, *Secrets of Revelation*, 19.

¹³See Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, 47-48. This alludes to Exod 19:5-6, where God promises that the Israelites would be for him a “kingdom of priests” (מְמַלְכֶת כֹּהֲנִים / βασιλείον ἱεράτευμα). On the Hebrew, see the discussion in Propp, *Exodus 19-25*, 157-60. The LXX phrasing also appears in 23:22 and is exactly reflected in 1 Pet 2:9. Aune suggests that John “appears to be drawing on a very early Jewish understanding of Exod 19:6 in terms of two distinct privileges rather than the single one reflected in the MT and LXX” (*Revelation 1-5*, 48).

¹⁴Notice that Moses consecrated the Israelites as well as Aaron and the other priests by sprinkling them with blood (Exod 24:4-8; 29:10-21). But contra Beale (*Revelation*, 194), Moses did not do this “in precisely the same manner.”

¹⁵Notice Thomas B. Slater, *Christ and Community: A Socio-Historical Study of the Christology of Revelation*, JSNTSup 178 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999), 97: “If Christ enables one to become a priest in the heavenly temple (1.5-6), cannot Christ himself be the high priest? If not, why not?” Cf. similar remarks by André Feuillet, *The Priesthood of Christ and His Ministers*, trans. Matthew J. O’Connell (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1975), 181. On the twofold office mentioned in 1:5-6 in relation to both Jesus and the believers, see Beale (*Revelation*, 192-93) and Stevens (“Son of Man,” 23).

is clearly cultic, indicative of the sanctuary architecture and rituals. John turned “to see the voice” (βλέπειν τὴν φωνήν [1:12]) speaking with him, and when he turned around, he saw two primary objects. John first saw “seven golden lampstands”¹⁶ (ἑπτὰ λυχνίας χρυσᾶς [1:12b]). The motif of the lampstands frames the initial vision, since not only is it the first thing John sees, but it is also the final interpretive element mentioned before the individual messages to the seven churches (1:12, 20).¹⁷

The second object John sees in his inaugural vision is “in the middle of the lampstands” (ἐν μέσῳ¹⁸ τῶν λυχνιῶν): He saw a ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου (1:13) apparently stationary or immobile.¹⁹ Most scholarly attention focuses on the latter object of John’s visionary sight, the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου. But recognizing the significant association of the ἑπτὰ λυχνίας χρυσᾶς and the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου is essential to establishing and framing the visionary context of John’s dress imagery in chap. 1.

The term λυχνία occurs twelve times in the NT, and outside of Revelation it refers to a household lampstand (Matt 5:15; Mark 4:21; Luke 8:16; 11:33) or the

¹⁶The KJV translates this term as “candlestick,” but this is not what the term means. See BDAG, s.v. “λυχνία.”

¹⁷Cf. Konrad Huber, *Einer gleich einem Menschensohn: die Christusvisionen in Offb 1,9-20 und Offb 14,14-20 und die Christologie der Johannesoffenbarung*, Neutestamentliche Abhandlungen, n.s., 51 (Münster: Aschendorff, 2007), 78.

¹⁸Codex Sinaiticus has μέσον (“middle”) instead of ἐν μέσῳ.

¹⁹Later this ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου describes himself as ὁ περιπατῶν ἐν μέσῳ τῶν ἑπτὰ λυχνιῶν τῶν χρυσῶν (“the one who walks in the middle of the seven golden lampstands” [2:1]).

lampstand in the holy place of the Israelite tabernacle (Heb 9:2).²⁰ Five out of the six times λυχνία occurs in Revelation it clearly refers to the same objects depicted here in 1:12 (1:13, 20 [2x]; 2:1, 5). In 11:4 John equates the two λυχνία that stand before the Lord of the earth with “the two olive trees” (αἱ δύο ἐλαῖαι) mentioned earlier in the verse.²¹

The verbal and conceptual background²² to the ἐπτὰ λυχνίας χρυσαῖς in 1:12 is

²⁰Scholarly treatments of the sanctuary lampstand(s) include: Briggs, *Jewish Temple Imagery*, 55-66; Erwin R. Goodenough, “The Menorah Among Jews of the Roman World,” *HUCA* 23 (1950-1951): 449-92; Rachel Hachlili, *The Menorah, the Ancient Seven-Armed Candelabrum: Origin, Form and Significance*, JSJSup 68 (Leiden: Brill, 2001); Carol Meyers, *The Tabernacle Menorah: A Synthetic Study of a Symbol from the Biblical Cult*, American Schools of Oriental Research Dissertation Series 2 (Missoula, MT: Scholars, 1976); Daniel Sperber, “The History of the Menorah,” *Journal of Jewish Studies* 16 (1965): 135-55; Joan Taylor, “The Asherah, the Menorah, and the Sacred Tree,” *JSOT* 66 (1995): 29-54; Jens Voss, *Die Menora: Gestalt und Funktion des Leuchters im Tempel zu Jerusalem*, Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 128 (Freiburg: Universitätsverlag Freiburg; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993); and L. Yarden, *The Tree of Light: A Study of the Menorah: The Seven-Branched Lampstand* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1971).

²¹Cf. Zech 4:1-3, 11-14. In LXX Zechariah λυχνία occurs in 4:2 and 11.

²²The topic of OT allusions and backgrounds to Revelation has generated a large amount of literature. This is intimately related to the issue of whether John alluded to the MT, the LXX, both the MT and the LXX, or other recensions. For a sampling of the literature, see G. K. Beale, *John’s Use of the Old Testament in Revelation*, JSNTSup 166 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1998); idem, “A Response to Jon Paulien on the Use of the Old Testament in Revelation,” *AUSS* 39 (2001): 23-34; Beate Kowalski, *Die Rezeption des Propheten Ezechiel in der Offenbarung des Johannes*, Stuttgarter Biblische Beiträge 52 (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 2004); Susan Fournier Mathews, “A Critical Evaluation of the Allusions to the Old Testament in Apocalypse 1:1–8:5” (PhD diss., The Catholic University of America, 1987); Mathewson, “Assessing Old Testament Allusions,” 311-25; Steve Moyise, *The Old Testament in the Book of Revelation*, JSNTSup 115 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1995); idem, “The Language of the Old Testament in the Apocalypse,” *JSOT* 76 (1999): 97-113; idem, “Authorial Intention and the Book of Revelation,” *AUSS* 39 (2001): 35-40; idem, “Intertextuality and the Use of Scripture in the Book of Revelation,” *Scriptura* 84 (2003): 391-401; Jon Paulien, “Elusive Allusions: The Problematic Use of the Old Testament in

sanctuary imagery, whether the singular golden lampstand in the Israelite tabernacle,²³ the golden lampstands in Solomon's Temple,²⁴ the golden lampstand in the Second Temple period (LXX 1 Macc 1:21; 4:49-50; Sir 26:17), or the visionary lampstand in Zech 4:2-3.²⁵ The fact that they are described in Revelation as golden further

Revelation," *Biblical Research* 33 (1988): 37-53; idem, "Criteria and Assessment of Allusions to the Old Testament in the Book of Revelation," in *Studies in the Book of Revelation*, ed. Steve Moyise (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2001), 113-29; idem, "Dreading the Whirlwind: Intertextuality and the Use of the Old Testament in Revelation," *AUSS* 39 (2001): 5-22; idem, "Elusive Allusions in the Apocalypse: Two Decades of Research into John's Use of the Old Testament," in *The Intertextuality of the Epistles: Explorations of Theory and Practice*, ed. Thomas L. Brodie, Dennis R. MacDonald, and Stanley E. Porter, New Testament Monographs 16 (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2006), 61-68; idem, "New Testament Use of the Old Testament," in "*For You Have Strengthened Me*": *Biblical and Theological Studies in Honor of Gerhard Pfandl in Celebration of His Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, ed. Martin Pröbstle with the assistance of Gerald A. Klingbeil and Martin G. Klingbeil (St. Peter am Hart: Seminar Schloss Bogenhofen, 2007), 167-88.

²³See the use of *λυχνία* in LXX Exod 25:31-35; 26:35; 30:27; 31:8; 35:14; 38:13; 39:16; 40:4, 24; Lev 24:4; Num 3:31; 4:9; 8:2-4. Cf. Jean-Pierre Charlier, *Comprendre l'Apocalypse*, Lire la Bible 89-90 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1991), 1:69; Hachlili, *Menorah*, 9-16; Seán P. Kealy, *The Apocalypse of John*, Message of Biblical Spirituality (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1987), 75; Alfred Loisy, *L'Apocalypse de Jean* (1923; repr., Frankfurt: Minerva, 1972), 79; and Thomas, *Revelation 1-7*, 97.

²⁴See the use of *λυχνία* in LXX 1 Kgs 7:35 (MT 7:49); 1 Chr 28:15; 2 Chr 4:7, 20; 13:11; Jer 52:19. Cf. Hachlili (*Menorah*, 16-18), Mulholland (*Revelation*, 81), Murphy (*Fallen Is Babylon*, 88), and Roloff (*Revelation*, 34). LXX 1 Kgs 7:35 and 2 Chr 4:7 indicate that there were five lampstands on the south side of the holy place and five lampstands on the north side. While LXX 1 Chr 28:15 and 2 Chr 4:20 indicate that there was more than one lampstand, they do not enumerate how many; the MT of 1 Chr 28:15, however, indicates that there were both gold and silver lampstands. 2 Chr 13:11 is unique in its discussion of Solomon's temple, in that it describes "the golden lampstand" (*ἡ λυχνία ἡ χρυσῆ*). Jewish interpreters harmonized the accounts in Chronicles by concluding that there was one golden lampstand (as in the tabernacle traditions) as well as ten associated lampstands (Sperber, "History," 135-36).

²⁵Cf. Beale and McDonough, "Revelation," 1091; George Wesley Buchanan, *The Book of Revelation: Its Introduction and Prophecy*, The Mellen Biblical Commentary: Intertextual, New Testament Series 22 (Lewiston, NY: Mellen Biblical

substantiates this conclusion.²⁶ The phrase does not, however, appear to refer to the seven lamps that were attached to the sanctuary lampstand(s), since the term for that type of lamp would be λύχνος instead of λυχνία.²⁷

Aune infers that the use of the anarthrous noun indicates that John's audience was not familiar with such lampstands.²⁸ There is no evidence, however, that either the

Press, 1993), 65; Charlier, *Comprendre l'Apocalypse*, 1:69; Hachlili, *Menorah*, 18-30, 41-50; Kealy, *Apocalypse of John*, 75; Loisy, *L'Apocalypse*, 79; Murphy, *Fallen Is Babylon*, 88; Prigent, *Commentary on the Apocalypse*, 134; and Thomas, *Revelation 1-7*, 97. If John is here alluding to Zechariah's golden lampstand, much associated with that singular lampstand in Zech 4:2-3 is missing: a bowl or torus (הַלְּבַיִת / λαμπάδιον) on top, seven lamps each with seven lips/spouts/pipes/funnels (מִזְבְּחֵי זָהָב / ἑπαρυστρίδες), and two olives or olive trees (אֵילֵי זַיִת / ἑλαῖαι) on either side of the bowl. Marko Jauhiainen does not believe that John's lampstands in chap. 1 contain a direct allusion to Zech 4 (*The Use of Zechariah in Revelation*, WUNT 199 [Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005], 90).

²⁶On the golden nature of the sanctuary lampstands, see LXX Exod 25:31; 38:13; Num 8:4; 1 Kgs 7:35; 2 Chr 4:7, 20; 13:11; cf. Jer 52:19. Huber, however, is reticent to attribute too much cultic meaning to the lampstands based on their golden nature (*Einer gleich einem Menschensohn*, 120-21).

²⁷Cf. LXX Exod 25:37; 27:20; 30:7-8; 38:16-17; 39:16; 40:4, 25; Lev 24:2, 4; Num 4:9; 8:2-3; 1 Chr 28:15; 2 Chr 4:20. For the use of λύχνος in Revelation, see 18:23, 21:23, and 22:5. See also the use of the term λαμπάς ("torch") in 4:5 and 8:10. F. J. A. Hort (*The Apocalypse of St John: I—III: The Greek Text with Introduction, Commentary, and Additional Notes* [London: Macmillan, 1908], 16) and Fee (*Revelation*, 16) are two who see the golden lampstands in Rev 1 having burning lights. But note that John does not describe any lamps attached to these lampstands; cf. Iwan Whiteley, "A Search for Cohesion in the Book of Revelation with Specific Reference to Chapter One" (PhD diss., University of Wales [Lampeter], 2005), 161). Explicit light imagery in this vision is associated with the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου (e.g., eyes like a flame of fire [1:14], face like the son shining in its strength [1:16]), and as such, Jesus "is the source of light for the vision" (Resseguie, *Revelation of John*, 75). In the New Jerusalem (21:23), God enlightens (φωτίζει) it and the Lamb is its lamp (λύχνος).

²⁸Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, 65, n. 12.d.

tabernacle or any Jewish temple contained exactly seven lampstands,²⁹ and this suggests that the issue is not one of familiarity but one of the ability of John's audience to make conceptual connections.³⁰ John is not slavishly reproducing HB/LXX motifs and ideas but rather adapting them to his own purposes,³¹ and what John saw was not necessarily *the* OT lampstands but objects *like* these items.³²

Aune suggests that the ἑπτὰ λυχνίας χρυσᾶς should be translated so that they refer to seven golden menorahs, since the term “menorah” (transliterated from either מְנֹרָה or מְנֹרֶה)³³ is a technical term for the lampstand(s) that existed in the tabernacle and the first and second temples, each having six branches attached to a central trunk

²⁹Ibid., 65, n. 12.d., and 88-89.

³⁰Mathews concludes that John is not alluding to any specific passage that mentions the golden lampstand in the OT (“Critical Evaluation,” 168-69). The issue is not whether John's audience could understand cultic imagery (such as sanctuary imagery or high priestly dress imagery). Numerous references in John's work to cultic imagery assume that at least some of John's audience could understand it. Such imagery includes the hidden manna (2:17; cf., e.g., LXX Exod 16:33, 34; Heb 9:4) and the ark of the covenant (11:19; cf., e.g., LXX Num 10:33; Josh 4:11; 6:8, 11), the golden censer (8:3; cf. LXX 1 Kgs 7:50; 1 Macc 1:22) used in association with the golden altar (8:3; cf., e.g., LXX Exod 39:38; 40:5, 26), and the tabernacle of the testimony (15:5; cf., e.g., LXX Num 1:53; 10:11; 18:2, 4, 6, 23).

³¹Cf. Whiteley, “Search for Cohesion,” 159.

³²Ibid., 163. In reference to the anarthrous ἑπτὰ λυχνίας χρυσᾶς, Whiteley observes that “John does not use the article as an OT reference marker anywhere through the discourse. The lack of article [*sic*] may be to point out that John did not see (e.g.) *the* lampstand of the temple. . . . It seems that John saw something qualitatively equivalent to the lampstand of the temple” (ibid., 160).

³³Cf. Exod 25:32 (2x); 37:18 (2x); 1 Chr 28:15 (7x). See also, e.g., Exod 25:31 (2x), 33, 34, 35; 37:17 (2x), 19, 20; Lev 24:4; Num 8:2, 3, 4 (2x); 1 Kgs 7:49; 2 Chr 4:7, 20; Jer 52:19; Zech 4:2, 11. For a non-sacral use of the word, see 2 Kgs 4:10.

(e.g., six plus one, yielding seven).³⁴ Nevertheless, he also notes that there is “no explicit indication that John conceived of these as *branched* lampstands with seven oil lamps like the traditional Jewish menorah used as a religious symbol.”³⁵ It appears that John has little to no interest in any lamps on the lampstands for at least two reasons: (1) the explicit number mentioned with this image is seven and not seven times seven, or forty-nine (1:12, 20; cf. 2:5);³⁶ and (2) when John views multiplex imagery (i.e., numbered items, each with other numbered items), he is not averse to describing it as such.³⁷

Several verses later John interprets the seven visionary lampstands of 1:12-13 to represent seven Christian churches: Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea (1:20; cf. 1:4, 11). Despite this later, explicit interpretation focusing on these seven communities of Christian believers, the first reference to the ἑπτὰ λυχνίας χρυσᾶς would likely have caused John’s readers to initially think of

³⁴Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, 88-89; cf., e.g., Beale, *Revelation*, 2070; Fee, *Revelation*, 16; Daniel F. Stramara, Jr., *God’s Timetable: The Book of Revelation and the Feast of Seven Weeks* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2011), 81-82. Barker is clearly incorrect when she argues that ὅμοιον υἶδὸν ἀνθρώπου “was the central part of the one, composite lamp, rather than a distinct figure surrounded by seven free-standing lamps as often depicted” (*Revelation*, 83; cf. idem, *Temple Mysticism: An Introduction* [London: SPCK, 2011], 166); John sees plural lampstands (1:12), and John later describes the ὅμοιον υἶδὸν ἀνθρώπου walking in the midst of them (2:1).

³⁵Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, 89.

³⁶In Exod 25:33-35 and 37:19-20, the term “lampstand” (מִנְרֵתָהּ) appears to focus on the central shaft and not the entire structure (cf. Propp, *Exodus 19-40*, 403).

³⁷The red Dragon has seven diadems on seven heads (12:3); the Sea Beast has ten diadems on ten heads (13:1); and the Scarlet Beast has seven heads and ten horns (17:3, 7).

sanctuary imagery. Consequently, as Aune observes, “this imagery suggests that a ‘temple’ is the ambiance for John’s vision.”³⁸

In the midst of the ἐπτὰ λυχνίας χρυσᾶς John sees the ὅμοιον υἷον ἀνθρώπου. One would expect a priestly or high priestly figure to be associated with the lampstand imagery in Rev 1, since they were the personnel historically associated with the lampstand(s) in the tabernacle and temple. While it is clear that the common priests were mentioned in association with rituals relating to the lampstand(s) in the Holy Place of both Solomon’s Temple (e.g., 2 Chr 13:10-11³⁹) and the Second Temple (Luke 1:8-11), it was not the common priests but instead the high priest who was specifically associated with the singular lampstand or menorah in the cultic legislation of the tabernacle traditions (cf. Exod 27:20-21; 29:29-30; 30:8 Num 8:2-4; Lev 24:3-4).⁴⁰ It seems unlikely, however, that John would have understood Jesus in the midst of the ἐπτὰ λυχνίας χρυσᾶς in terms of a common priest, since he utilized high priestly motifs elsewhere in his work.⁴¹ The picture in Rev 1, with the ὅμοιον υἷον ἀνθρώπου

³⁸Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, 88. Cf. Robert H. Gundry, *Commentary on the New Testament: Verse-by-Verse Explanations with a Literal Translation* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2010), 999; Slater, *Christ and Community*, 96; and Whiteley, “Search for Cohesion,” 159-60.

³⁹Philo understood that the work of tending the lampstand was initially a high priestly ministry, but it was delegated to subordinate priests as a result of indolence and negligence (*QE* 2.105).

⁴⁰Cf., e.g., Hachlili (*Menorah*, 176), Rooke (“Kingship as Priesthood,” 200; idem, “The Day of Atonement,” 350), and Yarden (*The Tree of Light*, 14).

⁴¹The most persuasive case is the twelve foundation stones of the New Jerusalem (21:19-20) reflecting the stones on the high priest’s ephod; on this, cf., e.g., Aune (*Revelation 17-22*, 1165), Beale (*Revelation*, 1080-88), Comblin (“La liturgie,” 15), Lee (*New Jerusalem*, 285-86), Mathewson (*New Heaven*, 130-49, 153-56), Schüssler

standing in the midst of the ἑπτὰ λυχνίας χρυσᾶς, appears more likely indicative of the high priest tending with care the golden lampstand(s) as he was delegated to do on a daily basis.⁴² Thus, beyond the two cultic references in the introductory material, this locative contextual marker sets forth not only a sanctuary background but even a high priestly one for the rest of John's inaugural vision.⁴³

The ὅμοιον υἶδὸν ἀνθρώπου

John's terminology for the ὅμοιον υἶδὸν ἀνθρώπου has struck commentators as grammatically odd.⁴⁴ While a dative typically follows various forms of the adjective ὅμοιος, Revelation's twenty-one occurrences of this adjective include two texts in

Fiorenza (*Invitation*, 205), and Zwickel ("Die Edelsteine," 50-70). Cf. also the dress imagery of the Great Prostitute (17:4-5) as reflecting high priestly dress.

⁴²The reference to the lampstand in Rev 1 would likely preclude a Yom Kippur meaning, since the lampstand was not integrally related to the rituals of that day any more so than any other day of the year.

⁴³Many scholars understand the tabernacle/temple lampstand to have symbolized, among other things, a stylized tree (see, e.g., Beale, *The Temple*, 71, 325, 330; but cf. Propp, *Exodus 19-40*, 511). As such, John includes the promise of access to eating from the tree of life in the message to the Ephesian church (2:7), a message which is introduced by Jesus describing himself as the one who walks in the midst of the lampstands (2:1). Furthermore, in John's final vision (cf. 21:1, 2, with 21:9, 10; 22:1) of the New Jerusalem, the tree of life imagery appears again (22:2, 14, 19). This last vision also contains high priestly dress imagery with regard to the twelve precious stones adorning the New Jerusalem. For the suggestion that Revelation has a "menorah structure," with the first vision in chaps. 1-3 inversely parallel to the last vision in 21:9-22:5, see Doukhan, *Secrets of Revelation*, 13-15. Doukhan suggests (ibid., 198) that the lampstand, explicitly missing from Rev 21-22, appears implicitly in the tree (22:2, 14, 19) and light (21:23; 22:5) imagery of those chapters.

⁴⁴See, e.g., Allen Dwight Callahan, who noted that John had not used "the obligatory dative case" ("The Language of the Apocalypse," *Harvard Theological Review* 88 [1995]: 456).

which a form of ὅμοιος is not followed by a dative: 1:13 and 14:14.⁴⁵ What makes this more striking is that it is in both of these latter texts that the phrase ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου occurs. The fact that it is only with regard to this phrase that the accusative instead of the dative occurs undercuts the argument that this is a grammatical mistake on the part of John. Rather, John is using this particular usage on purpose,⁴⁶ apparently to point attention to an OT text.⁴⁷

Exegetes typically understand John to be alluding to Dan 7:13 in his reference to the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου.⁴⁸ Thus, it is not surprising that John's overt description of the one he saw in vision in chap. 1, ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου, verbally alludes to Daniel's ὡς υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου in 7:13 (both OG and Θ).⁴⁹ Cultic and priestly issues are

⁴⁵Cf. 1:15; 2:18; 4:3 (2x), 6, 7 (3x); 9:7 (2x), 10, 19; 11:1; 13:2, 4, 11; 18:18; 21:11, 18. This reflects the overwhelming data for a form of ὅμοιος followed by a dative elsewhere in the LXX and NT.

⁴⁶Cf. Beckwith, who asserts that “the disregard of grammar here is evidently, then, designed” (*Apocalypse*, 437); and Robert K. MacKenzie, *The Author of the Apocalypse: A Review of the Prevailing Hypothesis of Jewish-Christian Authorship*, Mellen Biblical Press Series 51 (Lewiston, NY: Mellen Biblical Press, 1997), 158.

⁴⁷Scholarly discussion about the origin of the term “the son of man” in the Gospels and its meaning vis-à-vis Jesus has been unending and embarrassingly inconclusive. In such discussions the phrase ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου in Rev 1:12 and 14:14 often receives comparatively little discussion, in part because the Gospel references are articular (e.g., τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου [cf. Matt 16:13, 28; 24:30; Mark 8:31; 9:12; 13:26; Luke 9:22; 12:10; 21:27; John 1:51; 3:14; 6:62; Acts 7:56; etc.]), while those in Revelation are anarthrous (υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου).

⁴⁸See, e.g., Aune (*Revelation 1-5*, 90-93), Beale (*Revelation*, 208-210), Mathews (“Critical Evaluation,” 170), Osborne (*Revelation*, 87-88), and Smalley (*The Revelation to John*, 53-54).

⁴⁹Charles (*Revelation*, 1:36) makes the case that in Revelation, John can use ὅμοιος as synonymous with ὡς in meaning (cf. 4:3 and 21:11; and 4:6 and 22:1). But he also asserts (*ibid.*, 1:36-37) that John makes the two terms absolutely equivalent in

of great significance to Daniel.⁵⁰ It is possible that the figure known as the $\omega\varsigma$ υἱὸς

ἀνθρώπου in Dan 7:13 (כְּבֹר אֱנִיִּשׁ [MT]) is a high priestly figure.⁵¹ It is also possible

construction as well as meaning in 1:13 and 14:14, where instead of what one would expect— $\delta\muοιου\ υἱ\hat{\omega}$ —one instead finds $\delta\muοιου\ υἱ\delta\nu\ \alpha\upsilon\theta\rho\omega\piου$. Consequently, the phrase in Dan 7:13 is equivalent to those in Rev 1:13 and 14:14.

Scholarly discussion regarding the כְּבֹר אֱנִיִּשׁ / $\omega\varsigma$ υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου in Dan 7:13 has also been unrelenting. Benedikt Otzen, for one, deemed it “interminable” (“Michael and Gabriel: Angelological Problems in the Book of Daniel,” in *The Scriptures and the Scrolls: Studies in Honour of A. S. van der Woude on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday*, ed. F. García Martínez, A. Hilhorst, and C. J. Labuschagne, VTSup 49 [Leiden: Brill, 1992], 117). It is beyond the scope of this study to review the longstanding and voluminous history of interpretation regarding this figure. For representative works on the subject, see Chrys C. Caragounis, *The Son of Man: Vision and Interpretation*, WUNT 38 (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1986); Maurice Casey, *The Solution to the ‘Son of Man’ Problem*, Library of New Testament Studies 343 (London: T & T Clark, 2007); and Mogens Müller, *The Expression ‘Son of Man’ and the Development of Christology: A History of Interpretation*, Copenhagen International Seminar (London: Equinox, 2008).

⁵⁰Cf. André Lacocque, *The Book of Daniel*, trans. David Pellauer, ed. André Lacocque (Atlanta: John Knox, 1979), 124-25 (“The vision in chapter 7 has the Temple as its framework”); and Fletcher-Louis, “Divine Mediator,” 174 (Dan 7 “is ultimately Temple centered”). In line with this, some have suggested that Daniel writes from a priestly orientation or worldview or is a priest himself. Cf. *ibid.*, 171-72; *idem*, “Messiah: Part I,” 164, n. 32; and Marvin A. Sweeney, “The End of Eschatology in Daniel? Theological and Socio-Political Ramifications of the Changing Contexts of Interpretation,” in *Form and Intertextuality in Prophetic and Apocalyptic Literature*, FAT 45 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 256-260, who concludes that “the visions of Daniel 7-12 are permeated with priestly imagery, symbolism, and concepts” (p. 260). The priestly identification of Daniel is as at least as old as Bel 1:2 (ἄνθρωπός τις ἦν ἱερεὺς $\hat{\omega}$ ὄνομα Δανιηλ υἱὸς Αβαλ [“a certain man named Daniel, son of Abal, was a priest”]), despite the assumed princely/royal lineage in Dan 1:3-7.

⁵¹See Fletcher-Louis, “Divine Mediator,” 161-93, who confidently stated: “Glancing at the *Curriculum Vitae* of the candidates for the post described in Dan 7:13-4 [*sic*] the high priest is the front runner” (*ibid.*, 167). See also *idem*, “Jewish Apocalyptic and Apocalypticism,” in *The Study of Jesus*, vol. 2 of *Handbook for the Study of the Historical Jesus*, ed. Tom Holmén and Stanley E. Porter (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 1598-1600; *idem*, “Messiah: Part II,” 57-60; *idem*, “Sacral Son of Man,” 257-61; and Lacocque, *Book of Daniel*, 124-26. On the relationship of the $\omega\varsigma$ υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου in Dan 7, Adam (the original “man”), and the high priest, see Fletcher-Louis (“Messiah: Part I,” 172, n. 67), where he speaks of the “Adamic contours” of the Son of Man title.

that the same figure could be identified with other visionary figures in Daniel's visions that have been understood to be high priestly in nature.⁵² But such provocative, high

While a celestial judgment takes place in Dan 7 (see 7:10, 22, 26), Yom Kippur was also a day of judgment, one in which the high priest approached YHWH; on this see Gane, *Cult and Character*, particularly pp. 305-309.

⁵²Some have identified this figure in Dan 7 with: (1) the Prince of the Host / Prince of Princes in Dan 8:11, 25 (e.g., Lacocque, *Book of Daniel*, 162); (2) the striking being Daniel sees in vision in 10:5-6 (e.g., Lewis O. Anderson, "The Michael Figure in the Book of Daniel" [PhD diss., Andrews University, 1997], 317-61; Whiteley, "Search for Cohesion, 175-76); and/or (3) Michael, the Prince of Israel mentioned in Dan 10:13, 21, 12:1 (e.g., N. Schmidt, "The Son of Man in the Book of Daniel," *JBL* 19 [1900]: 22-28; John Day, *God's Conflict with the Dragon and the Sea: Echoes of a Canaanite Myth in the Old Testament*, University of Cambridge Oriental Publications 35 [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985], 151-78; Lacocque, *Book of Daniel*, 133-34; and Otzen, "Michael and Gabriel," 118).

Moreover, some have identified the Prince of the Host in chap. 8 with: (1) the visionary figure in 10:5-6 (e.g., Martin Pröbstle, "Truth and Terror: A Text-Oriented Analysis of Daniel 8:9-14" [PhD diss., Andrews University, 2006], 704-708 and 730-31); and/or (2) Michael (e.g., Klaus Koch, *Das Buch Daniel*, Erträge der Forschung 144 [Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1980], 207; Alberto Treiyer, "The Priest-King Role of the Messiah," *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 7 [1996]: 72). Cf. Adela Yarbro Collins, "The Son of Man Tradition and the Book of Revelation," in *The Messiah: Developments in Earliest Judaism and Christianity*, ed. James H. Charlesworth, with J. Brownson, M. T. Davis, S. J. Kraftchick, and A. F. Segal (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), 551.

Finally, some have also identified the visionary figure in 10:5-6 with Michael (e.g., Lacocque, *Book of Daniel*, 206). But most commentators believe that it refers to Gabriel (Otzen, "Michael and Gabriel," 116, n. 5).

It is clear that some segments of Second Temple Judaism identified Michael as a high priestly figure (see the extensive discussion in Darrell D. Hannah, *Michael and Christ: Michael Traditions and Angel Christology in Early Christianity*, WUNT 109 [Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999], 42-45). Some contemporary scholars have also identified as high priestly the Prince of Princes in Dan 8 (e.g., Treiyer, "The Priest-King Role," 69), the visionary figure in Dan 10 (e.g., *ibid.*, 76, 77; Winfried Vogel, *The Cultic Motif in the Book of Daniel* [New York: Peter Lang, 2010], 165-68), and Michael as well (e.g., Treiyer, "The Priest-King Role," 73, 77; Fletcher-Louis calls this identification "implausible" ["Divine Mediator," 169-70, here 169]). Furthermore, it has been demonstrated that the controversy between the Pharisees and the Sadducees over the correct ritual of the high priest on Yom Kippur is integrated into their understandings of Dan 7, suggesting that they saw that chapter as one with potentially high priestly meaning (cf. Fletcher-Louis ["Divine Mediator," 182-85; "Messiah: Part

priestly perspectives have not garnered support from more than a scholarly minority, and their use here would advance the argument only with much difficulty.

The Dress of the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου

John's nine-fold, mostly visual⁵³ description of ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου in 1:13-16 is rich and varied, and this detailed description itself is structurally divided into two parts. First, the overall visual record begins with the explicit reference to two dress descriptions: (1) clothed in a foot-length robe (ἐνδευμένον ποδήρη [1:13]); and (2) encircled at the breasts with a golden belt/sash (περιεζωσμένον πρὸς τοῖς μαστοῖς ζώνην χρυσᾶν [1:13]). Second, there immediately follows seven further descriptions of the appearance of the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου, several of which appear again in the messages to the seven churches in chaps. 2-3:⁵⁴ (1) his head, that is, his hair, is white like white wool, like snow (1:14);⁵⁵ (2) his eyes are like blazing fire (1:14); (3) his feet

II," 59], Lauterbach ["Significant Controversy," 173-205], and Milgrom [*Leviticus 1-16*, 1028-31]).

⁵³In 1:18 the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου announces that he holds the keys of death and of Hades (1:18), but this is auditory and not part of the visual identification John provides.

⁵⁴For instance, the eyes like a flame of fire (1:14), along with the feet like χαλκολιβάνω as if burned in a furnace (1:15), appear in the message to the Thyatiran church (2:18); the seven stars (1:16) appear in the messages to both the Ephesian and the Sardian churches (2:1; 3:1); and the sharp, two-edged sword appears in the message to the Pergamene church (2:12).

⁵⁵In Rev 1:14 the text in part reads: ἡ δὲ κεφαλὴ αὐτοῦ καὶ αἱ τρίχες λευκαὶ ὡς ἔριον λευκόν ὡς χιών ("and his head, that is, the hair, is white like white wool, like snow." For the exegetical nature of καὶ, see Robert Mounce (*Revelation*, 58) and Smalley (*The Revelation to John*, 54).

are like χαλκολιβάνω as if burned in a furnace (1:15); (4) his voice is like the sound of many waters (1:15); (5) there are seven stars in his right hand (1:16, 20); (6) a sharp, two-edged sword protrudes out of his mouth (1:16); and (7) his overall appearance (ἡ ὄψις)⁵⁶ is like the sun shining with full force (1:16). This latter seven-fold description, in turn, follows an intriguing pattern, with visual descriptions surrounding the sole auditory description (i.e., his voice like the sound of many waters) at the center.⁵⁷

At this point it is important to note that this rich description of the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου in 1:13-16 bears an amazing resemblance to some parts of the intriguing description of the “great angel” Eremiel⁵⁸ in *Apoc. Zeph.* 6:11-15, a text that O.S. Wintermute has dated between 100 BCE and 175 CE:⁵⁹

⁵⁶This term occurs three times in the NT; other than here it refers to one’s appearance (John 7:24) or one’s face (John 11:44). While reference to an overall appearance at the end of John’s description in chap. 1 would seem more appropriate than reference to his face, ὄψις itself could go either way (so BDAG, s.v. “ὄψις”). I have made my translation based on the recognition that within Revelation the concept of “face” clearly and typically appears with the use of another term, πρόσωπον, which occurs in 4:7; 7:11; 9:7 (2x); 10:1; 11:16; and 22:4. Cf. Stuckenbruck, *Angel Veneration*, 230, n. 69. In 6:16, 12:14, and 20:11 πρόσωπον has the meaning of “presence” (see BDAG, s.v. “πρόσωπον”).

⁵⁷If seen as a chiasm, the head and hair would parallel his overall appearance, the eyes would parallel the mouth, and the feet would parallel the hand; at least some of the pairings are possibly anatomically related.

⁵⁸In *4 Ezra* 4:36 he is Jeremiel, in *2 Bar.* 55:3 and 63:6 his name is “Ramael,” and in *1 En.* 20:8 he is listed as Remiel, one of the seven archangels (cf. Wintermute, “Apocalypse of Zephaniah,” 1:513, n. c.; Peter Schäfer, *The Origins of Jewish Mysticism* [Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011], 101).

⁵⁹Wintermute, “Apocalypse of Zephaniah,” 1:500-501. Cf. Martha Himmelfarb, *Tours of Hell: An Apocalyptic Form in Jewish and Christian Literature* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 2003); Schäfer, *Origins of Jewish Mysticism*, 99.

¹¹Then I arose and stood, and I saw a great angel standing before me with his face shining like the rays of the sun in its glory since his face is like that which is perfected in its glory. ¹²And he was girded as if a golden girdle were upon his breast. His feet were like bronze which is melted in a fire. ¹³And when I saw him, I rejoiced, for I thought that the Lord Almighty had come to visit me. ¹⁴I fell upon my face, and I worshiped him. ¹⁵He said to me, “Take heed. Don’t worship me. I am not the Lord Almighty, but I am the great angel, Eremiel, who is over the abyss and Hades, the one in which all of the souls are imprisoned from the end of the Flood, which came upon the earth, until this day.”⁶⁰

Wintermute, noting the striking similarities between 6:11-15 and Rev 1:11-18, believes it is based on the figure which appears in Dan 10:5-14.⁶¹ He also believes that the author (or the source he utilized) has edited—both by expanding and eliminating—material in Dan 10, and that the passage in Revelation shows similar revision in terms of dress.

While Wintermute suggests that this passage from the *Apocalypse of Zephaniah* is ultimately dependent on imagery from Dan 10, and Rev 1:13-16 is based on that information from the *Apocalypse of Zephaniah*,⁶² others disagree; for instance, some suggest that the *Apocalypse of Zephaniah* and Revelation are not interdependent but may both draw on a common tradition,⁶³ while others conclude that the *Apocalypse of*

⁶⁰Cited from Wintermute, “Apocalypse of Zephaniah,” 1:513.

⁶¹*Ibid.*, 1:504-505. Wintermute incorrectly states that Daniel’s visionary being has bronze legs “like those of the divine figure described in Ezekiel 1:27,” but in the latter text there is no clear reference to legs (“downward from what looked like the loins” [NRSV]) and certainly no reference at all to bronze.

⁶²*Ibid.*, 1:505.

⁶³See, e.g., Richard Bauckham, *The Climax of Prophecy: Studies on the Book of Revelation* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1993), 125-26; and Stuckenbruck, *Angel Veneration*, 78, n. 81, 230, n. 67, 257. Carrell believes the parallels are not close enough to conclude that one is dependent on another (*Jesus and the Angels*, 59).

Zephaniah postdates Revelation.⁶⁴ Beyond the unresolved issues of dating and dependency or independence, the fragmentary nature of the *Apocalypse of Zephaniah* further underscores the excessively complicated nature of the work, and the picture is moreover linguistically clouded by the fact that extant copies of *Apoc. Zeph. 6:11-12* occur not in Greek but in one Akhmimic Coptic manuscript. The question over whether the apocalypse is a Jewish or Christian work also muddies the issue.⁶⁵ With such being the case, the divergent interpretations of the *Apocalypse of Zephaniah*—which Briggs understatedly terms “an enigma among enigmas”⁶⁶—provide no solid ground for conclusions regarding its relationship to Rev 1:13-16.

As earlier indicated, one finds the only explicit dress terms in John’s inaugural

⁶⁴Briggs notes that since both *Apoc. Zeph. 6:12* and Rev 1:15 describe feet in reference to a fire or furnace—while Dan 10 does not—this indicates “evidence of there having been some sort of intertextual dependence” between them (*Jewish Temple Imagery*, 133, n. 102). He believes that the Jewish *Apocalypse of Zephaniah* attempted to “correct” Revelation (ibid.). There are, however, other ways to explain this without necessitating dependence.

Bernd Jörg Diebner concludes that the Akhmimic version (which contains the parallels with Rev 1:13-16) dates from between the latter part of the 2nd century and the latter part of the 3rd century CE, clearly well beyond the time of Revelation (*Zephanjas Apokalypsen*, pt. 9 of *Apokalypsen, Jüdische Schriften aus hellenistisch-römischer Zeit 5* [Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2003], 1187), but that it is problematic to attempt to separate Jewish elements from later Christian elements (ibid., 1184).

Keener suggests that *Apoc. Zeph. 6:11-15* “may be an Ebionite response to the Christology of Rev. 1:13-16” (*Revelation*, 95, n. 4).

⁶⁵E.g., Himmelfarb concludes that “there is nothing in the contents of the work that marks it clearly as Christian” (*Tours of Hell*, 13; see also pp. 15-16); cf. Bauckham, *Climax of Prophecy*, 125-26. James R. Davila, however, concludes differently that “very little in the way of a positive case can be made” for it being Jewish (*The Provenance of the Pseudepigrapha: Jewish, Christian, or Other?* JSJSup 105 [Leiden, Brill, 2005], 234).

⁶⁶Briggs, *Jewish Temple Imagery*, 133.

vision in the initial sartorial description in Rev 1:13 (ἐνδεδυμένον + ποδήρη, and περιεζωσμένον + ζώνην). Furthermore, of the remaining seven descriptors, I would suggest that only the third item (his [bare] feet like χαλκολιβάνω) has any possible, identifiable connection to high priestly dress motifs.⁶⁷ Consequently, it is these three sets of terms (i.e., ἐνδύω + ποδήρης, περιζώννυμι + ζώνη, and [bare] feet like χαλκολιβάνω) that I will further investigate for signs of high priestly dress imagery.

Clothed in a ποδήρης

In Rev 1:13 John describes ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου dressed in a long, ankle-length robe (ἐνδεδυμένον ποδήρη). It is at this point that Heinrich Kraft laconically remarked, “Hier liegen die Dinge etwas komplizierter” (“Here things lie slightly more complicated”).⁶⁸ So how should one understand this specific dress term? Moreover, what difference does it make if ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου is wearing this item of dress or a different one?

Numerous commentators have expressed strong views and opinions about the meaning of ποδήρης within the overall theology and christology of Revelation. The reason for this is the belief that the term ποδήρης could potentially determine the specific role of the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου. From a theological or christological

⁶⁷In no literary account of priestly dress is one’s head/hair like wool/snow, eyes like blazing fire, one’s voice like the sound of many waters, seven stars in one’s right hand, a sharp, two-edged sword emerging from one’s mouth, or one’s face like the sun shining with full force a recognizable descriptor of priestly or high priestly status.

⁶⁸Heinrich Kraft, *Die Offenbarung des Johannes*, Handbuch zum Neuen Testament 16a (Tübingen: Mohr [Siebeck], 1974), 45.

standpoint, the stakes are indeed high: if ποδήρης assumes, implies, or connotes the meaning of high priest, one would consequently understand the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου, at least from the standpoint of the social psychology of dress, as a high priestly figure.

In surveying what scholars have concluded with regards to the use of ποδήρης, one finds not unanimity but a wide spectrum of responses. I have catalogued nine interpretive approaches to this question.⁶⁹ First, a number of exegetes provide no discussion at all of what this particular dress image means.⁷⁰ Second, some commentators broadly conclude that this term indicates some kind of exalted, dignified or majestic status.⁷¹ Third, some advocate that this term yields angelic, prophetic,

⁶⁹Some examples may be in more than one category, particularly by those who deny priestly or high priestly meaning.

⁷⁰E.g., Doukhan, *Secrets of Revelation*, 23-26; Austin Farrer, *The Revelation of St. John the Divine* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1964), 64-68 (although he sees Jesus as high priestly and royal); Lupieri, *Commentary on the Apocalypse*, 109-110; Joseph L. Mangina, *Revelation*, Brazos Theological Commentary on the Bible (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2010), 49-51; Mitchell G. Reddish, *Revelation*, Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2001), 40-41; Christopher C. Rowland, "The Book of Revelation: Introduction, Commentary, and Reflections," *The New Interpreter's Bible*, ed. Leander Keck (Nashville: Abingdon, 1998), 12:566-67; Charles C. Ryrie, *Revelation*, new ed., Everyman's Bible Commentary (Chicago: Moody, 1996), 19; Robert W. Wall, *Revelation*, New International Biblical Commentary on the New Testament (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1991), 62; and Adela Yarbro Collins, *The Apocalypse*, New Testament Message: A Biblical-Theological Commentary 22 (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1979), 12-14.

⁷¹E.g., Philip Edgcumbe Hughes, *The Book of The Revelation: A Commentary* (Leicester, UK: Inter-Varsity; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 26; Lenski, *Interpretation*, 65; Morris, *The Book of Revelation*, 53; Osborne, *Revelation*, 89; Prigent, *Commentary on the Apocalypse*, 136; Resseguie, *Revelation of John*, 76; and Swete, *Apocalypse of St John*, 15-16.

judicial, royal, or other role-related dress imagery—but not priestly or high priestly.⁷²

Fourth, numerous interpreters see ποδήρης as indicative of priestly dress imagery, but they do not adequately distinguish between priestly and high priestly dress imagery.⁷³

Fifth, many specifically see the dress here in terms of high priestly imagery.⁷⁴ Sixth,

⁷²E.g., Buchanan, *Book of Revelation*, 62-66; Charles T. Chapman, *The Message of the Book of Revelation* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 1995), 17; Kiddle, *Revelation*, 15 (“The **long robe** and the **belt of gold around his breast** are emblems of royal dignity”); Mazzaferri, *Genre*, 243; Metzger, *Breaking the Code*, 26-27; J. Ramsey Michaels, *Revelation*, The IVP New Testament Commentary Series (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1997), 60-61; and Loren T. Stuckenbruck, “Revelation,” *Eerdmans Commentary on the Bible*, ed. James D. G. Dunn and John W. Rogerson (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 1539-40.

⁷³E.g., Ben-Daniel and Ben-Daniel, *Apocalypse*, 22-27; Brian K. Blount, *Revelation: A Commentary*, The New Testament Library (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2009), 44; M.-E. Boismard, *L’Apocalypse*, 3rd ed., La Sainte Bible (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1959), 29, n. g.; Joseph Bonsirven, *L’Apocalypse de Saint Jean*, Verbum salutis 16 (Paris: Beauchesne, 1951), 98; Lucien Cerfaux and Jules Cambier, *L’Apocalypse de Saint Jean lue aux Chrétiens*, Lection divina 17 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1955), 25; Charles, *Revelation*, 1:cxiii (though he contradicts this in *ibid.*, 1:27-28); Coppens, “Le messianisme sacerdotal,” 111; Ford, *Revelation*, 385; Lohmeyer, *Die Offenbarung des Johannes*, 15; Mulholland, *Revelation*, 82-83; Pablo Richard, *Apocalypse: A People’s Commentary on the Book of Revelation*, trans. Phillip Berryman, The Bible & Liberation Series (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1998), 51; Slater, *Christ and Community*, 16.

⁷⁴E.g., Barker, *Revelation*, 84-85; Bond, “Discarding the Seamless Robe,” 189; Brighton, *Revelation*, 49; Caird, *Revelation*, 25; Charlier, *Comprendre l’Apocalypse*, 1:71; Cullmann, *Christology*, 104-105; Fee, *Revelation*, 17; Gundry, *Commentary*, 99; Keener, *Revelation*, 94; Kistemaker, *Exposition*, 95 (although he subsequently refers to “priest” and “priesthood”); Krodel, *Revelation*, 95; Hanns Lilje, *The Last Book of the Bible: The Meaning of the Revelation of St. John*, trans. Olive Wyon (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1957), 54, 56; Lohmeyer, *Die Offenbarung des Johannes*, 15; Eduard Lohse, *Die Offenbarung des Johannes*, Das Neue Testament Deutsch 11 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1971), 20; Peter Morant, *Das Kommen des Herrn: Eine Erklärung der Offenbarung des Johannes* (Zurich: Thomas-Verlag; Munich: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1969), 67; Robert Mounce, *Revelation*, 57-58; Ulrich B. Müller, *Die Offenbarung des Johannes*, Ökumenischer Taschenbuchkommentar zum Neuen Testament 19 (Gütersloh: Gerd Mohn, 1984), 83-84; Adolf Pohl, *Die Offenbarung des Johannes*, Wuppertaler Studienbibel (Wuppertal: R. Brockhaus, 1969), 1:91; Gilles

some perceive both (high) priestly and royal imagery in the dress indicated.⁷⁵ Seventh, several have combined angelic, juridical, priestly, prophetic, royal, and/or other meanings in their interpretation of what ποδήρης means, producing a complex sartorial identity.⁷⁶ Eighth, a number of other scholars have proposed, some cautiously and others stridently, an explicit, negative critique of priestly or high priestly imagery, concluding that it is not encapsulated within ποδήρης and consequently does not appear here.⁷⁷ And finally, a few express either a lack of certainty or an implicit or explicit

Quispel, *The Secret Book of Revelation: The Last Book of the Bible* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1979), 37; Vanni, *L'Apocalisse*, 126-27; and Cornelis van der Waal, *Oudtestamentische priesterlijke motieven in de Apocalyps* (Goes, Netherlands: Oosterbaan & Le Cointre, 1956), 51.

⁷⁵See, e.g., Frederick Düsterdieck, *Critical and Exegetical Handbook to the Revelation of John*, trans. from the 3rd German ed. by Henry E. Jacobs (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1887), 112; and Stefanovic, *Revelation*, 100-101 (who provides no evidence for the royal part of his interpretation).

⁷⁶William Barclay states not only that John's description of the robe and girdle not only "is almost exactly that of the dress of the priests and of the High Priest" (*The Revelation to John: Translated with an Introduction and Interpretation*, rev. ed., The Daily Study Bible Series [Philadelphia: Westminster, 1976], 1:45), but also that the robe "was the robe of royalty" (*ibid.*, 1:46) and the "dress of the messenger of God" (*ibid.*); to him this shows Jesus "in his threefold eternal office of Prophet, Priest and King" (*ibid.*). Cf. Desmond Ford, *Crisis! A Commentary on the Book of Revelation* (Newcastle, CA: Desmond Ford Publications, 1982), 2:252; Hoffmann, *Destroyer and the Lamb*, 223-24; Benny J. Jones, "A Study of the Son of Man in Revelation with Special Reference to the Suffering Servant Motif" (PhD diss., New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, 1990), 123; Jonathan Knight, *Revelation, Readings: A New Biblical Commentary* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 39; and Leonard L. Thompson, *Revelation*, Abingdon New Testament Commentaries (Nashville: Abingdon, 1998), 59.

⁷⁷This perspective is sometimes associated with others listed above. Cf., e.g., Aune (*Revelation 1-5*, 93-94), Bauckham ("Revelation," 1291), Beasley-Murray (*Revelation*, 66-67), Beckwith (*Apocalypse*, 438), Carrell (*Jesus and the Angels*, 161, n. 38), Charles (*Revelation*, 1:27-28 [though he contradicts this in *ibid.*, 1:cxiii]), Giesen (*Die Offenbarung des Johannes*, 87-88), Lenski (*Interpretation*, 65), Mazzaferri (*Genre*,

inability to decide what this particular word means in this context.⁷⁸

Data on ποδήρης

When one compares the broad spectrum of scholarly comment on this verse with the linguistic data regarding ποδήρης explored in the last chapter, one discovers that a careful examination of the relevant textual data has regrettably not been the uniform or even typical approach to the subject. On a number of occasions exegetes have not only *not* collected all the relevant data but have also misinterpreted what information they do have; this has consequently skewed and distorted their preliminary results.

As I have already documented in the previous chapter, the term ποδήρης occurs only here in the NT but twelve times in the LXX.⁷⁹ In eight of its twelve occurrences in

303, n. 315, 320-21 [who sees the ποδήρης as “priestly” but denies Christ is a high priestly figure]], Metzger (*Breaking the Code*, 26-27), Morris (*The Book of Revelation*, 53-54), Murphy (*Fallen Is Babylon*, 90), Osborne (*Revelation*, 89), Prigent (*Commentary on the Apocalypse*, 136-37), Roloff (*Revelation*, 36), Thomas (*Revelation 1-7*, 98-99), and Vanhoye (“L’Apocalisse,” 262-63; *Old Testament Priests*, 280-81).

⁷⁸Cf., e.g., Alan Bandy, “The Prophetic Lawsuit in the Book of Revelation: An Analysis of the Lawsuit Motif in Revelation with Reference to the Use of the Old Testament” (PhD diss., Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2007), 187-89; David L. Barr, *Tales of the End: A Narrative Commentary on the Book of Revelation* (Santa Rosa, CA: Polebridge, 1998), 40; Huber, *Einer gleich einem Menschensohn*, 120-21, 149; Catherine Sunsalus González and Justo L. González, *Revelation*, Westminster Bible Companion (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1997), 18; George Eldon Ladd, *A Commentary on the Revelation of John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), 32-33; and Yeatts, *Revelation*, 41-42. In the second of his two articles on dress imagery in Revelation, Neufeld purposefully and explicitly sets aside the question of whether the dress indicates priestly status (“Under the Cover,” 71).

⁷⁹Several exegetes have concluded that the term appears only seven times in the LXX, despite the fact that this is not even close to the truth. See, e.g., Barclay (who mistakenly adduces Lev 16:4 as a text in which ποδήρης appears [*Revelation*, 1:45]), Robert Mounce (who erroneously asserts that ποδήρης “is found seven times in the LXX, and in every case but one it refers to the attire of the high priest” [*Revelation*,

the LXX, it clearly and unequivocally describes dress associated with the high priest.⁸⁰ In the previous chapter I have suggested plausible arguments for understanding three more LXX references in Ezek 9⁸¹ (plus a textual variant in Ezek 10:2) as high priestly dress imagery.⁸² The remaining LXX occurrence (Sir 27:8) is the most generic in nature, but there is nothing that automatically precludes it from being recognized as a reference or allusion to the high priest's long robe. In fact, other terminology within this verse points in this direction.

My survey of the remaining twenty-five references to ποδήρης in Jewish and Christian literature during the Second Temple period and into the second century CE⁸³ indicates that there are only three occurrences in this literature that clearly do not refer to dress associated with the high priest.⁸⁴ Two of these references, however, imply such dress, since in those texts the air on Earth is described as “reaching to the feet” so as to

58]), Osborne (who concludes that “six of the seven times the long robe is mentioned in the OT [e.g., Exod. 28:4; 39:29] it refers to the high priestly vestments” [*Revelation*, 89]), and Thomas (who agrees that the term has “seven OT occurrences” [*Revelation 1-7*, 99]).

⁸⁰LXX Exod 25:7; 28:4, 31; 29:5; 35:9; Zech 3:4; Wis 18:24; Sir 45:8.

⁸¹LXX Ezek 9:2, 3, 11.

⁸²Although Vanhoye realizes that statistics favor a high priestly interpretation, he discards that since he has already concluded that Ezek 9 does not contain high priestly imagery (“L’Apocalisse,” 263).

⁸³*Let. Aris.* 96; *Philo Fug.* 185, *Her.* 176, *Leg.* 1.81 and 2.56, *Mos.* 2.117, 118, 120, 121, 133, and 143, *Mut.* 43, *Somn.* 1.214, *Spec.* 1.85 (2x), 93, 94, and *Frg.* 117 on LXX Exod 28:27 (text in *Philo*, LCL, 12:257); *Josephus A.J.* 3.153 and 159, 8.93, 20.6, and *B.J.* 5.231; *Barn.* 7:9; *T. Levi* 8:2.

⁸⁴*Philo Mos.* 2.118 and *Spec.* 1.85b; *Josephus A.J.* 3.153.

prove why the high priest's hyacinthine χιτών is ποδήρης.⁸⁵ Consequently, only one out of these thirty-seven occurrences of ποδήρης clearly points away from the dress of the high priest.⁸⁶ One would therefore assume that the word ποδήρης in a Jewish and/or Christian context up to the time of Revelation normally carried a high priestly meaning and that such would be the default meaning in Rev 1:13.

Grammatical Issues

What is the grammatical nature and role of ποδήρης in Rev 1:13? Here the term is an anarthrous accusative masculine singular substantival adjective, the direct object of the perfect passive accusative masculine singular participle ἐνδεδυμένον. The two elements that are of interest here are the anarthrous and substantival nature of ποδήρης.

The anarthrous nature of the substantival adjective ποδήρης in 1:13, while evident in John's description, is not definitive for determining the sartorial meaning of the term.⁸⁷ It is not clear that Rev 1:13 falls into any of the numerous constructions in which an anarthrous substantive may be understood to be definite.⁸⁸ On the other hand, neither is it obvious that the force of the anarthrous ποδήρης is indefinite. As a matter of fact, this same anarthrous usage of ποδήρης occurs in numerous texts outside of

⁸⁵Philo *Mos.* 2.118 and *Spec.* 1.85b.

⁸⁶Josephus *A.J.* 3.153.

⁸⁷With regard to an anarthrous substantive, the lack of an article indicates that such a substantive has “one of three forces: indefinite, qualitative, or definite” (Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996], 243). Such articular distinctions are not sharply defined, and there is some overlap between these three categories (*ibid.*).

⁸⁸Cf. *ibid.*, 245-54.

Revelation.⁸⁹ But in all of these references except that in Josephus *A.J.* 3.153, it either certainly or probably refers to clothing associated with the high priest,⁹⁰ or it connotes or supports high priestly dress imagery.⁹¹ Consequently, one cannot argue solely from the anarthrous ποδήρης in Rev 1:13 either for or against high priestly dress imagery.

The fact that John uses ποδήρης in Rev 1:13 as a substantive, however, is important for understanding the nature of the term John uses. The argument that Josephus used ποδήρης to refer not only to the dress of the high priest but also to that of the common priests is used by some to diminish or negate the potential high priestly nature of the term in Rev 1:13.⁹² But this argument resists persuasive appeal, since in

⁸⁹As an anarthrous substantive, see LXX Ezek 9:2; Zech 3:4; Sir 45:8; Philo *Mos.* 2.118; *Spec.* 1.85b; Josephus *A.J.* 3.159, 8.93, and *B.J.* 5.231. As an anarthrous attributive adjective, see Exod 28:31; Wis 18:24; Philo *Spec.* 1:85a; Josephus *A.J.* 3.153.

⁹⁰LXX Exod 28:31; Zech 3:4; Wis 18:24; Sir 45:8; Josephus *A.J.* 3.159, 8.93, and *B.J.* 5.231.

⁹¹LXX Ezek 9:2; Sir 27:8; Philo *Mos.* 2.118 and *Spec.* 1.85b.

⁹²Did Josephus write the way he did with regards to priestly and high priestly dress partly because of his linguistic abilities in Greek (*C. Ap.* 1.50; cf. Loren L. Johns, *The Lamb Christology of the Apocalypse of John*, WUNT, 2nd ser., 167 [Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003], 36-37)? One must also keep in mind the possibility that the description of Josephus may have been tainted by self-serving or propagandistic purposes. Josephus claimed to be a Pharisee and an ordinary priest (*Vita* 1-6, 12), while the high priests were largely Sadducean. Josephus furthermore claimed that the Sadducees listened to the Pharisees (*A.J.* 18.17), and even that the high priests understood legal matters better because of his communicated understanding (*Vita* 9). With this in mind, in *Antiquitates judaicae* Josephus goes against the model of the OT in describing the dress of the common priests before that of the high priest's dress, and his account is much longer than the description there (Robertson, "Account," 197-98). Also, Josephus describes the neck opening of the tunic of the common priests by using the term ὠα ("collar"), a word restricted in the LXX to the high priest's dress (*A.J.* 3.156; cf. LXX Exod 28:28; 36:31; Ps 132:2). There is the possibility that Josephus may have attempted to magnify the role of the common priests by borrowing elements

that singular case in Josephus, the term is not a substantive but an attributive adjective modifying the χιτῶν of the priests.⁹³ It is true that ποδήρης is an adjective with the meaning of “foot-length.” But as I have demonstrated in the previous chapter, whenever ποδήρης is used as a substantive in Jewish and Christian literature outside of Josephus up to the first part of the second century CE, it designates either the distinctive foot-length robe of a high priest⁹⁴ or carries high priestly overtones.⁹⁵

While one might agree with Josephus (and against Philo)⁹⁶ that the priests wore foot-length tunics,⁹⁷ one must assert that if John were utilizing technical language, it would be unlikely for him to use the comparatively rare perspective of Josephus in his text in Rev 1:13, particularly when this particular usage is completely absent from the

from the high priest’s dress (Robertson, “Account,” 214-15).

⁹³See Josephus *A.J.* 3.153 (ἔστι δὲ τοῦτο τὸ ἔνδυμα ποδήρης χιτῶν [“But this garment is a foot-length tunic”]). Josephus’s account in here provides more detail than Exod 28:40 (MT and LXX), which only specifies that the garment was a tunic and does not refer to its length. Charles, in referring to Josephus as support for a ποδήρης being the clothing not only of the high priest but of all the priests in general, did not distinguish between this attributive adjective and the substantive in Rev 1:13 (*Revelation*, 1:27).

⁹⁴Cf. LXX Exod 25:7; 28:4; 35:9; Zech 3:4; Sir 45:8; Philo *Her.* 176, *Leg.* 1.81 and 2.56, *Mos.* 2.117, 118, 120, 121, 133, and 143, *Mut.* 43, *Spec.* 1.93 and 94, *Frg.* 117; *Let. Aris.* 96; *Barn.* 7:9; *T. Levi* 8:2.

⁹⁵Ezek 9:2, 3, 11.

⁹⁶Philo’s statement in *Spec.* 1.83 that the priests’ tunics were short (χιτωνίσκοις) so they could move quickly in their ministry contradicts Josephus. On χιτωνίσκος elsewhere in Philo, see *Contempl.* 51 and 72 and *Prov.* 2.17. On the meaning of χιτωνίσκος, see LSJ, s.v. “χιτωνίσκος,” and cf. Feldman (*Judean Antiquities 1-4*, 272, n. 391).

⁹⁷Cf. Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief*, 93-94.

LXX. A more prudent approach when first analyzing Rev 1:13 would be to start with a default understanding that ποδήρης typically refers not to priestly but to high priestly imagery. One should abandon such an approach only if it can be proven otherwise from the text of Revelation itself.⁹⁸

It is unlikely that John is primarily describing or emphasizing how long the dress item is that ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου is wearing.⁹⁹ Instead, in line with the preponderance of usage of the term in Jewish and Christian literature catalogued earlier, he is describing what type of dress item the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου is wearing.

The Question of an OT Background

While it is certain that the text of Rev 1:13 contains ποδήρης, one cannot conclusively determine what Hebrew or Aramaic terminology might lay behind or underneath the text, despite numerous attempts to do so. In the previous chapter I

⁹⁸Cf. Briggs, who notes that ποδήρης not being the only term for this robe “does nothing to discourage the notion that Christ is dressed as a high priest here” (*Jewish Temple Imagery*, 53, n. 18).

⁹⁹Cf., e.g., *Let. Aris.* 96 and Josephus *A.J.* 3.159. Gundry (*Commentary*, 999) and Thomas (*Revelation 1-7*, 99) are two who translate ἐνδεδυμένον ποδήρη in Rev 1:13 as “clothed down to the feet.” The adverbial sense of this translation amplifies its overall ambiguity (i.e., dressed in any kind of long robe). While a Greek adjective may be used adverbially, Wallace notes that such a usage is usually reserved for special terms (*Greek Grammar*, 292), and the usage of such adverbial adjectives that occur the most is in the neuter, which is “frequently, if not normally, articular” (*ibid.*, 293; cf. C. F. D. Moule, *An Idiom Book of New Testament Greek*, 2nd ed. [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959], 160-62; Stanley E. Porter, *Idioms of the Greek New Testament*, 2nd ed., *Biblical Languages: Greek 2* [Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999], 121-22). The parallelism between ἐνδεδυμένον ποδήρη and περιεζωσμένον . . . ζώνην (perfect participle + accusative singular) also undercuts the adverbial sense. Translating ποδήρη instead as a “foot-length robe” emphasizes it as a specific dress item in line with its usage elsewhere, where it is almost always associated with the high priest’s hyacinth-colored robe.

demonstrated that it is simply not the case that ποδήρης in the LXX translates five¹⁰⁰—or four¹⁰¹—or even three¹⁰²—Hebrew terms. Instead, I have suggested that it apparently translates but two terms, מְעִיל and מַחְלָצוֹת, the former being the closest equivalency and the latter rare term best approximated by this Greek term. Other apparent translations of different Hebrew words by ποδήρης are probably attempts to approximate high priestly dress or are possibly incorrect translations. Even so, we know that the semantic range of the Hebrew was not identical to the Greek, and ποδήρης was not used with the same sartorial range as מְעִיל. By making one’s case for a particular interpretation in Revelation largely if not solely based on the supposedly underlying Hebrew, one potentially confuses categories of inquiry and, so to speak, contaminates

¹⁰⁰Notice that Aune contends that the term translates “five different Hebrew words [חֲשִׁי, מְעִיל, אֶפֶד, בֶּד, and מַחְלָצוֹת], so that the Greek term ποδήρης can hardly be understood as a technical term” (*Revelation 1-5*, 93). Prigent also exclaims that the term does not have “a very specialized technical meaning” (*Commentary on the Apocalypse*, 136). Cf. Vanhoye, “L’Apocalisse,” 262.

In Thomas’s enumeration of the supposedly seven occurrences in which ποδήρης occurs, he incorrectly asserts that the term translates references to the “ephod,” citing “Exod 28:27[31]” (*Revelation 1-7*, 99), but there it refers to the “robe of the ephod.” Thomas is not alone; cf., e.g., Barker (*Revelation*, 84), Mulholland (*Revelation*, 82, n. 13), Prigent (*Commentary on the Apocalypse*, 136), Swete (*Apocalypse of St John*, 15), and Vanhoye (“L’Apocalisse,” 262).

¹⁰¹See Barker, *Revelation*, 84. Cf. Vanhoye, who initially stated that it “translates four different Hebrew words” (*Old Testament Priests*, 281), but later he agreed that it translates five words (“L’Apocalisse,” 262).

¹⁰²Mulholland comments that it translates the terms for “the breastplate (Ex 25:7; 35:9); the ephod (Ex 28:4, 31; 29:5); [and] the high priestly garments of Joshua (Zec 3:1-5)” (*Revelation*, 82, n. 13). Swete much earlier had declared that it is used for such garments as the breastplate, the ephod, and the robe (*Apocalypse of St John*, 15). See also Royalty, *Streets of Heaven*, 46, n. 19.

the exegetical pool.¹⁰³ Consequently, all substantial argumentation concerning this particular dress item in Rev 1:13 should be solely based on ποδήρης, its usage in Rev 1:13, and its usage in the LXX and other related texts.

Daniel 10:5 and Ezekiel 9:2, 3, 11

Exegetes have typically seen the allusive background to the phrase ἐνδεδυμένοι ποδήρη of Rev 1:13 in Dan 10:5,¹⁰⁴ Ezek 9:2, 3, 11¹⁰⁵ or a combination of those two texts.¹⁰⁶ In Dan 10:5 Daniel describes a celestial being “clothed in linen” (לְבוּשׁ בְּרִים)

¹⁰³Thomas, for example, implies that since ποδήρης translates מְעִיל on occasion (e.g., Exod 28:4 and 29:5), and since מְעִיל was a common term “for men of high rank (e.g., 1 Sam. 18:4; 24:5, 12; Ezek. 26:16),” ποδήρης could thus refer to a robe that not only the high priest wore but also men of different kinds of high rank; consequently, the word could refer to a robe that a generic man of “dignity or high rank” wore (*Revelation 1-7*, 99). H. R. van de Kamp has advanced similar arguments (*Openbaring: Profetie vanaf Patmos*, Commentaar op het Nieuwe Testament, 3rd series [Kampen: Kok, 2000], 80). Cf. also Ford (*Crisis!*, 252) and Stefanovic (*Revelation*, 100-101, 104), who both highlight the supposed royal imagery in 1:13 by concluding that both priests and kings wore long robes—apparently making this deduction on the basis of מְעִיל and/or the English translation. Van der Waal uses the argument that the מְעִיל was not foot-length as a reason to look elsewhere than the high priest’s foot-length robe (*Oudtestamentische priesterlijke motieven*, 51); but the word under discussion is ποδήρης, not מְעִיל.

¹⁰⁴Cf., e.g., Aune (*Revelation 1-5*, 93) and Vanhoye (“L’Apocalisse,” 263, who asserts that the relationship between Rev 1:13-14 and Dan 10:5-6 is an undeniable one).

¹⁰⁵Cf., e.g., Aune (*Revelation 1-5*, 93), Prigent (*Commentary on the Apocalypse*, 136), Royalty (*Streets of Heaven*, 46, 147), Vanhoye (“L’Apocalisse,” 263), and Whiteley (“Search for Cohesion,” 177). The major work advocating Ezek 9 as the primary allusive background to this sartorial image in Rev 1:13 is Kowalski (*Die Rezeption*, 75, 82, 86-89), although she realizes that the context is different (p. 88).

¹⁰⁶E.g., Beale, *Revelation*, 208-210 (who sees Dan 10 as primary); Huber, *Einer gleich einem Menschensohn*, 147, 152; Kowalski, *Die Rezeption*, 75, 82, 88; Whiteley, “Search for Cohesion,” 173-74 (who concludes that Daniel saw the man from Ezek 9 in his vision in chap. 10); and Yarbro Collins, “Son of Man Tradition,” 548. For the possibility that this dress image in 1:13 alludes to the high priest Joshua in Zech 3:5, cf.,

[MT]; ἐνδεδυμένος βύσσινα [OG]; ἐνδεδυμένος βαδδιν [Θ]).¹⁰⁷ The only dress term in the Greek of Dan 10:5, however, that matches ἐνδεδυμένον ποδήρη in Rev 1:13 is ἐνδύω, and the ubiquity of that particular verb¹⁰⁸ cannot, by itself, tie these two passages together on the basis of a verbal allusion. Furthermore, while several of the descriptive elements of the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου in Rev 1:12-16 occur in Dan 10:5-6,¹⁰⁹ comparison of the texts instead suggests that the allusion is ambiguous at best: (1)

e.g., Skarsaune (*Proof from Prophecy*, 309); Jauhiainen believes that establishing an allusion to this latter text is difficult (*Use of Zechariah*, 80-81).

¹⁰⁷Barclay confidently (but unreliably) informs the reader that, with regard to the visionary figure in Dan 10, “the Greek Old Testament calls his garment *podēres*” (*Revelation*, 1:46).

Numerous interpreters have discussed what is termed as the angelomorphic appearance of the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου in Rev 1. On angelomorphic christology and Revelation, cf., e.g., Gieschen, *Angelomorphic Christology*, 245-69; Robert H. Gundry, “Angelomorphic Christology in the Book of Revelation,” in *The Old Is Better: New Testament Essays in Support of Traditional Interpretations*, WUNT 178 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 377-98 (hereafter referred to as “Angelomorphic Christology [2005]”); Hoffmann, *The Destroyer and the Lamb*, particularly 26-28, 105-68, 193-201, 223-35; Huber, *Einer gleich einem Menschensohn*, 51-64; Leo R. Percer, “The War in Heaven: Michael and Messiah in Revelation 12” (PhD diss., Baylor University, 1999), 186-237; Håkan Ulfgard, “In Quest of the Elevated Jesus: Reflections on the Angelomorphic Christology of the Book of Revelation Within Its Jewish Setting,” in *The New Testament as Reception*, ed. Mogens Müller & Henrik Tronier, JSNTSup 230 / Copenhagen International Seminar 11 (London: Sheffield Academic, 2002), 120-30; and Adela Yarbro Collins, “Messiah, Son of God, and Son of Man in the Gospel and Revelation of John,” in Adela Yarbro Collins and John J. Collins, *King and Messiah as Son of God: Divine, Human, and Angelic Messianic Figures in Biblical and Related Literature* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 175-203.

¹⁰⁸E.g., LXX Gen 3:21; 27:15; 38:19; 41:42; Exod 28:41; 29:5, 8, 30; 40:13; 14; Lev 6:3, 4; Num 20:26, 28; Deut 22:5, 11; 1 Sam 17:5, 38; etc.

¹⁰⁹E.g., clothed, girded, gold(en), eyes, fire/fiery, feet/legs, voice.

descriptions are not always the same;¹¹⁰ (2) specific terminology is not always identical;¹¹¹ (3) the descriptive sequence in both texts is dissimilar;¹¹² and (4) some elements in Revelation do not occur in Dan 10¹¹³ (and vice versa).¹¹⁴ If John is dependent on OT literary works for his description of the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου in 1:12-16, he is certainly not dependent on Dan 10:5-6 alone.¹¹⁵ It remains difficult at best to prove that John was dependent on Dan 10:5-6 for his sartorial description of the

¹¹⁰E.g., waist (Dan 10:5: מִתְּנַיִם; ὀσφύς [OG/Θ]) vs. breasts (Rev 1:13: μαστός); face like the appearance of lightning (Dan 10:6: בְּרָק; ἀστραπή [OG/Θ]) vs. appearance like the sun (ἥλιος) shining with full force (Rev 1:16); voice like a tumult or crowd (Dan 10:6: הִמְנוֹן; θόρυβος [OG]; ὄχλος [Θ]) vs. voice like many waters (Rev 1:15: ὑδάτων πολλῶν).

¹¹¹E.g., linen (Dan 10:5: בָּד; βύσσινος [OG]; βαδδιν [Θ]) vs. foot-length robe (Rev 1:13: ποδήρης); eyes like fiery lamps/torches (Dan 10:6: שֵׁשׁ כְּלִפְיָדָי; λαμπάδες πυρός [OG/Θ]) vs. eyes like fiery flames (Rev 1:14: φλόξ πυρός); arms and feet (or, legs) like shining bronze (Dan 10:6: לְקַף נְהַשֵּׁת כְּעֵין וַמְרִגְלָתָיו וַיִּרְעַתָּיו [“his arms and his feet like the appearance of polished bronze”]; οἱ βραχίονες αὐτοῦ καὶ οἱ πόδες ὡσεὶ χαλκὸς ἐξαστράπτων [OG: “his arms and his feet like gleaming bronze”]; οἱ βραχίονες αὐτοῦ καὶ τὰ σκέλη ὡς ὄρασις χαλκοῦ στίλβοντος [Θ: “his arms and his legs like the appearance of shining/radiant bronze”]) vs. feet like χαλκολιβάνω (Rev 1:15).

¹¹²The reference in Dan 10:5-6 to the eyes *follows* reference to the face/appearance (פְּנֵי; πρόσωπον [OG/Θ]), whereas in Rev 1:12-16 reference to the eyes *precedes* (by some distance) reference to the face/appearance (ὄψις).

¹¹³E.g., no reference to head, hair, white, wool, snow, seven stars, hand, mouth, or sword.

¹¹⁴E.g., no reference in Revelation to a body “like Tarshish” (Dan 10:6: כְּתַרְשִׁישׁ; ὡσεὶ θαρσις [OG/Θ]) or to the arms (Dan 10:6: וַיִּרְעַתָּיו; οἱ βραχίονες [OG/Θ]).

¹¹⁵For instance, the voice like many waters in Rev 1:15 is frequently seen to allude to Ezek 1:24 (MT and LXX) and 43:2 (MT). On this, see, e.g., Kowalski and the references she cites (*Die Rezeption*, 89-92).

ποδήρης, particularly since the specific sartorial image is linguistically different.¹¹⁶

Consequently, the case for Dan 10:5 being the allusive background for Rev 1:13 is not compelling.

With regard to Ezek 9:2, 3, 11 as an allusive background to the ποδήρης in Rev 1:13, here Ezekiel sees an angelic being “clothed in linen” (MT) or clothed with a foot-length robe (LXX).¹¹⁷ From a linguistic standpoint LXX Ezek 9 does appear at first glance to be more allusively attractive than Dan 10:5. This is primarily because both words in LXX Ezek 9:2, 3, 11 (ένδύω, ποδήρης) appear in Rev 1:13 (ένδεδυμένοι ποδήρη).¹¹⁸ In fact, LXX Ezek 9:2, 3, and 11 contain not just two but three dress terms mentioned by John in Rev 1:13, since all three verses also refer to a sash (ζώνη).

Nevertheless, two major reasons¹¹⁹ cause me to find it difficult to conclude that

¹¹⁶Vogel’s assertion that Rev 1:13-15 “repeats almost word for word the description of the man clothed in linen in Dan 10” is clearly overstated (*Cultic Motif*, 166).

¹¹⁷Ezek 9:2: םיִּבְרֵה שְׂבִילֵי; ένδεδυκώς ποδήρη; 9:3: םיִּבְרֵה שְׂבִילֵה שִׂיאֵה; τὸν ἄνδρα τὸν ένδεδυκότα τὸν ποδήρη; and 9:11: םיִּבְרֵה שְׂבִילֵ שִׂיאֵה; ὁ ἄνῆρ ὁ ένδεδυκώς τὸν ποδήρη. Cf. Ezek 10:2: םיִּבְרֵה שְׂבִילֵ שִׂיאֵה; τὸν ἄνδρα τὸν ένδεδυκότα τὴν στολήν; 10:6: םיִּבְרֵה-שְׂבִילֵ שִׂיאֵה; τῷ ἄνδρὶ τῷ ένδεδυκότι τὴν στολήν τὴν ἁγίαν; and 10:7: םיִּבְרֵה שְׂבִילֵ; τοῦ ένδεδυκότος τὴν στολήν τὴν ἁγίαν.

¹¹⁸Kowalski agrees that the appearance of two words in a possible source text allows one to speak of an allusion (*Die Rezeption*, 88).

¹¹⁹Other reasons include: (1) the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου is not here the leader of any group of associates, particularly a group of avenging figures who are destroying people; (2) he is not marking people on the forehead who groan and grieve for Jerusalem’s iniquities; and (3) reference to ἄλλον ἄγγελον (“another angel”) in Rev 7:2-3 who places a protective seal (cf. 9:4) on the foreheads of the 144,000 is a closer parallel to the main character in Ezek 9-10, but this makes the utilization of ένδεδυκώς ποδήρη in Ezek 9:2 problematic for the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου in Rev 1:13. For the view that the angel of Rev 7 is an angelomorphic portrayal of Jesus, cf. Barker

John was attempting to allude specifically to LXX Ezek 9. First, with reference to the use of ποδήρης in Ezek 9 and Rev 1, it is unlikely that just two Greek words in LXX Ezek 9 (ἐνδύω, ποδήρης)—irrespective of the very different contexts of both passages—would be the primary reason for John’s description of the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου ἐνδεδυμένον ποδήρη in Rev 1:13. Again, the verb is a common dress verb, and thus the weight of the argument basically hangs on the ποδήρης, making this a slim argument indeed. And second, there is no clear reason why John would privilege one sartorial image from LXX Ezek 9 (the ποδήρης) over the other in the same verses (the ζώνη). Ezekiel’s sash is not a golden one as in Revelation but a lapis lazuli one (ζώνη σαπφείρου) instead (9:2). Furthermore, it is located (like Dan 10:5) not at his breasts but at his waist (9:2, 3, 11).¹²⁰

Both Dan 10:5 and Ezek 9:2, 3, 11 have attractive elements that have persuaded many exegetes to see one or both of them as allusive backgrounds to the ποδήρης of Rev 1:13. At the same time, there are several weighty reasons why such allusive attachments are not entirely persuasive. While both Daniel and Ezekiel are certainly important in understanding the structure and various motifs in Revelation,¹²¹ there is little compelling reason to privilege either Dan 10:5 or Ezek 9:2, 3, 11 as a background

(*Revelation*, 159-63), Gieschen (“The Lamb,” 242), and Gundry (“Angelomorphic Christology [2005],” 388-89).

¹²⁰LXX Ezek 9:2 and 3: ἐπὶ τῆς ὀσφύος αὐτοῦ; 9:11: τὴν ὀσφὺν αὐτοῦ. For more on this sartorial image, see the discussion in Winkle, “Iridescence in Ezekiel,” 56-70.

¹²¹Cf., e.g., Beale, *Revelation*, 76-99; and Kowalski, *Die Rezeption*.

for the particular dress imagery in Rev 1:13 based on the language and sartorial images in those former texts.

Another OT background text

I would suggest that another text is more compelling in terms of providing the OT background to this image of the ποδήρης in Rev 1:13. First, immediately after John's mention of the seven golden lampstands, he then writes that the next thing he saw with regard to the ὅμοιον υἷδον ἀνθρώπου was two pieces of dress imagery. Why is the dress of the ὅμοιον υἷδον ἀνθρώπου so prominently positioned here?¹²² Unlike

¹²²Recent discussion in the field of discourse analysis on the topic of prominence (also referred to as emphasis, foreground, grounding, relevance, salience, or stress) suggests that John utilizes perfects, such as ἐνδεδυμένον and περιεζωσμένον (1:13), to heighten the focus of his rhetoric on these dress terms. On prominence in general, see the groundbreaking work by R. E. Longacre, "Discourse Peak as Zone of Turbulence," in *Beyond the Sentence: Discourse and Sentential Form*, ed. Jessica R. Wirth (Ann Arbor, MI: Karoma, 1985), 83; and cf. Kathleen Callow, *Discourse Considerations in Translating the Word of God* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1974), 50; and idem, *Man and Message: A Guide to Meaning-Based Text Analysis* (Lanham, MD: Summer Institute of Linguistics and University Press of America, 1998), 151-52, 156, 164, 181-85.

With regard to prominence in the NT, Stanley E. Porter warns that "its importance should not be underestimated" ("Prominence: An Overview," in *The Linguist as Pedagogue: Trends in the Teaching and Linguistic Analysis of the Greek New Testament*, ed. Stanley E. Porter and Matthew Brook O'Donnell, New Testament Monographs 11 [Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2009], 45). In regard to the use of perfects, he states that "the perfect is the foreground tense, which introduces elements in an even more discrete, defined, contoured and complex way" (*Idioms*, 23). With regard to perfect participles, David L. Mathewson asserts: "The function of the perfect participles . . . is to foreground important features of the elements/characters that are introduced for the first time and play the most significant role" ("Verbal Aspect in the Apocalypse of John: An Analysis of Revelation 5," *NovT* 50 [2008]: 71 [cf. p. 74]). According to this perspective, the perfect participles in Rev 1 (γεγραμμένα [1:3]; ἐνδεδυμένον and περιεζωσμένον [1:13]; and πεπυρωμένης [1:15]) are instrumental in introducing the scroll of Revelation itself and the ὅμοιον υἷδον ἀνθρώπου. Mathewson has recently written a full-length monograph on the subject: *Verbal Aspect in the Book of Revelation: The Function of Greek Verb Tenses in John's Apocalypse*, Linguistic Biblical Studies 4 (Leiden: Brill, 2010). For cautionary notes regarding prominence in

the descriptive material that immediately follows, it never appears again in reference to Jesus in Revelation. Yet it is the sartorial framework for what follows.

I would suggest that one of the reasons for this prominent positioning of dress imagery is both structural and thematic in nature. In John's vision he sees only two objects: (1) the seven golden lampstands; and (2) the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου, initially described in sartorial terms. Furthermore, after John mentions the first object he sees, he locates the second object (i.e., the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου) in the midst of the seven golden lampstands before he even mentions and describes this second object.¹²³ John's description of the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου and his clothing in his inaugural vision narrative is tightly integrated with the seven golden lampstands, and such a contextual integration of lampstand(s) and dress is not unique.

terms of tenses, cf. Constantine R. Campbell, *Verbal Aspect, the Indicative Mood, and Narrative: Soundings in the Greek of the New Testament*, SBG 13 (New York: Peter Lang, 2007), 12-14, 233-37; and Robert E. Picirilli, "The Meaning of the Tenses in New Testament Greek: Where Are We?" *JETS* 48 (2005): 551.

Other studies dealing with prominence in the NT include: Buist Fanning, *Verbal Aspect in New Testament Greek*, Oxford Theological Monographs (Oxford: Clarendon, 1990), 74-75, 191; Stanley E. Porter, *Verbal Aspect in the Greek of the New Testament, with Reference to Tense and Mood*, SBG 1 (New York: Peter Lang, 2003), 92-93; Jeffrey T. Reed and Ruth A. Reese, "Verbal Aspect, Discourse Prominence, and the Letter of Jude," *FN* 9 (1996): 181-99; Randall K. J. Tan, "Prominence in the Pauline Epistles," in *The Linguist as Pedagogue*, 95-110; Cynthia Long Westfall, *A Discourse Analysis of the Letter to the Hebrews: The Relationship between Form and Meaning*, Library of New Testament Studies 297 (London: T & T Clark, 2005), particularly 31-36, 55-78; and idem, "A Method for the Analysis of Prominence in Hellenistic Greek," in *The Linguist as Pedagogue*, 75-94.

¹²³Notice the flow of the narrative in 1:12b-13: καὶ ἐπιστρέψας εἶδον ἑπτὰ λυχνίας χρυσᾶς καὶ ἐν μέσῳ τῶν λυχνιῶν ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου ἐνδεδυμένον ποδήρη καὶ περιεζωσμένον πρὸς τοῖς μαστοῖς ζώνην χρυσᾶν ("and after I turned around, I saw seven golden lampstands, and in the middle of the lampstands one like a son of man clothed in a foot-length robe and encircled [at the level of] the breasts with a golden sash").

The one place in the OT in which lampstand and dress are similarly integrated contextually is in Exod 27:20–28:5.¹²⁴ Immediately before the section focusing on the dress of the priests (in particular, the high priest) in Exod 28, YHWH tells Moses to command the “sons of Israel” (בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל) to provide oil “for the lamp” (לְמִאֹר [MT]; εἰς φῶς [LXX]) so that “the flame can continually go up” (27:20: לְהַעֲלֹת נֵר תָּמִיד [MT]) or so that the “lamp might burn continually” (ἵνα κάηται λύχνος διὰ παντός [LXX]). The text further notes that Aaron and his sons¹²⁵ will tend¹²⁶ it from evening to morning (27:21).¹²⁷

One may object that Exod 27:20 refers to but one lamp (נֵר) and that

¹²⁴While the high priest, high priestly clothing, and a lampstand/menorah occur in Zech 3-4 (e.g., 3:4-5 and 4:2), the structure is reversed (i.e., clothing mentioned before the lampstand) and the high priest Joshua is explicitly missing from chap. 4.

¹²⁵Since in Lev 24:3 only Aaron is to light the lamps, this likely refers to the high priestly successors of Aaron rather than to all of Aaron’s sons (cf. Propp, *Exodus 19-40*, 428). The terminology for “sons” in reference to the priesthood needs to be interpreted in context; in 28:1, it refers to Aaron’s sons mentioned in the text: Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. But the next reference in 28:4 appears to refer to Aaron’s successors, since the clothing is only high priestly in nature. The plainer clothing in 28:40 indicates that “sons” there refers to Aaron’s sons as in 28:1. The same emphasis on the four sons is apparent in 28:41. In 28:43, however, it appears to refer to Aaron’s high priestly successors.

¹²⁶The Hebrew here is יַעֲרֶה, with the stem עָרַח frequently referring to arranging or ordering (cf. Exod 40:4, 23; Lev 24:3-4, 6-8), but the LXX is καύσει (from καίω, “I light, burn, burn up”). Propp suggests the Hebrew refers to lamps arranged in a row (*Exodus 19-40*, 428-29).

¹²⁷Exod 30:8 indicates that the lights of the lampstand were lit at evening. According to Philo, the lamps on the lampstand burned from evening until morning (*Spec.* 1.296). But according to Josephus, three of the seven lamps of the lampstand burned by day, and all seven by night (*A.J.* 3.199). But he also states elsewhere that one of the lights of the lampstand was never extinguished (*C. Ap.* 1.199; cf. *m. Tamid* 3:9; 6:1). Cf. C. T. R. Hayward, *Jewish Temple*, 23.

“lampstand” does not linguistically appear at all. But the “light” language in 27:20 (לְמָאֹר) is apparently an abbreviation or shorthand for a longer phrase found in Exod 35:14 and Num 4:9: מְנֹרֶת הַמָּאֹר (“lampstand of the light”).¹²⁸ Consequently, J. Philip Hyatt concluded that “we may assume that this section has to do with providing for the lamps on the lampstand, in spite of the fact that the terms used suggest at first sight a single light or lamp.”¹²⁹ As such, an implied reference to the lampstand would appear almost immediately before discussion begins on the high priest’s dress ensemble.

Furthermore, Exod 27:20-21 is linguistically woven to chap. 28 in at least four ways.¹³⁰ That 27:20 begins a new, more personal emphasis on instruction to Moses that continues into chap. 28 is indicated by the threefold use of the emphatic “and you” (וְאַתָּה [MT]; καὶ σὺ [LXX]) not only in 27:20 (YHWH’s order to Moses to obtain the oil for the lamp) but also 28:1 (YHWH’s order to Moses to summon Aaron and his sons from among the sons of Israel [בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל] for priestly ministry) and 3 (YHWH’s order to Moses to commission the fabrication of the high priestly garments).¹³¹ Second, the

¹²⁸This is the conclusion of J. Philip Hyatt, based on his observations of the term לְמָאֹר found here in 27:20 (as well as in 25:6 [לְמָאֹר]; 35:28 [לְמָאֹר]; and Num 4:16 [הַמָּאֹר]). See his *Commentary on Exodus*, New Century Bible (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1980), 279. See also Exod 35:8 (לְמָאֹר); 39:37 (הַמָּאֹר); and Lev 24:2 (לְמָאֹר). Cf. Propp, *Exodus 19-40*, 428.

¹²⁹Hyatt, *Commentary on Exodus*, 279. Cf. U. Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Exodus*, trans. Israel Abrahams (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1967), 370.

¹³⁰The question over the possible secondary nature of Exod 27:20-21 (see, e.g., John I. Durham, *Exodus*, WBC 3 [Waco, TX: Word, 1987], 380) is a modern concern and would not have been an issue for John.

¹³¹On this, cf. Cassuto (*Exodus*, 369-71) and Propp (*Exodus 19-40*, 427). Propp notes here that the tonal switch was so striking that scribal tradition began a new weekly

motif of the **בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל**, not seen in Exodus since 25:22, surges into prominence again, occurring twice in 27:20-21 and another eight times in the next chapter (28:1, 9, 11, 12 [לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל], 21, 29, 30, 38) and not occurring again until 29:28. Third, the name of Aaron, the most prominent name in 27:20–28:5, occurs for the first time in the tabernacle tradition and then six more times for a total of seven in this paragraph (27:21; 28:1 [3x], 2, 3, 4).¹³² And fourth, within the tabernacle narrative in Exodus, the motif of a “perpetual ordinance” or statute occurs only in association with the high priest and his sons lighting the flames on the lampstand (**חֲקַת עֹלָם** [27:21]), the necessity of Aaron and his sons wearing their sacral dress (**חֲקַת עֹלָם** [28:43]), and office of the priesthood for Aaron and his sons immediately following their vesting in sacral dress at their ordination (**לְחֲקַת עֹלָם** [29:9]).¹³³

Thus, in 27:20-21 not only is the tabernacle lampstand implicitly mentioned immediately before the command to institute the priesthood along with the description of the dress of the Aaronic high priesthood in chap. 28, but the two passages are linguistically woven together. Following the detailed description of the priestly (in particular, high priestly) dress in chap. 28 are directions on dressing the high priest and other priests for their ordination in chap. 29. Consequently, if the dress imagery that

reading in 27:20, whereas the division in the Christian tradition was in 28:1. The nearest prior emphatic “you” occurs outside of the tabernacle account (18:21), and the nearest subsequent occurrence is in 30:23 (both MT and LXX).

¹³²Cassuto, *Exodus*, 372.

¹³³Elsewhere in Exodus this terminology occurs only in 12:14, 17.

appears prominently in Rev 1—in association with the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου standing in the midst of the seven golden lampstands—has any allusion to OT dress imagery, a reasonable source to seriously consider would be Exod 28:4–29:9.¹³⁴ Here in the LXX the term ποδήρης occurs in 28:4 (as a substantive) and in 28:31 (as an attributive adjective), while the terms ἐνδύω and ποδήρης (as an attributive adjective) occur together in LXX Exod 29:5 (cf. LXX Zech 3:4; Sir 45:8-13).¹³⁵

Issues of Dress

The only class of people who wore the substantival ποδήρης in the LXX and other Second Temple literature were the high priests.¹³⁶ Adolf Pohl thus concluded that

¹³⁴Kealy states that John’s reference to the robe and sash comes from Exodus (*Apocalypse of John*, 75), and he is probably referring to Exod 28. Cf. Holtz, who sees Exod 28 in the background (*Die Christologie*, 118); and Paulien (“Role,” 249, n. 18). See further discussion below.

¹³⁵Whiteley is thus incorrect that Rev 1:13 and Ezek 9:2 are the “only two places where ἐνδύω plus ποδήρης exist together” (“Search for Cohesion,” 177). The verb also occurs in implicit connection to the noun in LXX Exod 29:29-30 and 40:13-14.

¹³⁶The singular visionary character of Ezek 9-10 cannot be seen as a class. Some have inaccurately stated that ποδήρης describes the dress of those whom the LXX never describes with this term. Barclay, for instance, insists that ποδήρης “is the description [*sic*] of the robe of Jonathan (1 *Samuel* 18:4); of Saul (1 *Samuel* 24:5, 11); of the princes of the sea (*Ezekiel* 26:16)” (*Revelation*, 1:46); this conclusion is baseless. Ladd (*Revelation*, 33) confidently asserts that ποδήρης described the clothing of prophets—and then mistakenly adduces Zech 3:4 for support, which speaks not of prophets but of the high priest Joshua (cf. 3:1-4). Mulholland declares—also without providing any evidence—that “the term [ποδήρης] is also used for the garments of kings and people of high standing” (*Revelation*, 82). Yeatts supports this familiar conclusion by not only stating that “the long robe was also worn by kings” but also by adducing such texts as 1 Sam 24:4-5, Ezek 26:16, and *Wis. Sol.* 18:24 in support of his conclusion—none of which provides the evidence he asserts is there (*Revelation*, 41). Unfortunately, the former two texts set forth as evidence by Yeatts do not use the term ποδήρης in the Greek, while the latter text does not refer to the king but to the high priest.

it was a “Fachausdruck für die Amtstracht des Hohenpriesters” (“technical term for the official dress of the high priest”).¹³⁷ While it is true that these particular texts do describe a garment that was priestly in nature, and while it is true that Josephus notes that in his time the common priests wore a foot-length tunic (ποδήρης χιτῶν [A.J. 3.153]), ποδήρης in the LXX does not describe the garments of just any Jewish ordinary priest. Rather, as I have already indicated, it clearly describes the clothing of the high priest in eight texts and it probably assumes high priestly dress imagery in the other four. While this might appear to be quibbling, it remains clear that the high priest did not wear exactly the same clothing as the common priests.¹³⁸ If there is high priestly imagery in Revelation, that is much different from asserting, in a more generalized way, that there is priestly imagery there.

Similarly, one cannot combine sartorial terminology relative to the priesthood in general (i.e., dress germane to the high priest and the common priests) and then use that information to deny the significance of ποδήρης in Rev 1:13. For example, one cannot

¹³⁷Pohl, *Die Offenbarung des Johannes*, 1.91.

¹³⁸Thompson imprecisely identifies both Sir 45:6-13 and *Let. Aris.* 96 as instances in which ποδήρης describes the “garb of priests” (*Revelation*, 59)—when they are, in fact, describing the dress of the high priest. Farmer mistakenly adduces Exod 28:4, 31 for his conclusion that the long robe is “priestly” in nature (*Revelation*, 38). Cf. Stefanovic (*Revelation*, 100). Trafton asserts that the ποδήρης is “a distinctive garment worn by the priest” (*Reading Revelation*, 28). Yeatts concludes similarly in his discussion of 1:13 when he asserts that the “robe” “was the garment of the Hebrew priest” (*Revelation*, 41). He then adduces (*ibid.*) several texts that do not refer to the priest but to the high priest (e.g., Exod 28:4, 31; 29:5; Lev 16:4) or a visionary being (Ezek 9:2). The analysis of Christopher A. Davis is only marginally better, in that he states that in the Greek OT and the Apocrypha “this term is used to describe only one kind of garment—namely, the garment worn by the Jewish priests, and notably the High Priest” (*Revelation*, The College Press NIV Commentary [Joplin, MO: College, 2000], 113).

legitimately argue that the lexical statistics for כַּתְּנָת, typically translated as χιτῶν in the LXX, overshadow ποδήρης and thus prove that the latter term consequently cannot have decisive, role-related significance in 1:13.¹³⁹ This argument widens the subject frame in order to marginalize the statistical import of ποδήρης. It is true that the majority of the texts that refer to either כַּתְּנָת or χιτῶν refer to the clothing of the common priests.¹⁴⁰

But when one strips away occurrences of either כַּתְּנָת or χιτῶν relating to the common priests, these same terms are found only six times referring to the clothing of the high priest. No matter how one counts the data, neither כַּתְּנָת nor χιτῶν (or other Greek

¹³⁹See Aune (*Revelation 1-5*, 93), who notes that the most common term for the robes of the high priests and the priests in the HB is כַּתְּנָת (usually translated by the LXX as χιτῶν). Aune cites, without attempting to be exhaustive, the examples of Exod 28:4 (high priest), 39 (high priest), 40 (common priests); 29:5 (high priest), 8 (common priests); 35:19 (common priests); 39:27 (LXX 36:34: both high priest and common priests); 40:14 (common priests); and Lev 6:3 (common priests). In Aune's enumeration of sample texts translated by χιτῶν, however, two of them do not translate כַּתְּנָת (i.e., Exod 35:19 [translating בְּגָד] and Lev 6:3 [translating נִזָּד]). Texts that utilize כַּתְּנָת but do not refer to the dress of the priestly hierarchy are: Gen 3:21; 37:3, 23 (2x), 31 (2x), 32 (2x), 33; 2 Sam 13:18, 19; 15:32; Job 30:18; Song 5:3; Isa 22:21.

¹⁴⁰Texts not mentioned by Aune that utilize כַּתְּנָת in reference to the high priest are Lev 8:7 and 16:4. On the other hand, texts not mentioned by Aune that utilize this word in reference to the common priests are Lev 8:13; 10:5; Ezra 2:69; Neh 7:69, 71.

What this means is that of all the texts that actually utilize כַּתְּנָת in relation to priestly or high priestly characters, five refer solely to the clothing of the high priest (Exod 28:4, 39; 29:5; Lev 8:7; 16:4), eight refer solely to the clothing of the common priests (Exod 28:40; 29:8; 40:14; Lev 8:13; 10:5; Ezra 2:69; Neh 7:69, 71), and one refers to the clothing of both the high priest and the common priests (Exod 39:27). On the other hand, of all the references to χιτῶν, five refer solely to the clothing of the high priest (LXX Exod 28:4, 39; 29:5; Lev 8:7; 16:4), six refer solely to the clothing of the common priests (LXX Exod 28:40; 29:8; 40:14; Lev 6:10; 8:13; 10:5), and one refers to the clothing of both the high priest and the common priests (LXX Exod 36:34). Other transliterated forms of כַּתְּנָת occur three times for the common priests: in LXX Ezra 2:69 (κοθωνοι) and Neh 7:70 (χοθωνωθ) and 72 (χοθωνωθ).

transliterations of כַּתָּנָה) occurs more frequently than ποδήρης in describing the clothing of the high priest.¹⁴¹

In a seemingly devastating conclusion to the argument that ποδήρης in Rev 1:13 refers to priestly—not to mention high priestly—dress, Aune argues as follows:

Robes and belts (which gathered the robes at the waist) were basic articles of clothing in the ancient Mediterranean world used by both men and women (cf. *Odyssey* 6.38). Since the “one like a son of man” is wearing only a long robe and a golden sash, these two garments by themselves cannot be claimed to be priestly vestments. Nothing is said about the rest of the vestments (the ephod, the trousers, the turban, the crown, and so forth), nor are the material and color of the robe specified. There is therefore no clear intention on the part of the author to conceptualize the appearance of the exalted Christ in priestly terms.¹⁴²

But there are at least a couple of reasons why this line of argumentation is misleading.

First, the use of ποδήρης in Rev 1:13 is specific dress terminology; John did not utilize such dress terminology as ἔνδυμα (“garment, clothing”)¹⁴³ ἐπενδύτης (“outer garment,

¹⁴¹I.e., כַּתָּנָה or χιτῶν occurs six times with reference to the high priest (MT/LXX Exod 28:4, 39; 29:5; Lev 8:7; 16:4; MT Exod 39:27 [LXX Exod 36:34]), while ποδήρης explicitly occurs eight times with reference to him and, as I have indicated in the previous chapter, can be understood to refer to high priestly imagery in the other four. Notice that Aune asserts that “the term ποδήρης occurs twelve times in the LXX and always refers to a garment worn by the high priest” (*Revelation 1-5*, 93). This is his conclusion despite its non-explicit nature in Ezek 9:2, 3, and 11 and its apparent opacity in Sir 27:8, and thus his conclusions are more absolute than my own.

¹⁴²Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, 94.

¹⁴³See, e.g., LXX 2 Sam 1:24; 2 Kgs 10:22; Zeph 1:8; Lam 4:14; Wis 18:24; Matt 3:4; and Luke 12:23. Unless otherwise indicated, basic definitions for this and the following dress terms are taken from BDAG.

coat”),¹⁴⁴ ἱμάτιον (“clothing, apparel; cloak, robe”),¹⁴⁵ στολή (“long, flowing robe”),¹⁴⁶ ὑποδύτης (“garment worn under a coat of mail; undergarment”),¹⁴⁷ χιτῶν (“tunic, shirt; clothes”),¹⁴⁸ or χλαμύς (“military cloak, mantle”).¹⁴⁹ Rather, he is describing the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου with a foot-length robe typically associated with the high priest. Second, a lack of further high priestly dress imagery—whether dress element, color, or type of material—does not necessarily undercut a high priestly understanding of the admittedly meagre dress terminology in 1:13. A sartorial synecdoche might only include one or two items of an identifiable dress ensemble, but as a figure of speech it refers to the whole ensemble. The use of only one or two items of dress, accordingly, may simply be a synecdochical way of referring to the entire high priestly ensemble.¹⁵⁰ Expectations that a larger or a full ensemble of clothing reasonably indicative of high priestly identity should be present in the text are consequently incorrect expectations

¹⁴⁴LXX 2 Sam 13:18 and John 1:27.

¹⁴⁵In the NT see, e.g., Rev 3:4, 5, 18; 4:4; 16:15; 19:13, 16.

¹⁴⁶In the NT see, e.g., Rev 6:11; 7:9, 13, 14; 22:14.

¹⁴⁷LXX Exod 28:31, 33 (2x), 34; 36:29, 30, 31, 32, 33; Lev 8:7. See LSJ, s.v. “ὑποδύτης.”

¹⁴⁸In the NT, see Matt 5:40; 10:10; Mark 6:9; 14:63; Luke 3:11; 6:29; 9:3; John 19:23; Acts 9:39; Jude 23.

¹⁴⁹LXX 2 Macc 12:35; and Matt 27:28, 31.

¹⁵⁰Cf. Aeschylus *Pers.* 660-62, in which the description of the Great King of Persia mentions only his sandals and his royal tiara; Aune notes that “he is described ‘from head to foot’” (*Revelation 1-5*, 95).

that can preclude or distort identity perception.¹⁵¹

Since the garment worn by ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου in 1:13 is irrefutably a ποδήρης, the descriptions of the ποδήρης in the LXX and related Second Temple literature should be the primary guide to one's conclusions as to what it typically looked like.¹⁵² As such, one would assume it would be foot-length and of a hyacinth-dyed, woolen nature.¹⁵³ Since it was dyed, it would not be a white,¹⁵⁴ off-white, or yellowish-

¹⁵¹Bandy, in general agreement with Aune's assessment about priestly imagery in this text, concludes that one should not place too much weight on any priestly imagery because of the lack of additional priestly dress items ("The Prophetic Lawsuit," 189).

¹⁵²Of course, Josephus's accounts in *A.J.* 3.159 and *B.J.* 5.231 would indicate the perspective of Josephus on what it looked like in the 1st century CE.

¹⁵³See, e.g., Exod 28:31; 39:22, 24. Lenski's conclusion that since the "color of the robe is not mentioned, we cannot designate it" (*Interpretation*, 64-65) is too reductionistic.

¹⁵⁴So Margaret Barker, *The Hidden Tradition of the Kingdom of God* (London: SPCK, 2007), 85; idem, *Revelation*, 84; Büchsel, *Die Christologie*, 32; Choi, "Restoration Theme," 236; Hoffmann, *Destroyer and the Lamb*, 224; Kistemaker, *Exposition*, 95 ("white ankle-length robe"); Lenski, *Interpretation*, 65; Maier, *Apocalypse Recalled*, 35-36; Neufeld, "Sumptuous Clothing," 676-77; and Christopher C. Rowland, "A Man Clothed in Linen: Daniel 10.6ff. and Jewish Angelology," *JSNT* 24 (1985): 110, n. 24. Interpreters who ascribe to this view may be thinking of Dan 7:9's reference to the clothes of the "Ancient of Days" as white as snow. But this color is no longer attached to the clothes of the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου in Rev 1:13; rather, this color describes his head and hair (1:14).

Decades ago J. Hugh Michael suggested that in Rev 1:14 λευκὸν ὡς χιῶν ("white as snow") had been misplaced and should rather modify ποδήρη in 1:13 ("A Slight Misplacement in Revelation i. 13, 14," *ExpTim* 42 [1930-31]: 380). Cf. how Matthew describes the garments of the angel at the tomb as being white as snow (λευκὸν ὡς χιῶν [28:3]). One reason Michael advanced for this suggestion was that ποδήρη was the only item in the description of the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου that was not further described ("Slight Misplacement," 381). Michael himself admitted that one could only guess as to how such a proposed displacement took place (ibid.). For further support of Michael's study, see C. Cave Oke, "The Misplacement in Revelation 1,13-14," *ExpTim* 43 (1931): 237. The primary argument against Michael's proposal, however, is both inescapable and ultimately devastating: There is not one extant Greek

white color, nor would it be fabricated out of linen.¹⁵⁵ Neither would it be the distinctive dress worn on Yom Kippur,¹⁵⁶ since the foundational description of such clothing in Lev 16:4 does not include a לַעֲזָרָה/ποδήρης.¹⁵⁷ When these facts are not taken into consideration, resulting interpretations mistakenly mirror Josephus’s singular and ultimately irrelevant remark about the foot-length linen garb of the common priests (ποδήρης χιτῶν [A.J. 3.153]).¹⁵⁸

Summary of the ποδήρης

There is clear evidence that John’s description of the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου specifically wearing a ποδήρης in 1:13 indicates that John intended to portray Jesus

text that supports such a reading, and thus such a reading has no textual foundation whatsoever.

¹⁵⁵Van der Waal argues that since the comparison of Jesus’ appearance to the sun in its strength (1:16) alludes to the description in the last words of Deborah’s song in Judg 5:31, the yellowish color of the sun would be present in the color of the ποδήρης, and thus it likely refers to the yellowish-white linen χιτῶν of the priests (*Oudtestamentische priesterlijke motieven*, 51).

For a linen interpretation, see, e.g., Ben-Daniel and Ben-Daniel, *Apocalypse*, 25; Léon Hermann, *La vision de Patmos*, Collection Latomus 78 (Brussels: Latomus, 1965), 80; Moyise, *Old Testament*, 37; Stramara, *God’s Timetable*, 82; and James Valentine, “Theological Aspects of the Temple Motif in the Old Testament and Revelation” (PhD diss., Boston University, 1985), 279 and 329. Such a conclusion possibly stems from belief that 1:13 alludes to MT Ezek 9:2, 3, and 11 (cf. 10:2, 6, 7), where the “man in linen” wears a garment that is described as a ποδήρης in the LXX. But crossing linguistic boundaries in order to demonstrate an allusion is potentially problematic.

¹⁵⁶So, e.g., Barker (*Hidden Tradition*, 85; *Revelation*, 84-85) and Fletcher-Louis (“Messiah: Part II,” 59).

¹⁵⁷The lack of any golden clothing on Yom Kippur also contrasts with Rev 1:13. On this article of dress, see the discussion below.

¹⁵⁸Cf., e.g., Büchsel, *Die Christologie*, 32.

wearing the high priest's woolen, hyacinth-dyed, foot-length robe, thus communicating his high priestly identity. The dress term ποδήρης almost always has reference to the dress of the high priest not only in the LXX but also in numerous texts in extrabiblical Second Temple literature. While semantically there is room for an alternative meaning, the cultic motifs in the immediate context of Rev 1:13 drive one towards the high priestly meaning.

While such OT texts as Dan 10:5 and Ezek 9:2, 3, 11 are attractive in terms of possible backgrounds to the ποδήρης in Rev 1:13, differences in terminology and context suggest that other OT texts might be just as much or even more viable. Exodus 27:20–28:5 is an intriguing possibility, since it combines the implicit sanctuary lampstand, the role of Aaron and his “sons” in tending it, and the beginning of a sartorial description of the high priestly garments, which continues into chap. 28 and culminates with the directions on vesting Aaron and his sons in chap. 29. The fact that Exod 27:20–28:5 is woven together from a literary standpoint illuminates the close relationship between the vested ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου amidst the golden lampstands in Rev 1:12-13.

The argument that Josephus's reference to ποδήρης in terms of the common priests indicates that John may not be indicating high priestly dress is not persuasively compelling, since the reference by Josephus is an attributive use, whereas in Revelation it is substantive and thus matches other substantive uses referring to the high priest's foot-length robe. Consequently, the conclusion of Aune¹⁵⁹ that ποδήρης as a priestly

¹⁵⁹Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, 93.

term in 1:13 is “unfounded” is itself unfounded.¹⁶⁰

Encircled with a Golden ζώνη

John’s last, formal dress description of the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου in chap. 1 consists of the use of a dress item, a dress verb, and a location for that dress item: καὶ περιεζωσμένον πρὸς τοῖς μαστοῖς ζώνην χρυσᾶν (1:13). In close proximity to his reference to the ποδήρης, John thus indicates that ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου also has a golden belt or sash encircling (or, wrapped around at) the breasts.¹⁶¹ Based on this information, several questions quickly rise to the surface, specifically with regard to the ζώνην χρυσᾶν.¹⁶² First, what sartorial weight does a ζώνη carry in

¹⁶⁰Stevens concludes that Aune’s charge is “unnecessarily dismissive” (“Son of Man,” 22).

¹⁶¹Cf. *Apoc. Zeph.* 6:12.

¹⁶²The intriguing linguistic links between ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου in 1:13 and the seven angels in 15:6 (i.e., common use of ἐνδύω, περιζώννυμι, ζώνη, and χρυσοῦς), as well as the sanctuary and temple imagery in both texts, are noteworthy. Among the textual variants in 15:6, Aune’s conclusion that λίνον (Ϟ) “is certainly original” (*Revelation 6-16*, 854, n. 6.c.) is not compelling; cf. Beale (*Revelation*, 804-805), Osborne (*Revelation*, 575), and Swete (*Apocalypse of St John*, 198). Resolving this text-critical issue in Rev 15:6 instead in favor of the *lectio difficilior* λίθον (A C 2053 2062 pc vgst sy^{hmg})—despite strenuous objections that such a reading is absurd (Edmund Beckett, Baron Grimthorpe, *Should the Revised New Testament Be Authorised?* [London: John Murray, 1882], 179), impossible (ibid.; S. W. Whitney, *The Revisers’ Greek Text: A Critical Examination of Certain Readings, Textual and Marginal, in the Original Greek of the New Testament Adopted by the Late Anglo-American Revisers* [Boston: Silver, Burdett, 1892], 2:319; cf. Charles, *Revelation*, 2:38: “λίθον cannot be right”), and intolerable (Swete, *Apocalypse of St John*, 198)—could potentially indicate high priestly imagery, since the high priest was clothed with “stone” (Exod 28:9, 15-21).

The high priest, however, was not the only one “clothed” in/with stone in Jewish texts (cf., e.g., LXX Ezek 9:2; 28:13; Dan 10:6 [OG and Θ]; *Apoc. Abr.* 11:2; 4Q405 19 5-7a; Rev 4:3; see the discussion in Winkle, “Iridescence in Ezekiel,” 65-70). Despite the belief of some that stone is never indicated as dress material or is hard to imagine as

constructing a role-related identity? Second, why is this particular ζώνη in 1:13 described as golden? And third, what does it mean to have a ζώνη encircling or wrapped πρὸς τοῖς μαστοῖς?

The ζώνη and Role-Related Identity

Is a ζώνη characteristically indicative of a particular role-related identity? One must answer in the negative. The sartorial ζώνη is used in the NT for the belt/sash of John the Baptist (Matt 3:4; Mark 1:6), Jesus' disciples (Matt 10:9; Mark 6:8), Paul (Acts 21:11), and the seven bowl-plague angels (Rev 15:6). It also appears in the LXX

such (so Aune, *Revelation 6-16*, 854, n. 6.c.; Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 2nd ed. [Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft; 1994], 680; Osborne, *Revelation*, 575; Smalley, *The Revelation to John*, 381, n. f; Whitney, *The Revisers' Greek Text*, 2:319), such a contention is baseless: cf. (1) the Cherokee myth about a “wicked cannibal monster” named Nûñ' yunu' wï, which means “Dressed in Stone” (James Mooney, “Myths of the Cherokee,” *Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology* 19 [1897-98]: 319); (2) the Seneca tradition about a woman clothed in stone, known as the Genonsgwa, or Stone Coat Woman (Jeremiah Curtin and J. N. B. Hewitt, “Seneca Fiction, Legends, and Myths,” ed. J. N. B. Hewitt, *Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology* 32 [1910-1911]: 437-50, particularly 438-39); and (3) the Australian Aboriginal legends that spoke of foreigners arriving “dressed in stone clothes” (Gavin Menzies, *1421: The Year China Discovered America* [New York: William Morrow, 2003], 220). In any case, since the high priest was not the only one in antiquity described as dressed in stone, one cannot posit an ironclad high priestly identity for these angels.

While both the seven angels in 15:6 and the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου in 1:13 wear a golden ζώνη, the overall dress descriptions are not the same (contra Beale [*Revelation*, 209] and Ben-Daniel and Ben-Daniel [*Apocalypse*, 25]; cf. Barker's [*Temple Mysticism*, 68] and Stefanovic's [*Revelation*, 497] overstated comparisons). Even the comparable elements of the dress descriptions are not comprised of merely slight differences (so Carrell, *Jesus and the Angels*, 139). Rather, the use of περί in 15:6 instead of πρὸς in 1:13, the reference to the στηθή in 15:6 (a broad term) instead of the μαστοί in 1:13 (a narrower term), and the reference to λίνον/λίθον καθαρὸν λαμπρὸν (“pure, bright linen/stone”) in 15:6 with no corresponding dress description at all in 1:13—all present a cumulatively distinct difference.

for the belt/sash of the high priest (Exod 28:4, 39; 29:9; 39:29; Lev 8:7; 16:4),¹⁶³ the common priests (Exod 28:40; 29:9; Lev 8:13), the man seen in vision by Ezekiel who was clothed in a ποδήρης (Ezek 9:2, 3, 11), unnamed (defeated?) kings (Job 12:18),¹⁶⁴ David's military commander Joab (1 Kgs 2:5), Elijah (2 Kgs 1:8), Moabite military men (2 Kgs 3:21) and other foreigners (Isa 5:27), the women of Zion (Isa 3:24), and common Israelites (Deut 23:14; Ps 108:19 [MT 109:19]). Furthermore, OT girding verbs can assume a ζώνη even when the latter is not explicitly stated or described (see Dan 10:5).¹⁶⁵ It is therefore clear that a ζώνη as a sartorial image does not automatically trigger any particular role-related identity. Context must determine its role-related implications.

Is it possible to more narrowly determine the possible role-related intent of John regarding this dress term? With regard to the ζώνη in Rev 1:13, scholarly opinion is divided as to its meaning. Similar types of interpretive conclusions to that of the ποδήρης appear in the literature, including: (1) a generic meaning indicative of high

¹⁶³The only time it does not compare to the Hebrew מַגְבָּח is in Isa 22:21, where the Greek has no exact equivalent.

¹⁶⁴Note that the meaning here is entirely negative, denoting a judgment by YHWH (cf. the context in 12:14-25), and may well refer to something like a rope (NJB), loincloth (NIV), or waistcloth (NRSV). Consequently, it would not indicate role-related status as a king.

¹⁶⁵Mathews concludes that there is only a "possible" allusion to Dan 10:5 with regard to this sartorial image in Rev 1:13 ("Critical Evaluation," 172).

dignity or rank;¹⁶⁶ (2) a royal meaning;¹⁶⁷ (3) alternating between a priestly or high priestly meaning;¹⁶⁸ (4) a high priestly meaning;¹⁶⁹ (5) alternating between a high priestly meaning or one indicative of dignity;¹⁷⁰ and (6) explicitly denying any priestly or high priestly meaning.¹⁷¹ As a result, both its wide spectrum of usage and the lack of a scholarly consensus as to its meaning in Rev 1:13 invite further investigation.

The Golden Nature of the ζώνη

The ζώνη clearly does not have a monolithic meaning, since it can refer to such diverse dress as military garb and women's clothing. As such, the word by itself is not,

¹⁶⁶See Beckwith (*Apocalypse*, 438), Hailey (*Revelation*, 109), Hughes (*Revelation*, 26), Newport (*Lion and the Lamb*, 136), and Resseguie (*Revelation of John*, 76).

¹⁶⁷E.g., Blount (*Revelation*, 44; here he does see “priestly implications,” though), Boismard (*L'Apocalypse*, 29-30, n. g.), Bonsirven (*L'Apocalypse*, 98), Brighton (*Revelation*, 49-50, although he incorrectly notes its association with the high priestly ποδήρης [ibid., 49]), Cerfaux and Cambier (*L'Apocalypse*, 25), Charlier (*Comprendre l'Apocalypse*, 1:71), Farmer (*Revelation*, 38), Kraft (*Die Offenbarung des Johannes*, 45 [but only if it is golden and not simply decorated with gold]), Lohse (*Die Offenbarung des Johannes*, 20), Morant (*Das Kommen des Herrn*, 67), Quispel (*Secret Book of Revelation*, 37), Stevens (“Son of Man,” 23-28), Vanhoye (“L'Apocalisse,” 263), and Yeatts (*Revelation*, 42).

¹⁶⁸See Keener (*Revelation*, 94-95) and Mulholland (*Revelation*, 83).

¹⁶⁹E.g., Barker (*Revelation*, 85), Boxall (*Revelation of Saint John*, 42-43), Caird (*Revelation*, 25), Hoeksema (*Behold, He Cometh!*, 38), Krodel (*Revelation*, 95), Loisy (*L'Apocalypse*, 80), and Robert Mounce (*Revelation*, 58).

¹⁷⁰E.g., Ladd (*Revelation*, 32-33), Müller (*Die Offenbarung des Johannes*, 83-84), Newport (*Lion and the Lamb*, 136), and Prigent (*Commentary on the Apocalypse*, 136).

¹⁷¹E.g., Charles (*Revelation*, 1:28), Morris (*The Book of Revelation*, 53-54), and Swete (*Apocalypse of St John*, 16, who states that it does not “quite determine the highpriestly character of the costume” and concludes it refers instead to Dan 10:5).

unfortunately, as helpful as one might wish. But in Rev 1:13 John further describes this ζώνη as golden (ζώνην χρυσᾶν¹⁷²). This added description opens up further opportunities for interpretation.

It needs to be stated from the outset that although one need not look far to find examples of royalty wearing sashes,¹⁷³ biblical literature knows nothing of a golden ζώνη being associated with royalty. Granted, this is a literary argument, and it does not deny that royalty used golden ζωναί. Nevertheless, exegetes round up such texts as 1 Macc 10:88-89, 11:58, and/or 14:44 and point to the use of πόρπην χρυσῆν in one or more of these texts to illustrate or prove such a royal interpretation.¹⁷⁴ None of these texts, however, yields the desired result: The terminology in all three of the latter texts refers to a golden buckle, brooch, or clasp.¹⁷⁵ One would be hardpressed to even call this weak evidence, since it hardly needs to be stated that a golden πόρπη is not a golden

¹⁷²That χρυσᾶν is an accusative feminine singular—instead of the expected χρυσῆν (< χρυσοῦς, a contraction of χρύσεος)—apparently derives in parallel fashion from the morphological form of the related adjectival word for silver, ἀργυρᾶν (< ἀργυροῦς; see BDAG, s.v. “χρυσοῦς”). On this cf. Smalley (*The Revelation to John*, 54) and Swete (*Apocalypse of St John*, 16).

¹⁷³Cf., e.g., Propp, who notes that “the Assyrian Black Obelisk depicts Jehu of Israel wearing a fringed sash around his long robe” (*Exodus 19-40*, 434).

¹⁷⁴E.g., Beale (*Revelation*, 209), Blount (*Revelation*, 44), Brighton (*Revelation*, 49), Charles (*Revelation*, 1:28), Farmer (*Revelation*, 38), Holtz (*Die Christologie*, 119), Müller (*Die Offenbarung des Johannes*, 83-84), Swete (*Apocalypse of St John*, 16), Trafton (*Reading Revelation*, 28). But Düsterdieck disagrees (*Revelation of John*, 112, n. 3).

¹⁷⁵Cf. LSJ, s.v. “πόρπη.” Of 1 Macc 10:88-89, 11:58, and 14:44, the first text indicates that it is given τοῖς συγγενέσι τῶν βασιλέων (“to the relatives/kinsmen of the king”), the second is indicative of non-royal honors given to the newly confirmed high priest Jonathan, and the latter prohibits the common people or priests from wearing one along with πορφύρα (“purple”).

ζώνη, anymore than a royal crown is not a military beret or a baseball cap.

What about the golden ζώνη as high priestly dress imagery? As I have indicated, the only two dress verbs in the description of the ὅμοιον υἷδν ἄνθρώπου in Rev 1:13 are linked with the ποδήρης and the ζώνη. The only OT contexts in which ποδήρης and ζώνη explicitly occur in relative proximity are in LXX Exod 28:4–29:9 and Ezek 9.¹⁷⁶ The dress of the high priest is clearly—though not exclusively—the focus of Exod 28:4–29:9. And as I have demonstrated in the previous chapter, the LXX counterpart to the “Man in Linen” in Ezek 9 (MT) is likely based on a high priestly understanding of his ministry. Consequently, since the only biblical contexts in which the two terms ποδήρης and ζώνη explicitly occur in relative proximity are contexts with explicit or probable high priestly dress imagery and meaning, one could tentatively conclude that John’s use of the term ζώνη in proximate relationship to ποδήρης in 1:13 may well be intended to further his rhetorical interest in portraying the ὅμοιον υἷδν ἄνθρώπου in a high priestly role.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁶See LXX Exod 28:4 (ζώνη and ποδήρης), 31 (ποδήρης [adjective]), 39 (ζώνη); 29:5 (ποδήρης [adjective]), 9 (ζώνη); Ezek 9:2 (ζώνη and ποδήρης), 3 (ζώνη and ποδήρης), 11 (ζώνη and ποδήρης). Prigent’s note that “the description in Ex 28:4 indicates only that the pontifical belt is woven with gold” (*Apocalypse*, 136) is textually unfounded. Furthermore, in reference to LXX Ezek 9:2, his conclusion that “there is nothing that allows us to suppose that Ezekiel was thinking of a high priest” (*ibid.*) misses the point, since the LXX of that work was neither written nor translated by Ezekiel.

¹⁷⁷Étan Levine’s suggestion that the ζώνη of the ὅμοιον υἷδν ἄνθρώπου in Rev 1:13 might be “an article of battle dress” related to the ANE wrestling-belt because of the later reference to the sharp, two-edged sword in 1:16 (“The Wrestling-Belt Legacy in the New Testament,” *NTS* 28 [1982]: 564, n. 14) is not compelling in light of: (1) the contextual linkage with the ποδήρης, which is textually closer than the sword in 1:16; (2) the golden nature of this belt/sash; and (3) its location. For more on the ANE

But Rev 1:13 does not simply refer to a ζώνη but rather to a ζώνην χρυσῶν.
 Can one find a golden ζώνη in either LXX Exod 28:4–29:9 or Ezek 9? From a linguistic standpoint, the answer must again be negative. With regard to Exod 28:4–29:9, at least two apparent problems exist. For one thing, the singular ζώνη worn regularly by the high priest¹⁷⁸ appears more closely associated with the high priestly χίτων instead of the ποδήρης (cf. Exod 28:4; Lev 8:7, 13).¹⁷⁹ At the ordination of the priests in the Mosaic period, Moses clothed Aaron with the χίτων, then the ζώνη, and then the ὑποδύτης ποδήρης,¹⁸⁰ and thus the ζώνη would appear to be largely—if not entirely—invisible. Moreover, the ζώνη in Exod 28:4–29:9 is not golden at all.¹⁸¹

With regard to LXX Ezek 9, the ζώνη there is similarly not made out of gold; rather, it is fabricated from lapis lazuli (ζώνη σαπφείρου [9:2]). Moreover, it is located

wrestling-belt in light of the OT, see Cyrus H. Gordon, “Belt-Wrestling in the Bible World,” *HUCA* 23 (1950-1951): 131-36.

¹⁷⁸The high priest also wore a plainer ζώνη on Yom Kippur (Lev 16:4).

¹⁷⁹Contra Brighton (*Revelation*, 49). On the association of the belt/sash with the tunic, see Propp, *Exodus 19-40*, 434.

¹⁸⁰Cf. LXX Exod 28:31 (καὶ ποιήσεις ὑποδύτην ποδήρη ὅλον ὑακίνθινον [“and you will fabricate a foot-length undergarment entirely out of hyacinth(-colored cloth)”) and Lev 8:7 (καὶ ἐνέδυσεν αὐτὸν τὸν χιτῶνα καὶ ἔζωσεν αὐτὸν τὴν ζώνην καὶ ἐνέδυσεν αὐτὸν τὸν ὑποδύτην [“and he clothed him with the tunic and he tied the belt/sash around him and he clothed him with the undergarment”). In both cases the “undergarment” is not what we would understand to be underwear but rather a garment that goes under another one.

¹⁸¹See LXX Exod 28:4, 39; 29:9; 36:36 (MT 39:29); Lev 8:7; 16:4; cf. Exod 29:9. It is multichromatic, and the only text in the OT that indicates how it was fabricated describes it as being made out of fine twisted linen and embroidered with hyacinth, (Tyrian) purple, and crimson material (Exod 39:29 [LXX 36:36]). On the other hand, the belt/sash worn by the high priest on Yom Kippur was made out of linen and not multicolored (Lev 16:4).

at the visionary being's waist (ἐπὶ τῆς ὀσφύος αὐτοῦ [9:2, 3]; τὴν ὀσφὺν αὐτοῦ [9:11]) instead of his breast or chest. These differences are consequently problematic in terms of both material and location.

The express concern that the golden ζώνη of Rev 1:13 finds no clear antecedent in the OT,¹⁸² however, is not insurmountable. Such a concern assumes that if the golden ζώνη in Rev 1:13 were high priestly in nature, it must precisely match the description of the OT high priestly ζώνη both linguistically and conceptually. But in my estimation this is mistaken.

It is at this point that the examination of NT backgrounds—and particularly Second Temple *realia*—may indeed be useful. It is clear that the literary texts of the OT

¹⁸²Many exegetes see the golden belt/sash imagery alluding to Dan 10:5 (and perhaps Ezek 9:2); see, e.g., Aune (*Revelation 1-5*, 93), Beale (*Revelation*, 210), Brighton (*Revelation*, 49-50), Osborne (*Revelation*, 89), Whiteley (“Search for Cohesion,” 178). In Dan 10:5 the loins/waist of Daniel’s visionary being were encircled or girded with an implicit belt/sash of gold (וּמְתַנִּי וְהִגְרִים בְּקָתָם אֹפָז [MT: “and his hips/loins girded with gold of Uphaz”]; ἡ ὀσφὺς αὐτοῦ περιεζωσμένη ἐν χρυσίῳ Ὠφαζ [Θ: “his waist/loins girded with gold of Ophaz”]). The OG, however, is different: τὴν ὀσφὺν περιεζωσμένος βυσσίνῳ καὶ ἐκ μέσου αὐτοῦ φῶς (“the waist/loins girded with linen and light [glowing/streaming?] from the middle of him”). On the complicated and varied textual tradition of this verse, see the summary comments of Collins, *Daniel*, 361, 373. The implicit ζώνη in Dan 10:5 is, in the same way as Ezek 9, located at the celestial being’s waist or loins (ὀσφὺν [OG] and ὀσφὺς [Θ]) instead of his breast or chest. Furthermore, its locale is different, too, since it is apparently situated on this being’s linen garment (לְבוּשׁ בְּרִים [MT]; βύσσινα [OG]; βαδδιν [Θ]), as opposed to being on a woolen ποδήρης as in Rev 1:13. Gundry, on the basis of Dan 10:5-6, insists that the sash in Rev 1:13 is made out of gold metal, not golden cloth (*Commentary*, 999). Whiteley concludes that the girding with gold in Dan 10:5 refers to the high priestly ephod, since it was the only high priestly item wrapped around the high priest that was fabricated from gold (“Search for Cohesion,” 174, 179). But the high priestly ephod was not located at the waist/loins, and other high priestly items were made from gold (e.g., the band of the ephod and the breastpiece).

are not the only points of reference or allusion for John in Revelation.¹⁸³ As we have seen, while the OT mentions two high priestly ζωναί, neither the one worn daily nor the one worn on Yom Kippur was described as being worn in association with the ποδήρης, and neither was comprised of any gold or golden material. But this is not what Josephus understood towards the end of the Second Temple period. According to him, the high priest was arrayed like the common priests, “omitting nothing of the things already mentioned” (παραλιπών οὐδέν τῶν προειρημένων [A.J. 3.159; cf. 3.154]). This would seem to infer that the high priest wore a ζώνη around his linen χίτων. This ζώνη would thus be very similar to that of the common priests.¹⁸⁴

But Josephus then mentions in A.J. 3.159 that the high priest wore a hyacinthine, foot-length χίτων or tunic (known as the ποδήρης elsewhere), and that this garment, unique to the high priest, had a ζώνη tightly bound around him. This ζώνη was woven with flowers and embroidered with hyacinth, (Tyrian) purple, and crimson like that of the common priests mentioned in 3.154.¹⁸⁵ Although this high priestly ζώνη was multichromatic like the earlier (ἡ πρότερον) ζώνη of the common priests, it was

¹⁸³Note, for instance, the reference in Rev 1:18 to Jesus holding the “keys of death and of Hades” (τὰς κλεῖς τοῦ θανάτου καὶ τοῦ ᾗδου); this is a potential allusion to deities of the underworld like Hekate who were known as “keybearers”; on this, cf., e.g., Aune (*Revelation I-5*, 104-105) and Beale (*Revelation*, 215).

¹⁸⁴See the previous chapter on my reasons for concluding that the high priest’s sash was not entirely identical to that of the common priests.

¹⁸⁵Note that in A.J. 8.93 Josephus states that Solomon fashioned not multicolored but purple sashes (ζώνας πορφυράς) for the common priests. On the rabbinic dispute over the commonality or uniqueness of the sash, see *b. Yoma* 5b-6a and 12a-12b. Cf. Propp, *Exodus 19-40*, 669.

furthermore χρυσοῦ συνυφασμένου (“interwoven with gold” [A.J. 3.159]).¹⁸⁶ It appears that Josephus saw this ζώνη as the high priestly version of the ζώνη of the common priests, with its interwoven gold being the distinguishing characteristic. Furthermore, it appears that this ζώνη may have been more visible than the Pentateuchal one, since he describes it as being around or *on top of* the hyacinthine χίτων (i.e., the ποδήρης), as opposed to *underneath* the ὑποδύτης ποδήρης (Lev 8:7).

Josephus had earlier provided a somewhat different description of this dress item.¹⁸⁷ In *B.J.* 5.232 he had explicitly described it as the garment that attached the foot-length, hyacinthine robe (ποδήρη . . . ὑακίνθινον [5.231]) to the breast (ἢ δὲ τὸ ἔνδυμα τῷ στέρνω προσηλοῦσα ταινία [“but the band which fastened the garment to the breast”]).¹⁸⁸ Furthermore, this dress item was “embroidered with five bands of

¹⁸⁶As noted, e.g., by Barker (*Revelation*, 85), Boxall (*Revelation of Saint John*, 42), and Robert Mounce (*Revelation*, 58). “The high priest is dressed in the same manner as the ordinary priests (cf. *Ant.* III 159) but wears more robes and girdles. . . . The high priest’s vestment only differs in that he wears *golden* belts or belts with *interwoven gold* and that he has an additional girdle that holds the breastplate” (Omerzu, “Women, Magic and Angels,” 92). Mulholland’s comment that the high priest did not wear a belt/sash fabricated (at least in part) from gold betrays a lack of awareness of Josephus (*Revelation*, 83).

¹⁸⁷Bond astutely concludes: “The fact that there is no unanimity regarding the names of these [high priestly] garments, let alone their symbolic functions, should alert us to a certain fluidity in the tradition” (“Discarding the Seamless Robe,” 417, n. 37). Fernández Marcos provides a number of examples of dress terminology variation among Jewish sources during the Hellenistic-Roman period (“Rewritten Bible,” 321-36).

¹⁸⁸Cf. *Let. Aris.* 96-97, where one finds first mentioned the tunic (χιτῶνος) with the stones on it, then the observation “for golden bells are around the hem of it” (χρυσοῖ γὰρ κώδωνες περὶ τὸν ποδήρη εἰσὶν αὐτοῦ), then the sash or breastband (ζώνη), and then the breastpiece (λόγιον) with the twelve stones.

variegated colors [πέντε διηριθισμένη ζώναις πεποίκιλτο]—gold, (Tyrian) purple, crimson, with fine linen and hyacinth (χρυσοῦ τε καὶ πορφύρας καὶ κόκκου, πρὸς δὲ βύσσου καὶ ὑακίνθου). In this earlier text there were thus five ζωναί that comprised the sash/belt—and the first of them listed was golden.

In *A.J.* 3.171 Josephus mentions a second ζώνη following the first one he has already mentioned in that work. This second ζώνη was sewn onto the breastpiece and, after passing around the body, was tied at the seam where the breastpiece was stitched to the ephod,¹⁸⁹ with the remainder hung from the side (*Ant.* 3.171). Exodus 29:5 and Lev 8:7 indicate that the purpose of this dress item was to bind the ephod to the high priest.¹⁹⁰ While Josephus uses ζώνη for both the earlier high priestly belt/sash and for this second dress item,¹⁹¹ the LXX uses the term ὕφασμα (“woven garment”) instead for this latter item (Exod 28:8; 36:28).¹⁹² Nevertheless, like the ephod (to which the second

¹⁸⁹So Feldman, *Judean Antiquities I-IV*, 277, n. 455.

¹⁹⁰The verb used in the Hebrew here is **רָפַף**, a cognate of **רָפַף** (ephod), and it occurs only in these two texts.

¹⁹¹Just as Josephus does, *Targumim Onqelos* and *Neofiti* use the same term for both the first belt/sash (Exod 28:4) and the later band (Exod 28:8; 39:20). See Feldman, *Judean Antiquities I-4*, 277, n. 453.

¹⁹²In Exodus two different terms are used for these belts/sashes: the belt/sash around the high priest’s linen tunic was termed **זָוַנָה** / ζώνη (e.g., 28:4, 39; 39:29 [LXX 39:29]; Lev 8:7; 16:4), whereas that attached to the breastpiece was termed **בְּשֵׁמֶט** / ὕφασμα (28:8, 27 [LXX minus], 28 [LXX minus]; 29:5 [LXX minus]; 39:5 [minus in LXX 36:12], 20 [minus in LXX 36:27], 21 [LXX 36:28]; Lev 8:7 [LXX minus]). Notice that of the eight texts witnessing **בְּשֵׁמֶט**, the LXX has the specific term ὕφασμα in only two texts (Exod 28:8; 36:28). Yet cf. similar terms and ideas in LXX Exod 29:5 (καὶ συνάψεις αὐτῷ τὸ λογεῖον πρὸς τὴν ἐπωμίδα [“and you will join to him the oracle/breastpiece to the ephod”]), 36:12 (ἔργον ὕφαντον [“woven work”]), 39:20 (κατὰ πρόσωπον κατὰ τὴν συμβολὴν ἄνωθεν τῆς συνυφῆς τῆς ἐπωμίδος [“in front near

ζώνη mentioned by Josephus was attached), LXX 28:8 and 36:12 state that gold was utilized in the fabrication of this ὕφασμα, along with the same colors as the ephod (crimson, [Tyrian] purple, hyacinth, and fine linen).¹⁹³ The placement of gold first in the biblical description of this dress item (Exod 28:8; 39:5 [LXX 36:12]) suggests that gold was its predominant characteristic.¹⁹⁴

Thus, one can conclude that the term ζώνη could refer to more than one high priestly dress item. If John were describing something like one of the ζωναί mentioned by Josephus, it would seem that the one mentioned in *A.J.* 3.159 and *B.J.* 5.232 would be the most likely parallel, since it is closely associated with the ποδήρης and was fabricated with gold.¹⁹⁵ The second ζώνη mentioned by Josephus in *A.J.* 3.171 (described by the LXX instead as a ὕφασμα), while possible, would consequently appear

the juncture above the woven material of the ephod”), and Lev 8:7 (καὶ συνέζωσεν αὐτὸν κατὰ τὴν ποίησιν τῆς ἐπωμίδος καὶ συνέσφιγξεν αὐτὸν ἐν αὐτῇ [“and girded him {with a belt/sash/band} according to the fabrication of the ephod, and they bound him tightly in it”). The ὕφασμα also appears in relation to the high priest in two texts referring to the lapidary work of the breastpiece (28:17; 36:17).

Josephus states (*A.J.* 3.154) that the ζώνη there has an open or coarse mesh texture, utilizing a term (ὕφασμένην) that is a cognate for the ὕφασμα in LXX 28:8 and 36:28.

¹⁹³Cf. Josephus *A.J.* 3.154. Josephus also indicates that golden reeds or sheaths at the end of the ζώνη gathered in or encompassed all of its tassels (*A.J.* 3.171). Cf. Feldman (*Judean Antiquities*, 277, nn. 453-56) and Robertson (“Account,” 228, 234-35).

¹⁹⁴Cf. Josephus *B.J.* 5.232. In *A.J.* 3.171, however, Josephus does not list gold first. Neither does he list it first for the ephod (3.162), but he does list gold first for the breastpiece (3.163). As for the difficulty of determining which color predominated in the ephod, see Propp, *Exodus 19-40*, 435 and 669.

¹⁹⁵The lack of gold and the lack of an association with the ποδήρης appear to also knock the sash worn on Yom Kippur out of contention.

to be less likely primarily because it was not directly attached to the ποδήρης.¹⁹⁶

This interpretation, however, again underscores the concern raised by some that John cannot be referring to high priestly dress in Rev 1 because too many characteristic dress elements are missing from his sartorial portrayal. For instance, Hort argued that “even though the biblical associations of the word [ποδήρης] are chiefly connected with the high-priesthood,” what “makes it somewhat doubtful whether that is distinctly meant here is the absence of any other clear sign of the high-priesthood.”¹⁹⁷ Barker somewhat differently argues that the ποδήρης cannot be the hyacinthine, foot-length robe of the high priest:

On balance, we should probably assume that the robe in Revelation 1.13 was the white linen worn by the high priest when he entered the holy of holies as no other vestments are mentioned. Had it been the long coloured robe worn elsewhere, he would have been wearing over it the embroidered tunic, the ephod, and the breastplate set with twelve gem stones. These are not mentioned.¹⁹⁸

Both of Hort’s and Barker’s contentions assume that dress indicative of the high priest must include the whole dress ensemble—or at least several parts of it. But these would be classic examples of incorrect expectations precipitating dress identity misperceptions. On the contrary, I would instead conclude that John’s ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου is wearing dress indicative of the high priest: Over the hyacinthine ποδήρης he wears a golden ζώνη, equivalent to the high priestly belt/sash which Josephus

¹⁹⁶Cf. Treiyer, *Day of Atonement*, 99 and 348, where he relates the ζώνη of Rev 1:13 with this dress item.

¹⁹⁷Hort, *Apocalypse*, 16.

¹⁹⁸Barker, *Revelation*, 84-85. Cf. Aune (*Revelation 1-5*, 94), Omerzu (“Women, Magic and Angels,” 94), and Satake (*Die Offenbarung des Johannes*, 142).

described as being intricately interwoven with gold.

It is clear that metonymical or synecdochical use of dress imagery in Rev 1 should not be discounted. John may have used ζώνη metonymically or synecdochically to encompass the high priestly ζώνη, ephod, and even breastpiece, since they could be visually perceived to be attached to each other.¹⁹⁹ In the last chapter I noted the probable use of such sartorial imagery in the LXX (Exod 25:7; 35:9) and Philo (*Her.* 176; *Leg.* 1.81; *Mut.* 43; *QE* 1.107-108; *Somn.* 1.216; cf. *Mos.* 2.109-110). With regard to the belt/sash image in Rev 1:13 Ben Witherington III startlingly wrote: “The image of Jesus seems to combine some divine features with an attempt to depict him as the high priest in heaven wearing a full-length robe and the priestly breastplate.”²⁰⁰ While Witherington did not explain why he refers to the breastpiece that does *not* appear in the text of Rev 1:13, he unconsciously may have been on to something in his overall conclusion, since the high priestly ὑφασμα could refer to both a golden, high priestly sash as well as the lapidary work on the high priestly breastpiece.²⁰¹

¹⁹⁹Propp hypothesizes that the OT “woven-band” may have been part of what constituted the ephod itself (i.e., “woven-band” + two shoulder-pieces). See his discussion in *Exodus 19-40*, 436.

²⁰⁰Witherington, *Revelation*, The New Cambridge Bible Commentary (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 81.

²⁰¹Again, cf. the second ζώνη of Josephus (*A.J.* 3.170-71). On ὑφασμα in association with high priestly lapidary work, see LXX Exod 28:17 and 36:17. With regard to high priestly dress items, Philo uses the term ὑφασμα to describe the breastplate itself (*Spec.* 1:86: εἰθ’ ὑφασμα θωρακοειδὲς ἐπὶ τούτῳ [“next a woven garment with the appearance of a breastpiece on this”]), the woven texture of the foot-length robe and the ephod (*Mos.* 2.109, 143), and the Urim and Thummim (*Spec.* 1:88). Cf. also the comments of Giesen, who also speaks of the breastpiece and the Urim and Thummim in relation to 1:13 without endorsing a high priestly interpretation (*Die Offenbarung des Johannes*, 87).

Not all of Revelation's characters are, so to speak, "fully clothed." John portrays other characters in his work with what appears like an incomplete dress ensemble. For instance, John's sartorial description of the sixth plague's two hundred million horsemen includes only their breastplates the color of fire, hyacinth, and sulphur (9:16-17). Similarly, John describes the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου in 14:14 with only a golden crown or wreath (στέφανον χρυσοῦν) on his head and a sharp sickle (δρέπανον ὀξύ) in his hand; certainly he would be wearing more than this, since the shame of nakedness is a concern for John (3:18; 16:15). One must understand these clearly incomplete sartorial descriptions as purposely partial, metonymical, or synecdochical in nature.²⁰² A similar understanding of the sartorial portrayal in Rev 1 would not only be prudent and reasonable but also useful in explaining role-related identity.²⁰³

The Location of the ζώνη

In Rev 1:13 John further describes the golden ζώνη of the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου as being encircled or wrapped around him at the breasts (περιεζωσμένον πρὸς τοῖς μαστοῖς). The verb περιζώνυμι, when used in association with a part of one's anatomy, is typically utilized to describe something girded or wrapped around

²⁰²See Gane (*Cult and Character*, 190, n. 102) and the literature he cites on the use of the *pars pro toto* principle (in which a part is taken for the whole) within the Israelite cult.

²⁰³On other similar, apparently incomplete, priestly dress catalogues, see Ezek 44:17-19; the only priestly garments mentioned here are linen turbans and undergarments. See also the incomplete references to high priestly attire in 4Q405 23 II, 1-10, which list ephodim, the band of the ephod, and possibly the head ornament; see the discussion in Fletcher-Louis, *Glory of Adam*, 356-73.

one's waist or loins (ὀσφύς).²⁰⁴ But John uses other anatomical terminology with this verb in Revelation (μαστός [1:13]; στήθος [15:6]), which nevertheless was not necessarily unusual.²⁰⁵ In any case, this alternative usage is potentially of heightened interest.

While the term μαστός most frequently refers to feminine breasts,²⁰⁶ it can also refer to one of the male mammillae or nipples. Its usage here consequently appears anomalous, striking, and even bizarre.²⁰⁷ This initial perception, unfortunately, is of no immediate help, since much in Revelation could be characterized similarly.

John's description in 1:13 also raises questions about its possible relation to OT high priestly dress imagery, since there is no indication in the OT that the high priest's belt/sash was worn around the breast. A number of commentators consequently do not see this as an indicator of high priestly dress. Osborne's observations are representative of a number of others: "Long robes and sashes across the chest were . . . worn by dignitaries and rulers. . . . The day laborer wore the sash around the waist, in order to tuck in a tunic for work. The aristocrat wore it around the chest, as here, to indicate

²⁰⁴Both words are utilized in LXX Exod 12:11; 2 Sam 20:8; 1 Kgs 20:32; 2 Kgs 1:8; Isa 32:11; Jer 1:17; Ezek 44:18; Jdt 4:14; Dan 10:5 (OG and Θ); and Eph 6:14. See also the use of the cognate noun περίζωμα ("girdle around the loins; loincloth") along with ὀσφύς in LXX Jer 13:1, 2, 4, 11.

²⁰⁵Cf. Omerzu, "Women, Magic and Angels," 90. Omerzu's suggestion that "high girding is a common attribute of angels" because *Apoc. Zeph.* 6:12 also refers to high girding in relation to an angelic being relies on slim evidence (*ibid.*, 92-93).

²⁰⁶See, e.g., LXX Ps 22:9; Hos 2:2; Joel 2:16; Isa 66:11; and Luke 11:27 and 23:29. Cf. LSJ, s.v. "μαστός"; BDAG, s.v. "μαζός" and "μαστός"; Jesse Rainbow, "Male μαστοί in Revelation 1.13," *JSNT* 30 (2007): 251.

²⁰⁷Cf. Rainbow, "Male μαστοί," 249-50.

high rank.”²⁰⁸ Such observations are sometimes used to deny any priestly or high priestly connotations, despite this being contrary to clear evidence elsewhere.²⁰⁹

In John’s depiction of the golden ζώνη of the ὅμοιον υἷδον ἀνθρώπου at the level of the μαστοί, one detects a certain distance or abstraction on his part in referring to the μαστοί. In the phrase περιεζωσμένον πρὸς τοῖς μαστοῖς ζώνην χρυσᾶν, John follows the participle of περιζώννυμι with the preposition πρὸς²¹⁰ instead of following it with περί²¹¹ or no preposition at all.²¹² The preposition πρὸς is then followed by reference to the μαστοί in the dative case.²¹³ Because John did not use περί, and because πρὸς plus a dative is a “marker of closeness or relation or proximity” with the meanings of “near, at, by” or “in addition to,”²¹⁴ it does not seem likely that John is

²⁰⁸Osborne, *Revelation*, 89.

²⁰⁹Ibid. But cf. Omerzu: “Thus the high girding about the breast (not crosswise over the body like a sash) is, according to Josephus, the special feature of *all* Jewish priests” (“Women, Magic and Angels,” 92). Despite Omerzu’s avoidance of the term sash here, I use it because of its fabrication out of cloth. And contra Omerzu, sashes do not need to run diagonally across one’s body.

²¹⁰Cf. in the LXX περιβλέπομαι + πρὸς (Bar 4:36; 5:5) and περιπλέκω + πρὸς (Ezek 17:7), and in the NT περιπατέω + πρὸς (Col 4:5).

²¹¹Cf. 15:6. In the LXX see περικαθίζω + περί (Deut 20:19; 1 Macc 11:61), περισπάομαι + περί (Sir 41:2), and περιτίθημι + περί (Jer 13:1, 2; 34:2; cf. Dan 5:29 [Θ]); and in the NT περισπάομαι + περί (Luke 10:40), and περικείμεαι + περί (Luke 17:2).

²¹²Cf., e.g., LXX 2 Kgs 1:8; 3:21; Joel 1:8; and Luke 12:35; Eph 6:14.

²¹³For πρὸς followed by the dative plural article τοῖς, see LXX Josh 24:31; 1 Sam 10:2; 2 Macc 4:8, 9; 5:21, 24; 8:22; 10:31; 11:8, 11 [2x], 29; 12:20; and John 20:12.

²¹⁴BDAG, s.v. “πρὸς.”

attempting to focus on the ζώνη being wrapped *around* the μαστοί. Rather, it could just as well suggest that the golden ζώνη is near/at/by (*the level of*) the μαστοί, indicating that John is interested not so much in anatomy as in physical elevation.²¹⁵

While the OT does not provide a specific location for the sash of the high priest, Josephus states that the first ζώνη of the high priest (assuming that it was located at the same level as that of the common priests) was located at the στῆθος²¹⁶ or the στέρνον.²¹⁷ In *A.J.* 3.154 he describes its location: “They gird/wrap the belt/sash at the breast area, drawing it around a bit above the (level of) the armpit” (ἐπιζώννυται κατὰ στῆθος ὀλίγον τῆς μασχάλης ὑπεράνω τὴν ζώνην περιάγοντες). And in *B.J.* 5.232 the implied belt/sash that went around the hyacinth, foot-length robe was attached τῷ στέρνῳ (“to the breast/chest”).

Though some have suggested that the use of μαστοί in Rev 1:13 alludes to an

²¹⁵If it were wrapped around the breasts (so BDAG, s.v. “πρός”), it could mean “around the breasts, i.e., at that level.” Cf. Johannes P. Louw and Eugene A. Nida, eds., *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains*, 2nd ed. (New York: United Bible Societies, 1989), 1:99 (sec. 8.37, “μαστός, οὔ”): “In Re 1.13 the phrase πρὸς τοῖς μαστοῖς is a reference to the particular location of the gold band which went around the chest and not to the mammary glands as such.”

²¹⁶See Josephus *A.J.* 3.154 and cf. 3.164 (ephod/breastpiece) with Rev 15:6. The στῆθος was the “*breast*, of both sexes, being the front part of the θώραξ, divided into two μαστοί (LSJ, s.v. “στῆθος”; cf. BDAG, s.v. “στῆθος”). It could also refer to “the seat of the voice and breath,” the “seat of the heart,” the breasts of a woman, “the breast as the seat of feeling and thought,” and the breastbone—here as equivalent to the στέρνον (LSJ, s.v. “στῆθος”).

²¹⁷Josephus *A.J.* 3.155, 156; cf. 3:162 (ephod). The στέρνον was the “*breast, chest, . . . always of males*” (LSJ, s.v. “στέρνον”). It could also refer to the area of the heart, the seat of affections, or the breastbone (ibid.). That Josephus uses both στῆθος and στέρνον synonymously can be seen by comparing *A.J.* 3.162 and 164.

unusual OT text,²¹⁸ I would suggest that a locative sense is more than adequate for interpretation. I would consequently conclude that one need not necessarily assume any unusual OT allusion with regard to the use of the term *μαστός*; this is particularly the case because of its more frequently feminine character. And based on the cultic triggers already encountered in the text, neither does one need to assume that John is attempting to point one's attention to the high, costumed cincture found in tragic Greek theatre that was probably well-known to John's audience.²¹⁹ The upper body location of the *ζώνη* in Rev 1:13 is not as anomalous as one might first think. Furthermore, it is not an incorrect location for a *ζώνη*²²⁰ but rather fits nicely with Josephus's locative description of the *ζωναί* of the high priest.

Summary of the Golden *ζώνη*

When John describes the *ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου* encircled with a golden *ζώνη*

²¹⁸One possible candidate has been Gen 49:25, part of Jacob's blessing of his beloved son Joseph, which paronomastically describes the God of Jacob, the "Almighty" (*אֱלֹהִים* / LXX minus), as the one who blesses in part with the blessings of the "breasts" (*מְדַבֵּר* / *μαστόν*). On Shaddai as a divine name, cf. David Biale, "The God with Breasts: El Shaddai in the Bible," *History of Religions* 21 (1982): 240-56; Harriet Lutzky, "Shadday as a Goddess Epithet," *VT* 48 (1998): 15-36; and W. Warning, "Terminological Patterns and the Divine Epithet *Shaddai*," *Tyndale Bulletin* 52 (2001): 149-53.

Another possibility has been references to Solomon's *μαστοί* in LXX Song 1:2 (so Rainbow, "Male *μαστοί*," 249-53). But the suggestion that John, in this apparently cultic setting, is attempting to refer to "'male breasts' as a sort of shorthand for the tradition that Jesus is the lover of the Song of Songs" (ibid., 252) is not less than jarring.

²¹⁹So Paul Jouïon, "Apocalypse 1, 13: περιεζωσμένον πρὸς τοῖς μαστοῖς," *Recherches de science religieuse* 24 (1934): 365-66.

²²⁰See Rainbow, "Male *μαστοί*," 249 ("misplacement"), 250 ("the LXX . . . correctly places the belt upon τὴν ὀσφύν [the 'waist' or 'loins']").

situated at the breasts, several pieces of information point to high priestly dress. While the LXX mentions only one ζώνη in association with the high priest, by the time of the Second Temple, Josephus indicates that the high priest wore, as part of his daily regalia, at least two and up to six ζωναί. The first was attached to the ποδήρης, multicolored, comprised in part of gold, and located near the breasts. In *B.J.* 5.232 Josephus states that this item was comprised of five ζωναί, indicating that the sartorial terminology of Josephus for the high priest is not consistent. The second ζώνη was the same as the high priestly ὑφασμα of the LXX (Exod 28:8; 36:28), but it was a somewhat different ζώνη than the others, since it was stitched to the breastpiece. While it was also fabricated in part from gold and located near the breasts, the first belt/sash described by Josephus for the high priest appears to be the parallel to Rev 1:13. An article of dress indicative of royalty it was not.

A high priestly ζώνη is the most natural interpretation of this dress item in Rev 1:13. This is particularly so since John has contextually led up to his sartorial description through cultic references to priesthood and freedom from sin via blood, a description of the golden lampstands reminiscent of the golden lampstand(s) of the earthly sanctuary, and a portrayal of the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου wearing the high priestly ποδήρης, an item of dress John closely relates to the belt/sash in 1:13.

Feet like χαλκολιβάνω

The third dress descriptor that John writes about provides two possible references to high priestly dress imagery. The first is an implicit high priestly dress image, while the latter is a potential comparison to a high priestly dress image. In his

description of the ὅμοιον υἷδον ἀνθρώπου, John writes (1:15a): καὶ οἱ πόδες αὐτοῦ ὅμοιοι χαλκολιβάνῳ ὡς ἐν καμίνῳ πεπυρωμένης (“and his feet were like χαλκολιβάνῳ having been fired/refined [or, burnt] in a furnace”).²²¹

Three things are striking about this descriptive statement. First, the fact that John mentions the feet of the ὅμοιον υἷδον ἀνθρώπου indicates that he could see them in his vision. Visible feet could convey priestly or high priestly dress imagery. Furthermore, he portrays these feet as looking like something that he—but not modern interpreters—was apparently acquainted with: they were ὅμοιοι χαλκολιβάνῳ.²²² Finally, John describes this mysterious word χαλκολιβάνῳ by stating that it looked as if it had been fired (or, burned up) in a furnace, oven, or kiln (ὡς ἐν καμίνῳ πεπυρωμένης). With regard to John’s comparison of the feet to χαλκολιβάνῳ, I would suggest that this mysterious word refers to a “bronze frankincense [holder]” or censer. This, in turn, could communicate high priestly dress imagery as well.

Visible Feet

That John can see the feet of ὅμοιον υἷδον ἀνθρώπου implicitly indicates that his feet are bare (i.e., he is barefoot).²²³ As mentioned earlier, lack of clothing is negative dress imagery; bare feet, consequently, are an indication of dress, that is, that one has not covered one’s feet with sandals or other footwear. Being barefoot could

²²¹Because of the difficult nature of χαλκολιβάνῳ, I have left it untranslated at this point.

²²²Cf. *Apoc. Zeph.* 6:12.

²²³So Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, 95.

either be looked down upon or indicate social deprivation.²²⁴ But those who walked on sacred ground were to take off their sandals (Exod 3:5; Josh 5:15; Acts 7:33), and thus the most prominent people in Judaism who had bare feet were the priests.²²⁵ While John's description of the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου having bare feet would not in and of itself point to high priestly imagery, the possibility of such imagery is both realistic and credible from the standpoint of Jewish backgrounds. The combined descriptions of the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου wearing a ποδήρης and a golden ζώνη as well as being barefoot would consequently add cumulative weight to the probability of high priestly dress imagery.²²⁶

The Problem of χαλκολιβάνω

The word χαλκολιβάνω, however, is one of the most difficult linguistic problems in the NT. While Resseguie understatedly notes that it is “unusual,”²²⁷ Swete declares that it is “a word of unusual difficulty,”²²⁸ and Thomas bluntly asserts that “the

²²⁴Jacob Chinitz, “The Role of the Shoe in the Bible,” *JBQ* 35 (2007): 41, 44-45.

²²⁵Cf. *ibid.*; Anderson (“Feet in Ancient Times,” 10); Tigchelaar (“Bare Feet,” 21, 28-33); and Van der Waal (*Oudtestamentische priesterlijke motieven*, 52). Cf. *b. Zebah* 24a with regard to nothing being between the priests and the floors or pavement of the Temple. On Greco-Roman depictions, see Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, 95-96. Kings and gods are also depicted as having nothing on their feet (so Anderson, “Feet in Ancient Times,” 15).

²²⁶So Barker, *Great High Priest*, 105.

²²⁷Resseguie, *Revelation of John*, 37.

²²⁸Swete, *Apocalypse of St John*, 17.

exact nature of the metal called *chalkolibanon* is impossible to ascertain.”²²⁹ One of the basic reasons for this is that John is apparently the only writer in all of Greek literature up to his time to use this term (1:15; 2:18),²³⁰ while its presence in all Greek literature after his time is not independent of Revelation’s influence.²³¹ Nevertheless, because it has been associated with high priestly imagery,²³² it and the phrase ὡς ἐν καμίνῳ

²²⁹Robert L. Thomas, “The Glorified Christ on Patmos,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 122 (1965): 244. Barclay concluded: “No one really knows what the metal is” (*Revelation*, 1:49).

²³⁰When the term χαλκολιβάνῳ appears again in the message to the church at Thyatira, the fourth or central message of the seven (2:18), the important title “the Son of God” (ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ) is ascribed to Jesus, with that designation being further described in two ways. First, the Son of God is ὁ ἔχων τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς αὐτοῦ ὡς φλόγα πυρὸς (“the one whose eyes are like a flame of fire”; cf. 1:14: οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ αὐτοῦ ὡς φλόξ πυρὸς [“his eyes are like a flame of fire”]). Note that John takes care to match the case of φλόξ with ὀφθαλμός in both 1:14 and 2:18. Second, the Son of God is ὁ ἔχων . . . οἱ πόδες αὐτοῦ ὅμοιοι χαλκολιβάνῳ. This latter description, however, is grammatically problematic, since one would expect the reference to feet to be in the accusative (Τάδε λέγει ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ, ὁ ἔχων τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς αὐτοῦ ὡς φλόγα πυρὸς καὶ οἱ πόδες αὐτοῦ ὅμοιοι χαλκολιβάνῳ). It appears that John explicitly quotes himself here, since the six-word phrase καὶ οἱ πόδες αὐτοῦ ὅμοιοι χαλκολιβάνῳ is exactly the same in both 1:15 and 2:18. I would suggest that this is the probable reason for the unusual grammar—John wants to use the same formulaic description mentioned earlier in 1:15, and so the grammar is not changed. But note that in 2:18 the last part of the description in 1:15 (ὡς ἐν καμίνῳ πεπυρωμένης) is absent and not repeated.

The term “son of God” here in 2:18 may have high priestly overtones. Notice that in Hebrews this title is explicitly associated with high priestly terminology (Heb 4:14; 7:1-3; cf. 5:5; 7:28). On the relation between high priesthood and the title “Son of God” in Hebrews, see Cullmann, *Christology*, 304-305.

²³¹Cf. BDAG, s.v. “χαλκολίβανον.”

²³²See Fletcher-Louis, *Glory of Adam*, 365. Fletcher-Louis associates this term first with Sir 50:9, which compares the high priest to fire and frankincense, and second with 4Q405 (4QShirShabb^e) 23 II, 10, which uses מְמוּלָח תוֹהַר (“salted, pure”; found in the OT only in Exod 30:35, in reference to the tabernacle’s special compound of incense) in its song utilizing high priestly dress imagery (Fletcher-Louis, *Glory of Adam*, 356-58, 364-65). He sees high priestly imagery standing behind the use of the

πεπυρωμένης deserve further examination and exploration in terms of morphology, etymology, grammar, and contextual clues to meaning.

Two basic linguistic possibilities confront one with regard to this word: (1) it was an incredibly rare word that John did not originate but used nonetheless;²³³ or (2) it was a Johannine neologism. Along the lines of the former hypothesis, Colin J. Hemer asserted: “We must suppose that the word was intended to be intelligible to the original readers.”²³⁴ Whichever the case may be, what could χαλκολιβάνω possibly mean?²³⁵

English translations of χαλκολιβάνω typically range from “brass” (GNB) and “fine brass” (KJV) to “bronze” (CEV, NIV, NLT) or “burnished bronze” (NASB, NJB, NRSV).²³⁶ Despite its apparently impenetrable nature, scholars have continued to

separate elements of χαλκολιβάνω in Rev 1:15. If so, this would be suggestive of high priestly dress imagery, since incense has been an overlooked dress element of the high priest. On מִזְבֵּחַ תְּוָהֵר see most recently Noam Mizrahi, “The *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice* and Biblical Priestly Literature: A Linguistic Reconsideration,” *HTR* 104 (2011): 48-56. Cf. Austin Farrer, who translates χαλκολιβάνω as “bronze-hued incense” and states: “Whatever does or does not belong to Levi, incense does” (*A Rebirth of Images: The Making of St John’s Apocalypse* [Westminster, UK: Dacre, 1949], 233).

²³³So Swete, *Apocalypse of St John*, cxxii.

²³⁴Colin J. Hemer, *The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia in Their Local Setting*, The Biblical Resource Series (1986; repr., Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; Livonia, MI: Dove, 2001), 111.

²³⁵For a succinct yet detailed summary of many older interpretations, see W. Lee, “The Revelation of St John,” in *Hebrews—The Revelation of St John*, vol. 4 of *The Holy Bible According to the Authorized Version (A.D. 1611), with an Explanation and Critical Commentary and a Revision of the Translation, by Bishops and Other Clergy of the Anglican Church: New Testament*, ed. F. C. Cook (London: John Murray, 1881), 511.

²³⁶A number of commentators favor translations that describe this in terms of “burnished” bronze or brass. Cf., e.g., Blount, *Revelation*, 44; Hultberg, “Messianic

advance various interpretive suggestions in their attempts to explicate the term.²³⁷ The majority of scholars have suggested that it is either a precious metal or an alloy of gold and bronze.²³⁸ Another popular suggestion is that the word describes an alloy of gold and silver known anciently as electrum, or “white gold.”²³⁹ But this interpretation is unlikely, particularly since the Greek term for it (ἤλεκτρον or ἤλεκτρος) already appears in LXX Ezek 1:4, 27, and 8:2.²⁴⁰

Exegesis,” 234-35; Kiddle, *Revelation*, 15; Lilje, *Last Book*, 54; Murphy, *Fallen Is Babylon*, 91; Resseguie, *Revelation of John*, 37-38; Vernon K. Robbins, *The Invention of Christian Discourse*, Rhetoric of Religious Antiquity 1 (Blandford Forum, UK: Deo, 2009), 1:474; Ryrie, *Revelation*, 20; Charles H. Talbert, *The Apocalypse: A Reading of the Revelation of John* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1994), 16; and Yeatts, *Revelation*, 42. For burnishing being improper to the meaning of this passage, see Grimthorpe, *Revised New Testament*, 159. Lenski succinctly concluded: “Cancel the ‘burnished’ of the R. V.” (*Interpretation*, 66).

²³⁷For a succinct summary of seven interpretive opinions, see Lee, “Revelation of St John,” 506.

²³⁸E.g., Buchanan (*Book of Revelation*, 66), Hoffmann (*Destroyer and the Lamb*, 227), Lenski (*Interpretation*, 66), and Prigent (*Commentary on the Apocalypse*, 138). Aune suggests that since λίβανος also refers to Lebanon, it could possibly mean “Lebanese brass” or “brass from Lebanon” (*Revelation 1-5*, 96). The Syriac version understood it as a metal from Lebanon. Cf. BDAG, s.v. “χαλκολίβανον”; LSJ, s.v. “χαλκολίβανον.” But Swete concluded that “such a conjecture is unsupported, and seems to require λιβανοχάλω” (*Apocalypse of St John*, 17). And Aune ultimately also concluded that “it is philologically doubtful that the second element in such a compound would be used to describe the first element” (Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, 96).

²³⁹See BDAG, s.v. “χαλκολίβανον” and compare Hort, *Apocalypse*, 17: “In the LXX ἤλεκτρον doubtless means not amber, but the metal *electrum*, and this is probably what St John has in view.” Cf. Barclay, *Revelation*, 1:49; Beasley-Murray, *Revelation*, 67; Ford, *Revelation*, 383; Charles Homer Giblin, *The Book of Revelation: The Open Book of Prophecy*, Good News Studies 34 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 1991), 48; González and González, *Revelation*, 18; Robert Mounce, *Revelation*, 59; and Quispel, *Secret Book of Revelation*, 37.

²⁴⁰The Hebrew term in these texts is לְשֵׁמֶט. In Ezek 1:27 and 8:2 it describes the mysterious human likeness (cf. Ezek 1:26 [אָדָם כְּמִרְאֵה אָדָם] / ὁμοίωμα ὡς εἶδος

The most extensive exploration of its possible meaning remains that by Hemer in his discussion of the term as it appears in the letter to the church at Thyatira (2:18).²⁴¹ Hemer’s ultimate conclusion, fundamentally tying the meaning of the word to the Thyatiran guild of χαλκῆς (“bronze-workers”), is worth noting:

I suggest then that an alloy of copper with metallic zinc was made in Thyatira, the zinc being obtained by distillation. This was a finer and purer brass than the rough and variable coinage-alloy. It may have derived from older skills preserved by the craftsmen of the guild. The product, I suggest, was known there as χαλκολίβανος, which I conjecture to be a ‘copulative compound’, literally rendered ‘copper-zinc’, λίβανος being an unrecorded word, perhaps peculiar to the trade, for a metal obtained by distillation, and so derived from the verb λείβω.²⁴²

ἀνθρώπου] and 8:2 [שֶׁמֶט־הַדָּגָוָה / ὁμοίωμα ἀνδρός]) in terms not focusing on his feet or legs but on the area from his loins and above.

²⁴¹Hemer, *Letters*, 111-17. Aune calls Hemer’s study “the most informed discussion of this word” (*Revelation 1-5*, 96). Hemer set forth four criteria that he believed had to be met for a successful solution to the interpretational problem (ibid., 111-12): (1) Dan 10:6, and any other OT passages that underlie Rev 1:15 and 2:18, “require us to understand a shining metal, and a similar sense is surely required for *chalkolibanos*”; (2) the word must have been “intended to be intelligible to the original readers,” and the change from the terminology in Dan 10:6 was “deliberate,” perhaps because the term was “familiar to the important local guild of bronze-workers” in Thyatira; (3) the relationship between 1:15 and 2:18 “is only sufficiently explained if we consider Dan. 10 to have been closely linked in John’s mind with the circumstances of the local church [Thyatira],” and thus the interpretation must be found in the context of that community; and (4) “any attempted derivation must meet the philological requirements.”

²⁴²Hemer, *Letters*, 116. The verb λείβω means “to pour, pour forth” (LSJ, s.v. “λείβω”). Hemer notes that forming a noun or adjective from a verb frequently results in the suffix -ανος (*Letters*, 250, n. 45). Thus, deriving λίβανος from λείβω is possible, just as one can form the adjective πιθανός from the verb πείθω. He also believes that both the unrecorded meaning and the “frankincense (tree)” meaning both derive from λείβω (ibid.). Hemer was not the first to suggest a derivation of λίβανος from λείβω; cf. Düsterdieck, *Revelation of John*, 113 (who decades earlier criticized this interpretation); Andrew Tait, *The Messages to the Seven Churches of Asia Minor: An Exposition of the First Three Chapters of the Book of Revelation* [London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1884], 78); and Chr. Wordsworth, *St. Paul’s Epistles; The General Epistles: The Book of Revelation, and Indexes*, vol. 2 of *The New Testament of Our Lord and*

This interpretation appears contextually attractive, since it seriously takes into consideration the Thyatiran locale. But it is not entirely persuasive for at least three reasons. First, as Craig R. Koester has ably pointed out with regard to the later message to Laodicea, suggestions that distinctive characteristics of the various community locales are embedded in the messages to the seven churches of Asia Minor may well be circumstantial, conjectural, unlikely, or even incorrect.²⁴³ While this argument does not deny any Thyatiran contextual reference or meaning to χαλκολιβάνω, it warns against an automatic interpretation based on a Thyatiran context, in particular, the guild of χαλκκείς.²⁴⁴

Second, one can only arrive at the “Thyatiran metal alloy” interpretation on the basis of the second occurrence of χαλκολιβάνω in Revelation (2:18), not the first (1:15). This is exacerbated by the fact that the second occurrence of the term appears almost six hundred words later than the first one. While possible, it is difficult to

Saviour Jesus Christ, in the Original Greek: With Introductions and Notes, new ed. (London: Rivingtons, 1872), 170. Besides deriving πιθανός from the verb πείθω, Wordsworth also noted the derivation of στεγανός from στέγω and λιχανός from λείχω (ibid.). Assuming that λίβανος derived in parallel fashion from λείβω, Wordsworth suggested that χαλκολιβάνω would thus refer to “liquid or molten brass” (ibid.), but Hemer concluded that this was “problematic etymologically” (*Letters*, 250, n. 45).

²⁴³See Koester, “Message to Laodicea,” 407-24. Cf. E. H. Plumptre, *A Popular Exposition of the Epistles to the Seven Churches in Asia*, 3rd ed. (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1884), 135; and Moyise, *Old Testament*, 35-36. Charles H. H. Scobie advances a moderating position between “maximalist” and “minimalist” views regarding local church references in Rev 2-3; he sees Hemer as a recent representative of such a “maximalist” viewpoint and Prigent as a recent representative of a “minimalist” perspective (“Local References in the Letters to the Seven Churches,” *NTS* 39 [1993]: 606-24).

²⁴⁴The suggestion that the term was related to the guild of bronze-workers was also made by Caird (*Revelation*, 43), Kiddle (*Revelation*, 37), and others.

believe that John purposely introduced a rare or even unique concept in 1:15 but provided the first real contextual means of recognizing and understanding it so many verses later.²⁴⁵

Third, Hemer's argument assumes that χαλκολιβάνω is a copulative compound. A copulative (or, coordinative) compound is one in which each item does not define the other but combines with the other to denote the meaning of the whole (e.g., bittersweet, singer-songwriter, sleepwalk, washer-dryer).²⁴⁶ Other than cardinal numbers, however, there is only one recognizable coordinative compound in the NT, and that is Paul's reference in 2 Cor 11:25 to νυχθήμερον ("a night and a day").²⁴⁷ The rarity of such compounds in the NT places a further burden of proof on Hemer and consequently compounds the conjectural nature of his hypothesis.²⁴⁸

And fourth, Hemer's argument stands or falls on the supposition that what he

²⁴⁵Cf. Plumptre, *Popular Exposition*, 135. In a parallel situation with regard to the seven lampstands, Whiteley complains: "It is common for commentators to preempt John's mind and introduce later information [earlier] into the text" ("Search for Cohesion," 161). Beckwith argued, however, that some symbols in Revelation receive fuller determination by later references (*Apocalypse*, 426). On this, cf. Hemer (*Letters*, 248, n. 29) and Resseguie (*Revelation of John*, 52).

²⁴⁶Cf. Io Manolessou and Symeon Tsolakidis, "Greek Coordinated Compounds: Synchrony and Diachrony," *PWPL* 1 (2009): 23-39; and Angela Ralli, "Compounds in Modern Greek," *Rivista di Linguistica* 4 (1992): 156-60.

²⁴⁷On this issue, see BDF §121, p. 66 and most recently Manolessou and Tsolakidis, "Greek Coordinated Compounds," 28-29, n. 4.

²⁴⁸Fletcher-Louis argues that the word means "incense-bronze," and that it "attests to the enduring association of the high priesthood with incense" (*Glory of Adam*, 365). His "incense-bronze" sounds like a copulative or coordinative compound. But if such were the case, Fletcher-Louis has strangely reversed the two words. The suggestion of Fletcher-Louis is consequently untenable.

believes the right-hand component of the compound word to be, λίβανος, does not mean what it usually means (“frankincense [tree]”). Instead, one must conclude that it has another meaning apparently unrecorded anywhere in ancient literature or material remains. This results in a *hapax legomenon*, χαλκολίβανω, being defined by a non-extant and thus hypothetical term.

Hemer’s conclusion is a valiant attempt to make sense of this mysterious word. As such, Hemer’s work is admirable. Yet because of its clearly hypothetical and speculative nature, it need not necessarily remain the last word on the subject.²⁴⁹ It is certainly possible that these feet that appear like χαλκολιβάνω burned in a furnace suggest some obscure or unknown type of refined metal or metal alloy; this is clearly one of the most accessible interpretations. But the morphology and etymology of χαλκολιβάνω are worth further consideration.

The Morphology of χαλκολίβανω

Interpreters are virtually unanimous that χαλκολιβάνω is a compound word.²⁵⁰ The key to identifying it as a compound is the presence of the vowel -o-.²⁵¹ When one

²⁴⁹Cf. Aune’s judgment of Hemer’s “speculative” argumentation here (*Revelation 1-5*, 96); and Moyise, *Old Testament*, 33, 35-36.

²⁵⁰For a succinct, recent discussion regarding compound words in a number of languages, see Sergio Scalise and Antonietta Bisetto, “The Classification of Compounds,” in *The Oxford Handbook on Compounding*, ed. Rochelle Lieber and Pavol Štekauer, Oxford Handbooks in Linguistics (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 34-53.

²⁵¹Cf. Angela Ralli, “Compound Markers and Parametric Variation,” *Sprachtypologie und Universalienforschung (STUF)* 61 (2008): 23, 31-32; idem, “Compounds in Modern Greek,” 153-54; and idem, “IE, Hellenic: Modern Greek,” in *Oxford Handbook on Compounding*, 454-56. As for the similarity in compounding

breaks this compound apart into its constituent elements, it is comprised of χαλκ- (left-hand member) + -ο- (compound marker) + -λιβαν- (right-hand member) + -ω (inflectional ending). Exegetes are virtually unanimous that χαλκ-, the left-hand member, is a stem²⁵² and is derived from the noun χαλκός.²⁵³ While χαλκός can refer to metal in general, it more frequently refers to copper, brass (i.e., copper alloyed with zinc, also known as ὀρείχαλκος²⁵⁴ [“mountain brass,” “metal of the mountain,” or “ore”]), and particularly bronze (i.e., copper alloyed with tin).²⁵⁵ This same noun can also refer to anything made out of the type of metal just described (e.g., mirrors, money, musical instruments, vessels, weaponry).²⁵⁶ The metallic nature of this word is potentially heightened by the reference in 1:15 to burning or refining in a furnace.

It is important to note that John did not refer to χαλκός itself but rather the

between ancient and modern Greek, see Evanthia Petropoulou, “On the Parallel Between Neoclassical Compounds in English and Modern Greek,” *PWPL* 1 (2009): 46.

²⁵²On the first constituent of a compound noun being a stem, see Ralli, “IE, Hellenic,” 456.

²⁵³Cf. Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, 96.

²⁵⁴Cf. P. T. Craddock, “Zinc in Classical Antiquity,” in *2000 Years of Zinc and Brass*, rev. ed., ed. P. T. Craddock, British Museum Occasional Paper 50 (London: British Museum, 1998), 3-5; N. Zhiron, *Atlantis: Atlantology: Basic Problems*, trans. David Skvirsky (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1970), 45-46. The Greek ὀρείχαλκος was later translated as the Latin *aurichalcum* (Craddock, “Zinc,” 3; Zhiron, *Atlantis*, 46).

²⁵⁵Cf. Aune (*Revelation 1-5*, 96) and Hemer (*Letters*, 112). Aune (*Revelation 1-5*, 96) follows Earle R. Caley (*Orichalcum and Related Ancient Alloys: Origin, Composition, and Manufacture, with Special Reference to the Coinage of the Roman Empire* [New York: American Numismatic Society, 1964], 1, 24-25) in attributing ὀρείχαλκος to bronze instead of brass.

²⁵⁶Cf. BDAG, s.v. “χαλκός”; LSJ, s.v. “χαλκός.”

compound χαλκολιβάνω. This is highly unusual and striking for at least two reasons. First, John is clearly familiar with χαλκός and freely uses it later in his work.²⁵⁷ Why would John utilize an apparently rare term instead of the more common one in his inaugural vision? And second, scholars have frequently advanced two texts (LXX Ezek 1:7; Dan 10:6 [OG and Θ]) as background to this motif in Rev 1:15. Both texts use χαλκός in nearly identical terminology in order to describe the “gleaming bronze” feet of the four living creatures Ezekiel saw in vision (ἐξαστράπτων χαλκός [LXX Ezek 1:7])²⁵⁸ and the “gleaming bronze” feet of the celestial being Daniel saw in vision (χαλκός ἐξαστράπτων [OG Dan 10:6]).²⁵⁹ While these references sound somewhat similar to John’s description of the ὅμοιον υἷὸν ἀνθρώπου who has feet like χαλκολιβάνω, neither χαλκός nor ἐξαστράπτων is shared with either Rev 1:15 or 2:18. Moyise, for instance, perceptively notes that “Dan. 10.5-6, the source text quoted by most commentators, cannot explain John’s choice of χαλκολίβανος” because of the different language utilized.²⁶⁰ While John’s anomalous use of χαλκολιβάνω may well indicate that John is not mechanically following a Greek source in his description, it

²⁵⁷See χαλκοῦ (< χαλκός) in Rev 18:12 and the related adjective χαλκᾶ (< χαλκοῦς) in 9:20. Cf. also the cognate χαλκηδών in 21:19.

²⁵⁸Mathews concludes that it is “unlikely that there is an allusion to Ezek 1:7 in Apoc 1:15” (“Critical Evaluation,” 175).

²⁵⁹Cf. the Θ version of Dan 10:6: καὶ οἱ βραχίονες αὐτοῦ καὶ τὰ σκέλη ὡς ὄρασις χαλκοῦ στίλβοντος (“and his arms and legs like the appearance of shining/radiant bronze”). Mathews believes that verbal correspondence between Dan 10:6 and Rev 1:15a is “considerable,” and thus there is a probable allusion here (“Critical Evaluation,” 176).

²⁶⁰Moyise, *Old Testament*, 32.

may also indicate that he is using a compound word in 1:15 for a different reason.

The Etymology of χαλκολίβανω

Greek has numerous compounds that begin with χαλκ-,²⁶¹ and so the left-hand member of χαλκολιβάνω is clearly not unusual in terms of its compound nature. But George Wesley Buchanan correctly notes that “it is the second part of the word . . . that creates the problem.”²⁶² And so the first question to answer is whether this right-hand member of the compound derives from Hebrew or Greek. John not only uses loanwords or transliterations of various words from Hebrew²⁶³ but also shows an interest in pointing out words with Hebrew derivation and/or meaning.²⁶⁴ Consequently, John is certainly aware of Hebrew etymologies and meanings, and the possible use of other Hebrew etymologies and meanings embedded in Greek terms would not be unusual.

With regard to χαλκολιβάνω, scholars have advanced at least two different Hebrew derivations for the right-hand member of the compound. One old suggestion is that the right-hand member is derived from either the Hebrew noun לָבָן (“white”)²⁶⁵ or

²⁶¹E.g., χαλκάνθρωπος (“copper-man”), χαλκάρματος (“with brazen chariot”), χαλκολίθος (“copper ore, copper”), χαλκοσάνδαλος (“with sandals of bronze”), and χαλκοχίτων (“bronze-clad”). On these and many more, see LSJ.

²⁶²Buchanan, *Book of Revelation*, 67.

²⁶³E.g., ἁλληλουϊά (“hallelujah” [19:1, 3, 4, 6]); Βαλαάμ and Βαλάκ (“Balaam” and “Balak” [2:14]); Ἰεζάβελ (“Jezebel” [2:20]); μάννα (“manna” [2:17]); and σαπφίρος (“sapphire” [21:19]).

²⁶⁴See 9:11 (ὄνομα αὐτῷ Ἑβραϊστὶ Ἀβαδδὼν [“his name in Hebrew is ‘Abaddon’”]) and 16:16 (τὸν τόπον τὸν καλούμενον Ἑβραϊστὶ Ἀρμαγεδὼν [“the place that in Hebrew is called ‘Armageddon’”]).

²⁶⁵So Whiteley, “Search for Cohesion,” 186.

the verb לְבַן (“to make white, purify”).²⁶⁶ The noun לְבָן in the HB, however, correlates to the adjective λευκός in the LXX.²⁶⁷ Since John is very familiar with λευκός,²⁶⁸ this would make unlikely the suggestion that לְבָן underlies the right-hand member of the compound χαλκολιβάνω.²⁶⁹ In any case, certain exegetes concluded that it was preferable to look for a Greek right-hand component than a Hebrew one.²⁷⁰

This, however, has not dissuaded the search for another Hebrew right-hand component. Another suggestion is that John was alluding to the Hebrew of Dan 10:6 (i.e., נְחֹשֶׁת קָלֵל).²⁷¹ According to this view, John saw a variant of נְחֹשֶׁת קָלֵל in that

²⁶⁶On the pointing of this verb, see H. Ringgren, “לְבַן,” *TDOT* (1995), 7:439-40. Richard Chenevix Trench supported this interpretation for Rev 1:15 (*Commentary on the Epistles to the Seven Churches in Asia: Revelation II. III.*, 6th ed. [1897; repr., Minneapolis: Klock & Klock, 1978], 41, where he concluded that it referred to “brass which in the furnace has attained what we call ‘white heat’”).

²⁶⁷Ringgren, “לְבַן,” 7:441.

²⁶⁸Rev 1:14; 2:17; 3:4, 5, 18; 4:4; 6:2, 11; 7:9, 13; 14:14; 19:11, 14; 20:11.

²⁶⁹Such a derivation was opposed, e.g., by *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Being Grimm’s Wilke’s Clavis Novi Testamenti*, 4th ed., trans. and rev. by Joseph Henry Thayer (1889; repr., Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1962), s.v. “χαλκολίβανον.”

²⁷⁰With reference to the possible compounding of χαλκός and the Hebrew verb לְבַן, Tait said there was a “great objection to this, as it is a very unusual thing to have such a combination, except perhaps in proper names” (*Messages*, 78). And Hort protested that the idea of “λίβανος being the Heb. לְבַן, to whiten, is monstrous” (*Apocalypse*, 17). Cf. also Wordsworth, *Book of Revelation*, 170, for a similar preference.

²⁷¹The first Hebrew term (נְחֹשֶׁת) clearly refers to copper/bronze (cf., e.g., Exod 25:3; 31:4; 1 Kgs 7:15; Isa 60:17; Jer 52:17; Ezek 1:7; 9:2; 40:3), while the latter term derives from the verb קָלַל, which Buchanan defines as meaning “to make light in weight, to disparage, belittle, curse, whet, sharpen, polish, shine, or burn to make glisten” (*Book of Revelation*, 67). The same two words occur together in a description

text that read as **לְבַנָּה תַּחֲשֵׁת**, and it is this hypothetical variant that underlies **χαλκολιβάνω**.²⁷² The basic problem—and perhaps fatal flaw—with this latter hypothesis is that it depends on the use of an unknown textual variant to Dan 10:6.

Consequently, it is more probable that the right-hand member **-λιβαν-** in **χαλκολιβάνω** derives from the Greek instead of the Hebrew. As such, the most likely etymological source is one in which the right-hand element is not a stem but a word.²⁷³ The most obvious choice would be the well-known word **λίβανος**.²⁷⁴ This Semitic loanword²⁷⁵ refers to: (1) the Lebanon mountain range (masculine gender);²⁷⁶ or (2) a frankincense tree (masculine or feminine gender); or (3) frankincense itself, as opposed

of the feet of the four living beings in Ezek 1:7 (**תַּחֲשֵׁת קַלְלִי**).

²⁷²Buchanan, *Book of Revelation*, 67. Buchanan states that **לְבַנָּה** carries the idea of something made white, purified, bright or clear, and even frankincense, and that it was understood to be a synonym for **קַלְלִי**.

²⁷³On the two basic possibilities for the right-hand element (i.e., stem + stem, or stem + word), see Angela Ralli and Athanasios Karasimos, “The Role of Constraints in Greek Compound Formation,” *PWPL* 1 (2009): 6; and Ralli, “IE, Hellenic,” 456.

²⁷⁴Cf. Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, 96; Édouard Delebecque, *L’Apocalypse de Jean: Introduction, traduction, annotations* (Paris: Mame, 1992), 164; Giesen, *Die Offenbarung des Johannes*, 88; Kamp, *Openbaring*, 80; and Vanni, *L’Apocalisse*, 131-32, n. 40. Postulating **-λιβαν-** as the right-hand element of **χαλκολιβάνω** and deriving it from **λίβανος** fits the criteria for what happens when the right-hand element is a word instead of a stem, as set forth by Ralli (“IE, Hellenic,” 456): In the resultant compound, both the stress and inflection of **λίβανος** are preserved. Cf. also Ralli and Karasimos, “Role of Constraints,” 6.

²⁷⁵Cf. D. Kellermann, “**לְבַנָּה**,” *TDOT* (1995), 7:441-43; and W. Michaelis, “**λίβανος**, **λιβανωτός**,” *TDNT* (1967), 4:263.

²⁷⁶E.g., Cant 5:15; Isa 10:34; Zech 10:10.

to incense in general (masculine or feminine gender).²⁷⁷ Which possibility is more likely depends on the gender of the compound χαλκολιβάνω.

Greek compounds usually take the gender of the right-hand component of a compound.²⁷⁸ A number of exegetes have categorized χαλκολιβάνω as a feminine second declension noun on the basis of the feminine participle that follows in 1:15 (ὅμοιοι χαλκολιβάνω ὡς ἐν καμίνω πεπυρωμένης).²⁷⁹ Assuming such to be a

²⁷⁷For λίβανος as frankincense, see, e.g., LXX Exod 30:34; Lev 2:1; Sir 50:9. See also Matt 2:11; Rev 18:13. John uses another term for incense in general: θυμιάμα (5:8; 8:3, 4; 18:13). Cf. BDAG, s.v. “Λίβανος” and “λίβανος.” While the 9th ed. of LSJ showed the word when referring to the frankincense tree to be only masculine, the 1996 rev. supplement corrected this to show a feminine form referring to a frankincense tree (LSJ, s.v. “λίβανος”). Several recent commentators (e.g., Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, 96) appear to have missed this. The related word λιβανωτός, when referring to “frankincense,” also appears in both masculine and feminine genders (LSJ, s.v. λιβανωτός).

With regard to English translations, Nielsen stated: “I believe it is important to distinguish between frankincense and incense” (*Incense in Ancient Israel*, 60). But cf. Harvey: “Frankincense was so closely identified with sacrificial rites that the term ‘incense’ could denote this spice alone” (*Scenting Salvation*, 34). Milgrom considered frankincense to be “the main ingredient in the incense burned on the inner altar” (*Leviticus 1-16*, 180).

²⁷⁸According to Ralli, “gender in Greek is a property of stems and derivational affixes” (“IE, Hellenic,” 460). She also argues that through the linguistic concepts of headedness and percolation “specific gender values are inherited from the head constituent that is usually the right-hand member in Greek compounds” (“The Role of Morphology in Gender Determination: Evidence from Modern Greek,” *Linguistics* 40 [2002]: 530; cf. *ibid.*, 540-41 and 548, n. 19). See also *idem*, “Compounds in Modern Greek,” 155.

²⁷⁹Cf. Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, 96; Beckwith, *Apocalypse*, 439; Hemer, *Letters*, 247, n. 25, and 250, n. 45; Lupieri, *Commentary on the Apocalypse*, 110; F. Rehkopf, “Grammatisches zum Griechischen des Neuen Testaments,” in *Der Ruf Jesu und die Antwort der Gemeinde: Exegetische Untersuchungen, Joachim Jeremias zum 70. Geburtstag gewidmet von seinen Schülern*, ed. Eduard Lohse, with Christoph Burchard and Berndt Schaller (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1970), 215-16; and Thomas, *Revelation 1-7*, 102. William Mounce asserts that χαλκολιβάνω can be either neuter or masculine, and then he lists it “arbitrarily” as a neuter (*The Morphology of Biblical*

reasonable interpretation, the right-hand member of the compound (derived from λίβανος) would then not refer to Lebanon; instead, it could refer either to the frankincense tree or frankincense itself. While either of the latter two options could be possible, it would be more likely that frankincense itself were the referent, since the significance of the frankincense tree is that it produces the aromatic substance.²⁸⁰

One suggested possibility for χαλκολιβάνω under this option would thus be to take the word not as a copulative but as a determinative compound. In the latter case, the right-hand element of the compound is defined by the left-hand element.²⁸¹ This would yield something like bronze- or brass-like λίβανος²⁸² or “yellow frankincense.”²⁸³ A number of exegetes, however, have adamantly opposed this tentative conclusion because of its supposed absurdity.²⁸⁴ With such an interpretive dead-end appearing

Greek [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994], 188, n. 9).

²⁸⁰Cf. Aune (*Revelation 1-5*, 96), Giesen (*Die Offenbarung des Johannes*, 88), and Hort (*Apocalypse*, 17), who believe the only possibility is frankincense. References to frankincense in the LXX are masculine (e.g., τῷ λιβάνω [Lev 6:8]; τὸν λίβανον [Lev 2:2, 16; Neh 13:5, 9]), while those in the HB are feminine (לִבְנָן).

²⁸¹See BDF §114, p. 62.

²⁸²This was one of the suggestions of Oecumenius (Hemer, *Letters*, 247, n. 26). “Nothing will serve philologically but ‘brass-like λίβανος’” (Hort, *Apocalypse*, 17). Cf. the “bronze-hued incense” and “bronze-coloured incense” of Farrer, *Rebirth of Images*, 233 and 238, n. 1. In another vein, Wordsworth suggested that it might signify “copper in a state of ignition, like *frankincense* when it is red-hot” (*Book of Revelation*, 170).

²⁸³LSJ, s.v. “χαλκολίβανον.” Cf. Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, 96. Pursuing this aromatic perspective, Giesen translates Rev 1:15 to refer to “wohlriechender Bronze” or “fragrant bronze” (*Die Offenbarung des Johannes*, 83; cf. p. 88), but this reverses which element of the compound defines the other.

²⁸⁴Düsterdieck, basing his interpretation on Dan 10:6 being the allusive background to Rev 1:15, insisted that “incense can in no way be thought of” (*Revelation*

inescapable, an examination of ὡς ἐν καμίνῳ πεπυρωμένης—the phrase immediately following χαλκολιβάνῳ—could help resolve the impasse.

The Grammar of ὡς ἐν καμίνῳ πεπυρωμένης

The third element of this enigma in Rev 1:15, ὡς ἐν καμίνῳ πεπυρωμένης, raises some issues of its own in its relationship to the description of the feet of the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου. First, the phrase—which does not occur in the parallel passage in 2:18—appears to describe something burned or refined²⁸⁵ in an oven, furnace, or kiln.²⁸⁶ Whether John intends his audience to understand that the subject of

of John, 113). Kraft denies that the right-hand member refers to incense, since incense does not glow when heated; he concludes that a translation of “goldgelber Weihrauch [“golden-yellow incense”]” makes no sense (*Die Offenbarung des Johannes*, 46). And Prigent claims—despite information “that a certain variety of incense was called χαλκολίβανον because of its golden color”—that all attempts to connect the term to some sort of golden incense “are all merely vain attempts, for it is clear that the grandiose description of Rev 1:15 would fit very poorly with a metaphor comparing the legs of the Son of Man to a sort of golden resin!” (*Commentary on the Apocalypse*, 138). Cf. also Trench (*Commentary*, 41) and Swete (*Apocalypse of St John*, 17).

²⁸⁵John uses πυρόω elsewhere in 3:18, where it describes gold refined by fire (χρυσίον πεπυρωμένον ἐκ πυρὸς). Elsewhere in the NT it refers to burning passion (1 Cor 7:9), intense feelings (2 Cor 11:29), burning arrows (Eph 6:16), and the destruction of the earth by burning, fire, or flames (2 Pet 3:12). In the LXX it refers to such concepts as refining by fire (2 Sam 22:31; Ps 17:31 [Eng. 18:30]; Prov 30:5), refined, pure, or flawless metals (Pss 11:7 [Eng. 12:6]; 65:10 [Eng. 66:10]; Prov 10:20; Job 22:25), spiritual testing or refining (Pss 16:3 [Eng. 17:3]; 25:2 [Eng. 26:2]; 65:10 [Eng. 66:10]; 104:19 [Eng. 105:19]; 118:140 [119:140]; Isa 1:25; Jer 9:6 [Eng. 9:7]; Zech 13:9; Jdt 8:27; *Pss. Sol.* 17:43; cf. Dan 11:35 [Θ]; 12:10 [Θ]), burning or resplendent glory (Esth 5:1), burning anger (2 Macc 4:38; 10:35; 14:45), burning hearts (3 Macc 4:2), burning flesh (4 Macc 9:17), heated instruments of torture (4 Macc 11:19), and igniting a fire (2 Macc 10:3).

²⁸⁶In the LXX and NT, κάμινος refers to an oven, furnace, or kiln used for burning bricks or smelting metals (e.g., Gen 19:28; Exod 19:18; Deut 4:20; Isa 48:10; Jer 11:4; Ezek 22:20, 22; Matt 13:42, 50; Rev 9:2; etc.). It frequently occurs in the story

this clause has been through a furnace or is still there is unknown.²⁸⁷

A second interpretive issue revolves around the form of the perfect passive feminine singular participle. Textual evidence²⁸⁸ is divided among three basic possibilities: (1) nominative plural (πεπυρωμένοι: 1006 1611 1841 1854 2329 2344 2351 *Byz* [P 046] sy^{hmg} Andrew; Victorinus-Pettau Tyconius); (2) genitive singular (πεπυρωμένης: A C); and (3) dative singular (πεπυρωμένω: **Ⲛ** 205 209 2050 2053 2062 it^{ar, gīg, h, t} vg cop^{sa, bo} arm eth Irenaeus^{lat, arm}; Cyprian Maternus Apringius Primasius Beatus). Most contemporary exegetes have concluded that the genitive singular πεπυρωμένης is the original text, primarily on the basis of: (1) its attestation by A and C, considered among the best textual witnesses to Revelation;²⁸⁹ (2) it explaining best

of the fiery furnace into which Daniel's three friends were thrown as punishment for disobedience to King Nebuchadnezzar (e.g., Dan 3:6, 11, 15, 17, 19, 20, 21). In Ezek 22:20 χαλκός is one of the metals that is fired in a κάμινος. It may also refer to an alcove or large vaulted tent (Num 25:8; MT **כַּמִּינֹס** is a *hapax legomenon*). Notice that in MT Num 25:8 there is punning between the **כַּמִּינֹס**, where the execution took place, and the **כַּמִּינֹס** (belly), through which Phinehas thrust his spear. LSJ suggests κάμινος could be a cognate with καμάρα, which refers to something with an arched covering [cf. LSJ, s.v. "κάμινος" and "καμάρα"; LXX Isa 40:22]). On this, see also the note below regarding *Mart. Pol.* 15:2.

²⁸⁷Kistemaker, *Exposition*, 96. If it were understood to be still in the furnace, it is unlikely to refer to its strength, since any metallic object burned or refined in a fire would be hot, molten, and shiny, but not strong. Cf. Reddish, who suggests the imagery conveys the idea of "powerful legs" (*Revelation*, 41); Resseguie, who concludes that the refined nature of the material indicates it will not crack, suggesting "a person of incomparable stability and strength" (*Revelation of John*, 77); Stevens, who concludes the imagery "conjures ideas of strength and stability" and indicates the unmoving nature of the Son of Man wherever he stands ("Son of Man," 30); and Yeatts, who concludes it indicates "stability and immovable strength" (*Revelation*, 42).

²⁸⁸Here I cite the textual fuller evidence from *UBS⁴* instead of *NA²⁷*.

²⁸⁹Cf. Aune (*Revelation 1-5*, clvi) and Beale (*Revelation*, 72, 105).

the origin of the other two variants; and (3) it being deemed the *lectio difficilior*.²⁹⁰

This variant, as the latter designation demonstrates, has not found easy acceptance. Over a century ago, Edmund Beckett, Baron Grimthorpe, asserted that πεπυρωμένης “is not intelligible, or translateable,”²⁹¹ and decades later C. C. Torrey exclaimed his surprise at the “astonishing form of the participle with its genitive case and feminine gender, both quite impossible.”²⁹² Recently Smalley concluded that while the “difficult” grammar of πεπυρωμένης suggested its originality, John instead intended to write πεπυρωμένω in order to agree with χαλκολιβάνω.²⁹³ Nevertheless, the contemporary general conclusion has been that some scribes attempted to correct the feminine genitive singular participle πεπυρωμένης to the masculine dative singular πεπυρωμένω in order to match χαλκολιβάνω (masculine), or they corrected πεπυρωμένης to the masculine nominative plural πεπυρωμένοι in order to match οἱ πόδες.²⁹⁴ One must consequently search for another grammatical explanation.²⁹⁵

²⁹⁰On these points cf., e.g., Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, 65-66, n. 15.a.; Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 663-64; Robert Mounce, *Revelation*, 59, n. 26; G. Mussies, *The Morphology of Koine Greek As Used in the Apocalypse of St. John: A Study in Bilingualism*, NovTSup 27 (Leiden: Brill, 1971), 98; and Swete, *Apocalypse of St John*, 17.

²⁹¹Grimthorpe, *Revised New Testament*, 159.

²⁹²C. C. Torrey, *The Apocalypse of John* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1958), 97.

²⁹³Smalley, *The Revelation to John*, 45, n. a.

²⁹⁴Cf., e.g., Aune (*Revelation 1-5*, 65-66, n. 15.a.), Beale (*Revelation*, 210), Metzger (*Textual Commentary*, 663-64), and Robert Mounce (*Revelation*, 59, n. 26).

²⁹⁵Cf. Thomas, *Revelation 1-7*, 107. Robert Mounce’s suggestion to emend ἐν καμίνω to ἐκ καμίνου to match the case of the participle is desperate (*Revelation*, 59).

When two items are compared in Revelation via the word ὡς, they are typically in the same case.²⁹⁶ In 1:15, however, that is not the case with any of its reasonably possible referents (οἱ πόδες, χαλκολιβάνω, or καμίνω): οἱ πόδες [nominative] αὐτοῦ ὅμοιοι χαλκολιβάνω [dative] ὡς ἐν καμίνω [dative] πεπυρωμένης [genitive]. A

Moreover, there is no overwhelmingly persuasive reason to conclude that the participle is a solecism in order to allude to τὴν κάμινον τοῦ πυρὸς (“the furnace of fire”) in LXX Dan 3. For supporters of this suggestion, cf. Beale, *Revelation*, 210; idem, *The Use of Daniel in Jewish Apocalyptic Literature and in the Revelation of St. John* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1984), 159-61; Beale and McDonough, “Revelation,” 1092; Moyise, *Old Testament*, 41. For τὴν κάμινον τοῦ πυρὸς in LXX Daniel, see 3:6, 11, 15, 20; for τῆς καμίνου τοῦ πυρὸς, see 3:17, 21, 23, 93 (Eng. 3:26). However, King Nebuchadnezzar’s attempt to burn Daniel’s three friends to death in the fiery furnace does not fit the context of Rev 1 and would provide an arguably discordant and jarring allusion. Furthermore, the suggestion loses force because the root of the participle is completely absent from Dan 3. Cf. Whiteley, who concluded that “it is difficult to see any reason for importing Daniel 3 into the text” (“Search for Cohesion,” 185).

²⁹⁶Charles, *Revelation*, cxxxviii. See, e.g., the following eight examples:

ἡ δὲ κεφαλὴ αὐτοῦ καὶ αἱ τρίχες λευκαὶ ὡς ἔριον λευκόν ὡς χιῶν

(1:14: “his head and his white hair like white wool, like snow”)

οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ αὐτοῦ ὡς φλόξ πυρὸς

(1:14: “his eyes like a flame of fire”)

ἡ φωνὴ αὐτοῦ ὡς φωνὴ ὑδάτων πολλῶν

(1:15: “his voice like the sound of much water”)

ἡ ὄψις αὐτοῦ ὡς ὁ ἥλιος

(1:16: “his appearance like the sun”)

ἔπεσα [implicit nominative] πρὸς τοὺς πόδας αὐτοῦ ὡς νεκρός

(1:17: “he fell to his feet as a dead person”)

τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς αὐτοῦ ὡς φλόγα πυρὸς

(2:18: “his eyes like a flame of fire”)

ἦξω [implicit nominative] ὡς κλέπτῃς

(3:3: “I will come as a thief”)

καὶ εἶχον θώρακας ὡς θώρακας σιδηροῦς

(9:9: “and they had breastplates like breastplates of iron”)

reasonable solution is that πεπυρωμένης is a rare form of the genitive absolute.²⁹⁷ In this case, the construction would have no explicit noun or pronoun to which the participle agrees.²⁹⁸ Assuming χαλκολιβάνω to be a second declension feminine compound, with the participle as a feminine genitive absolute implicitly referring back to it, however, would solve the problems of both the participle's gender and case.²⁹⁹

A New Proposal

One further possibility exists that, to my understanding, has never been explored. In Rev 8:3 an angel “stood on the altar” (ἑστάθη ἐπὶ τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου), holding what appears at first glance to be golden frankincense (λιβανωτὸν χρυσοῦν).³⁰⁰

The word λιβανωτός can be a synonym of λίβανος and also frequently refers to

²⁹⁷Cf., e.g., Aune (*Revelation 1-5*, 65-66), Huber (*Einer gleich einem Menschensohn*, 156), Lenski (*Interpretation*, 66), MacKenzie (*Author of the Apocalypse*, 160-61), Osborne (*Revelation*, 102), Rehkopf (“Grammatisches,” 215-19), Thomas (*Revelation 1-7*, 102, 107), and Whiteley (“Search for Cohesion,” 185-87). Charles denied that there were any genitive absolutes in Revelation (*Revelation*, 1:cxxxviii-cxxxix).

²⁹⁸Aune lists three other texts with the same dynamic: Matt 17:14; Acts 21:10; 21:31 (*Revelation 1-5*, 66, n. 15.a). He believes that αὐτῆς has been omitted from the sentence (ibid.), while Beckwith (*Apocalypse*, 439) and Thomas (*Revelation 1-7*, 107) suggested that τῆς χαλκολιβάνου was the unexpressed part. Cf. Whiteley, “Search for Cohesion,” 187. Other suggestions include hypothesizing an Aramaic equivalent to πεπυρωμένης (so Mussies, *Morphology*, 98; Vanni sees this as persuasive [*L'Apocalisse*, 131, n. 38]), but this suggestion seems more conjectural and less likely.

²⁹⁹Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, 66, n. 15.a.

³⁰⁰For a recent argument that the angel stands on the altar of burnt offering even as the earthly priests stood on the large altar of burnt offering in the temple, see Stefanovic (“Angel at the Altar,” 82-85).

frankincense.³⁰¹ But scholars translate 8:3 on the basis of its context to communicate that the angel was holding not “golden frankincense” but “a golden censer.”³⁰² The contextual descriptor of “golden” in 8:3 ultimately provides the nearest key to transform the meaning of λιβανωτός from the fragrant frankincense to the metonymical metallic censer. In other words, the λιβανωτὸν χρυσοῦν in 8:3 was understood not as “golden frankincense” but instead as “golden frankincense [holder],” that is, a “golden censer.”

I would suggest that one could apply the same exegetical process to 1:15 and 2:18. The compound χαλκολιβάνω, because of the association of its left-hand member (χαλκός) and its right-hand member (λίβανος, a cognate of λιβανωτός), could, similarly to 8:3, refer metonymically to the container in which the frankincense was placed.³⁰³

³⁰¹Cf. BDAG (s.v., “λιβανωτός”), LSJ (s.v., “λιβανωτός”), and Aune (*Revelation 1-5*, 96). It occurs only twice in the NT (Rev 8:3, 5) and only twice in the LXX (1 Chr 9:29 [translating $\text{לִבְנָן}^{\text{L}}$]; 3 Macc 5:3). In Jewish and Christian literature it is also used in Philo *Spec.* 1.275; Josephus *A.J.* 3.256 (2x); and *Mart. Pol.* 15:2.

³⁰²The angel with the λιβανωτὸν χρυσοῦν is immediately given much incense (καὶ ἐδόθη αὐτῷ θυμιάματα πολλά [8:3: “and much incense was given to him”]), and τὸν λιβανωτὸν is filled with fire from the altar (ἐγένευσεν αὐτὸν ἐκ τοῦ πυρὸς τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου [8:5: “he filled it from the fire from the altar”]). On the difference in normal meaning for λιβανωτός because of contextual indicators, see BDAG, s.v. “λιβανωτός”; LSJ, s.v. “λιβανωτός”; and cf., e.g., Aune (*Revelation 6-16*, 512), Beckwith (*Apocalypse*, 553), Ford (*Revelation*, 131), Robert Mounce (*Revelation*, 174), Osborne (*Revelation*, 344), Smalley (*The Revelation to John*, 215), and Swete (*Apocalypse of St John*, 108).

³⁰³Notice the morbidly fascinating description of the martyrdom of Polycarp in the 2nd-century *Martyrdom of Polycarp*, where imagery of gold and silver being refined in a furnace is associated with the scent of (frank)incense (*Mart. Pol.* 15:2):

τὸ γὰρ πῦρ καμάρας εἶδος ποιῆσαν, ὥσπερ ὀθόνη πλοίου ὑπὸ πνεύματος πληρουμένη, κύκλω περιετείχισεν τὸ σῶμα τοῦ μάρτυρος· καὶ ἦν μέσον, οὐχ ὡς σὰρξ καιομένη ἀλλ’ ὡς ἄρτος ὀπτώμενος ἢ ὡς χρυσὸς καὶ ἄργυρος ἐν καμίνῳ πυρούμενος. καὶ γὰρ εὐωδίας τοσαύτης ἀντελαβόμεθα, ὡς λιβανωτοῦ

This proposal would result in χαλκολιβάνω being understood as a determinative compound which refers to a “bronze frankincense [holder],” that is, a “bronze censer.”³⁰⁴ Robert Mounce’s explanation for the meaning of the cognate λιβανωτός in 8:3 could be revised and used with regard to χαλκολιβάνω in 1:15 and 2:18: “although the word John uses for censer elsewhere means frankincense (*e.g.*, 18:13), the adjective “*bronze*” in χαλκολιβάνω indicates that he had the implement in mind rather than that which was placed in it.”³⁰⁵

Reference to such a bronze censer would most likely invoke, as a matter of consequence, not the censers associated with Solomon’s Temple or the post-exilic temple but those used in the Mosaic tabernacle as first described in Exodus. It was in the tabernacle traditions that the censers were described as being made of bronze.³⁰⁶

πνέοντος ἢ ἄλλου τινὸς τῶν τιμίων ἀρωμάτων.

“For the fire, taking the shape of an arch, like the sail of a ship filled by the wind, completely surrounded the body of the martyr; and it was there in the middle, not like flesh burning but like bread baking or like gold and silver being refined in a furnace. For we also perceived a very fragrant odor, as if it were the scent of incense or some other precious spice.”

(Text and translation in *Apostolic Fathers*, trans. and ed. Bart Ehrman [LCL]).

³⁰⁴I will use bronze from now on to refer to any possible copper/bronze metal.

³⁰⁵Cf. Robert Mounce, *Revelation*, 174 (the words in italics constitute the difference from Mounce).

³⁰⁶Exod 27:3; 38:23. Incense was placed in bronze censers (Num 16:37, 39 [LXX Num 17:2, 4]), but it appears that these bronze censers were used outside the tabernacle proper and not just by the high priest (cf. Lev 10:1). Nevertheless, when the Israelites rebelled in the wilderness at this time, Aaron the (high) priest made atonement for Israel with incense in his (bronze) censer (Num 16:46 [MT 17:11]; 4 Macc 7:11). While bronze censers were used in the tabernacle complex, (mostly) golden censers were used in the temple (1 Kgs 7:50; 2 Chr 4:22; some were possibly silver [2 Kgs

The presence of λίβανος as the right-hand member of χαλκολιβάνω would accordingly make sense, since frankincense was either one of several ingredients or the key ingredient in the incense used within the tabernacle incense rituals.³⁰⁷

Use of the concept of the bronze frankincense holder could further underscore the cultic portrayal of Jesus by pointing to the most famous illustration of a (bronze) censer in association with the tabernacle traditions—when the high priest Aaron made atonement for the people after the rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram (Num 16:46-48 [MT 17:11-13]). This censer was an evocative, role-related dress symbol, since, as Gane³⁰⁸ has noted, “the censer of Aaron . . . represents [Aaron’s] high priestly function”

25:15]). On extrabiblical traditions of gold censers being used in the temple, cf. 11QT^a III, 12-13; *m. Yoma* 4:4; and the discussion in Hurowitz, “Solomon’s Golden Vessels,” 158.

³⁰⁷On the ingredients of the fragrant incense, see Exod 30:34-36; Josephus *B.J.* 5.218; *b. Ker.* 6a; cf. Propp (*Exodus 19-40*, 484-86) and Milgrom (*Leviticus 1-16*, 237, 1026-28). According to Exod 30:34-36, some of the sanctuary incense was to be placed before the Testimony in the Tent of Meeting and was to be considered most holy (קִדְשֵׁי קִדְשֵׁי / ἅγιον τῶν ἁγίων). For frankincense as possibly being the key ingredient, cf. Milgrom (*Leviticus 1-16*, 180, 1028), Nielsen (*Incense in Ancient Israel*, 60-61, 65), and Propp (*Exodus 19-40*, 485). Milgrom believes, on the analogy with the golden pans used with the golden lampstand, that golden censers were used to bring the incense into the Most Holy Place on Yom Kippur, but there is no clear biblical evidence for this (*Leviticus 1-16*, 1025).

It remains possible, according to the suggestion that Rev 1:15 refers to a bronze (frankincense) holder, that the frankincense would not necessarily be absent. Reference to an incense holder would usually assume that there is incense in it; an incense holder takes on importance primarily because of the use of the incense within it. Perhaps the incense holder imagery was meant to imply that the incense, which would be understood in Revelation in association with the prayers of the saints (see 5:8; 8:3-4; cf. Ps 141:2; Luke 1:8-11), adhered to the body of the ὁμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου and emphasized his mediatorial role.

³⁰⁸Gane, *Leviticus/Numbers*, 633.

in the rhetoric of Num 16.³⁰⁹ Rooke concurs, noting that “the use of censers and incense to determine who is the chosen party implies that Korah is actually challenging Aaron for the high priesthood.”³¹⁰ YHWH’s judgment on the Israelites in the aftermath of the rebellion against Moses and Aaron was mediated by Aaron’s atoning ministry with his bronze censer. Such potential bronze censer dress imagery in Rev 1 would highlight the high priestly ministry of the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου within the context of judgment and mediation that extends from Rev 1 into chaps. 2-3.

Specifically, in the introduction to the message to Thyatira (2:18), Jesus describes himself as having two things: (1) eyes like a fiery flame (φλόγα πυρός); and (2) feet like χαλκολιβάνω. Both of these descriptions derive from the inaugural vision of Jesus in 1:14-15. Assuming that χαλκολιβάνω alludes to Numbers, one finds that the judgment on the rebels in that narrative (16:35) was later understood in terms of fiery flames.³¹¹ Consequently, both descriptions in the Thyatiran message could carry connotations of judgment as well as mediation.

³⁰⁹Cf. Magonet, “The Korah Rebellion,” 3-4, 22-23.

³¹⁰Rooke, “Day of Atonement,” 359. The right-hand element in the compound χαλκολιβάνω (λίβανος) occurs in Sir 50:9, where it is one of the rapturous descriptors of the high priest emerging from the temple: “like fire and frankincense [πῦρ καὶ λίβανος] in the censer [πυρείου].” Consequently, the association of the high priest with incense, some of which was considered most holy, could suggest that this rare term denoted high priestly imagery. And since the censer could be considered a high priestly dress tool, one could view this image in Rev 1 as evoking not just high priestly imagery in general but a high priestly dress image.

³¹¹Cf. LXX Ps 105:18 [πῦρ . . . φλόξ]; Sir 45:19 [πυρὶ φλογός]). Reference to the Ancient of Days in Dan 7:9, who has “the [or, his] throne [like] a fiery flame” (ὁ θρόνος ὡσεὶ φλόξ πυρός [OG]; ὁ θρόνος αὐτοῦ φλόξ πυρός [Θ]), is also in the context of judgment (cf. 7:9-10, 22, 26).

Furthermore, in Rev 1 John records ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου stating that he, the Living One, was dead but is alive forever and has the keys of Death and Hades (Rev 1:18).³¹² Moreover, the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου is the one who walks (ὁ περιπατῶν [2:1]) among the seven lampstands.³¹³ While most of the members of the seven church communities are “alive,” some have the reputation of being alive but are instead spiritually dead (3:1),³¹⁴ and thus Jesus not only walks but stands (ἔστηκα [3:20]) between the living and the dead,³¹⁵ similar to Aaron standing between the living and the dead in his ministry of atonement (Num 16:48 [MT 17:13]; cf. Wis 18:23).

³¹²According to the LXX, the rebels went down ζῶντες εἰς ᾗδου (“alive into Hades” [Num 16:30, 33]). While those who went down “alive into Hades” were not the same people involved in the later story of Aaron’s (high) priestly mediation, the earlier revolt of Korah was related to the later rebellion of the Israelites (cf. Num 16:1-2, 16-18, 31-35, 39-40 [MT 17:4-5], 49 [MT 17:14]). Cf. Magonet, “The Korah Rebellion,” 22, who notes that the implicit reference to the censer ties together both the initial rebellion in Num 16:1 and Aaron’s atoning ministry in 16:47 (MT 17:12). On the confusion over whether Korah was “swallowed up” or burned, see the summary discussion in David C. Mitchell, “‘God Will Redeem My Soul from Sheol’: The Psalms of the Sons of Korah,” *JSOT* 30 (2006): 369, n. 10.

³¹³Cf. περιπατήσουσιν μετ’ ἐμοῦ ἐν λευκοῖς (“they will walk with me in white” [3:4]). YHWH indicated to the Israelites on the way to Canaan that he would walk among them (Lev 26:12; Deut 23:15). The promise to the Sardian believers that they will walk with Jesus in white could well indicate that, as priests, they walk in the white, linen robes of the common priests (cf. LXX Exod 28:40; 29:8; 35:19; 39:27; 40:14; Lev 6:10; 8:13). This does not, however, mean that Jesus walks “in white,” since he clearly walks in a ποδήρης.

³¹⁴Rev 3:1: ὄνομα ἔχεις ὅτι ζῆς, καὶ νεκρὸς εἶ (“you have a reputation that you are alive, but you are dead”).

³¹⁵Cf. τὰ τέκνα αὐτῆς ἀποκτενῶ ἐν θανάτῳ (“I will strike her children dead [2:23, NRSV]), γίνου πιστὸς ἄχρι θανάτου, καὶ δώσω σοι τὸν στέφανον τῆς ζωῆς (“be faithful unto death, and I will give to you the crown of life” [2:10]), and Ἀντιπᾶς ὁ μάρτυς μου ὁ πιστὸς μου, ὃς ἀπεκτάνθη παρ’ ὑμῖν (“Antipas, my faithful witness, who was killed among you” [2:13; cf. BDAG, s.v. “παρά”]).

Finally, as we have already observed, Wis 18:24 describes Aaron, intervening between the dead and the living, as wearing the ποδήρης, the glittering and gem-encrusted breastpiece, and the divine tetragrammeton on his diadem. Wisdom relates that it was to these as well as his prayer, his censuring, and his recalling the ancestral oaths and covenants that the Destroyer yielded (Wis 18:21-25; cf. 1 Cor 10:10). The ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου in Rev 1:13 similarly wears the same ποδήρης, and the potentially allusive reference to Aaron’s ministry with his bronze censer would help complete the interpretive arc.³¹⁶

One objection to this suggestion would be that comparing the feet of the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου to a bronze censer not only is bizarre but is also absurd. Concern about such a comparison should pale, however, when one remembers, for instance, that this same ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου has a sword protruding from his mouth (1:16; 2:16; cf. 19:15, 21).³¹⁷ The portrayal is certainly symbolic, and John is grasping at

³¹⁶It is difficult to determine how familiar John was with LXX traditions such as these.

³¹⁷Cf. the Mighty Angel of Rev 10 having “feet” like “pillars of fire” (οἱ πόδες αὐτοῦ ὡς στῦλοι πυρός [10:1]). This verse furthermore raises the question of whether οἱ πόδες should be translated as “feet” or “legs”; most commentators (e.g., Aune [*Revelation 6-16*, 548-49, n. 1.e.], Beale [*Revelation*, 524], Brighton [*Revelation*, 261-62], Robert Mounce [*Revelation*, 202, n. 10], Osborne [*Revelation*, 394, n. 2], and Smalley [*The Revelation to John*, 257]) suggest that, either via linguistic usage or metonymy, “legs” works better in context, since the comparison is with “pillars of fire.” But in the very next verse, does the angel place his right “leg” (τὸν πόδα αὐτοῦ τὸν δεξιὸν) and his left (τὸν δὲ εὐώνυμον) on the sea and on the land? Note that everywhere else in Revelation outside of 10:1-2, ὁ πούς refers to “foot” and not “leg” (1:15, 17; 2:18; 3:9; 11:11; 12:1; 13:2; 19:10; 22:8). If one stayed with the “foot-pillar” comparison, the symbolism would appear bizarre—but not unusual for Revelation. Note that some commentators have seen a relationship between this image and that of the feet of the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου in 1:15 and 2:18 (cf. Brighton [*Revelation*, 261],

approximations in order to convey his visionary and auditory experience. And objecting that it would be irregular for John to compare the (plural) feet of ὅμοιον ὑἰὸν ἀνθρώπου to a (singular) bronze censer is unpersuasive in light of his earlier comparison of his (plural) eyes to a (singular) fiery flame (οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ αὐτοῦ ὡς φλόξ πυρὸς [1:14; cf. 2:18; 19:12]).

Objecting to the image of a bronze censer being burned or refined in a fire of a furnace (as opposed to a fire being burned in a bronze censer) similarly has little merit. Grimthorpe argued that brass (and we could include copper or bronze) “is not ‘refined’ by melting, as gold and silver are, but is a compound metal or alloy, *made* by melting.”³¹⁸ It would thus not make metallurgical sense to speak of bronze being refined by fire. But πεπυρωμένης need not refer to refining, as it does later in 3:18, and it could well refer to burning or even something glowing instead.³¹⁹

Bronze censers were burned in the rebellion of Korah and company. In fact, the rebels who were burned up were described as being consumed/devoured (לָכַח / κατέσθιω [Num 16:35]), a verb sometimes used in contexts in which something is

Osborne [*Revelation*, 394], and Smalley [*The Revelation to John*, 257]). In any case, the reference to “pillars of fire” alludes again to the story of the Exodus, in which YHWH led the Israelites through the “pillar of fire” and the “pillar of cloud” (see Exod 13:21-22; 14:19-20 [only pillar of cloud], 24 [pillar of cloud and fire]; 33:9-10 [only pillar of cloud]; Num 12:5 [only pillar of cloud]; 14:14; Deut 31:15 [only pillar of cloud]; Neh 9:12, 19; Ps 99:7 [only pillar of cloud]).

³¹⁸Grimthorpe, *Revised New Testament*, 159.

³¹⁹Cf. the possibilities in BDAG, s.v. “πυρόω” and LSJ, s.v. “πυρόω.”

burned up in an oven or furnace.³²⁰ As a result of the burning of the censers,³²¹ the censers became holy (שִׁקְדָּה [Num 17:2-3 {Eng. 16:37-38}]) and were later hammered into a covering for the tabernacle altar as a reminder to the Israelites that only the descendants of Aaron (בְּנֵי אַהֲרֹן / ἐκ τοῦ σπέρματος Ααρων) could offer incense before YHWH (Num 16:37-40 [MT 17:2-5]). This would call up not only the imagery of holiness but also the restrictive identity of the priesthood. The burned censers of the erstwhile rebels became holy and overlaid the bronze altar of the tabernacle, and the bronze censer became a sartorial symbol of Aaron’s high priestly identity and atoning ministry. Thus, the narrative in Num 16-17 may well run beneath the textual surface of Rev 1 through the allusive reference to the bronze censer.³²² Certainly John is not unaware of the Numbers narratives, since not much later in Rev 2:14 Numbers provides the background to John’s references to Balaam and Balak (cf. Num 22-24; 31:8, 16).

Summary of the Feet like χαλκολιβάνω

The fact that the feet of the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου are visible (1:15) is suggestive—but not conclusive—of priestly (and even high priestly) dress. What makes this image more complicated is the seemingly impenetrable reference to the feet appearing ὅμοιοι χαλκολιβάνω ὡς ἐν καμίνω πεπυρωμένης. The compound word

³²⁰For use of this verb used in the larger context of burning in a oven/stove (תִּנְנֶה / κλίβανος), see Ps 21:9 (MT 21:10 and LXX 20:10); Hos 7:7.

³²¹On the burning of the censers, cf. Num 16:37, 39 (MT 17:2, 4).

³²²See Leithart (“Womb of the World,” 61-62), who similarly sees the narrative in Num 16-18 running beneath the textual surface of Heb 7 in its argument that Jesus’ Melchizedekian high priesthood is superior to the Aaronid priesthood.

χαλκολιβάνω appears to be a conundrum, mostly because it occurs but twice in Revelation and nowhere else in earlier Greek literature. It is unlikely, given the current state of our understanding, that any proposed interpretation of the feet like χαλκολιβανω in 1:15 and 2:18 is completely persuasive and without flaw. At the same time, the most detailed exposition of this problem, that by Hemer, remains not only conjectural but problematic.

The proposal I have advanced is also conjectural. Nevertheless, it is predicated on the reasonable supposition that the cryptic compound most likely has, as its right-hand component, the feminine word λίβανος (i.e., “frankincense,” instead of the less likely “frankincense tree”). This has led to the hypothesis that the term might indicate a bronze frankincense holder (i.e., a censer), similar to how the cognate of the right-hand element of χαλκολιβανω (i.e., λιβανωτός, the cognate of λίβανος) refers not to the expected frankincense but instead to a censer in Rev 8:3, 5. There the contextual trigger “golden” transformed the meaning to refer to a golden incense (holder) instead of simply golden incense. Likewise, the immediate triggers that transform the meaning of the compound χαλκολιβανω in 1:15 are χαλκ- (“bronze”), the left-hand member of the compound χαλκολιβανω, and the earlier high priestly sartorial images of the ποδήρης and ζώνη in 1:14.

Consequently, this terminological proposal would also signify high priestly dress imagery: the bare feet of the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου are compared to a bronze frankincense (holder), that is, a bronze censer, with the latter being understood as a high priestly dress tool, redolent of Aaron’s bronze censer used mediatorially in Num 16.

Furthermore, the implicit frankincense in that comparison could further focus the high priestly connotation of the comparison, since it could be viewed as a high priestly dress cosmetic. Such an interpretation, alluding to the story of the high priest Aaron in Num 16, coheres with the developing theme of judgment in chaps. 2-3, and it illumines several mediatorial motifs in those same chapters.

The Dress of the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου and Role-Related Identity

No matter how much high priestly dress imagery actually appears in Rev 1, if any imagery does appear it should be able to communicate a role-related identity for Jesus. What would it mean for Jesus to be presented in a high priestly role? Boxall provides a succinct summary of the possibilities:

We know from Hebrews that the understanding of Christ as High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary was able to emerge within New Testament Christianity; Revelation 1 suggests that Hebrews might not be as unique in its christology as is sometimes assumed. If all believers now participate in the priesthood (1:6), and angels fulfill liturgical roles in the worship of heaven (e.g. 8:3-5), a unique role nevertheless remains for Christ. His presence now in the midst of the seven menorahs, that is **the seven congregations** (v. 20), may evoke the high-priestly role of mediator and intercessor (e.g. Heb. 7:25).³²³

If Jesus is portrayed in a high priestly manner in Rev 1, one would expect mediatorial and/or intercessory information to appear, as Boxall suggests. A logical place to look would be in chaps. 1-3. We have already seen that Jesus walks among the lampstands in 2:1.³²⁴ The tabernacle narratives of the HB prescribed the role of tending the

³²³Boxall, *Revelation of Saint John*, 42-43.

³²⁴Paul describes the church as God's temple; see, in particular, 1 Cor 3:16 (οὐκ οἴδατε ὅτι ναὸς θεοῦ ἐστε καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ θεοῦ οἰκεῖ ἐν ὑμῖν; ["do you not know that you {plural} are God's temple and the Spirit of God dwells in you?"]), and

lampstands to Aaron and the successive high priests, and in later experience it was seen to be democratized to the common priests. In any case, associating this mobile motif in chap. 2 together with the sartorial imagery in chap. 1 provides further coherence to the high priestly role-related identity of Jesus.

Such role-related identity triggers would point to Jesus tending the lampstands (i.e., the seven churches) in a mediatorial way. Beale notes that those who tended the lampstands would “trim the lamps, remove the wick and old oil, refill the lamps with fresh oil, and relight those that had gone out. Likewise, Christ tends the ecclesial lampstands by commending, correcting, exhorting, and warning (see chs. 2-3) in order to secure the churches’ fitness for service as lightbearers in a dark world.”³²⁵ For instance, Jesus threatening to remove the lampstand of Ephesus unless it repents (2:5), encouraging the persecuted Smyrnan church (2:10), exhorting the dead Sardian church to wake up (3:1-2), noting his love for the Philadelphian church (3:9), and pleading for the Laodicean church to repent (3:19)—all take on new meaning and dynamic significance from the standpoint of the high priestly mediation of Jesus.

Summary and Conclusions

The crux of the exegetical controversy over potential high priestly imagery for Jesus Christ in the book of Revelation typically focuses on the dress imagery in John’s inaugural vision in chap. 1. John’s visual description of the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου in

cf., e.g., 1 Cor 3:17; 6:19; 2 Cor 6:16.

³²⁵Beale, *Revelation*, 208-209. Cf. Exod 27:20-21; 30:7-8; Lev 24:2-4; 2 Chr 29:7.

the midst of seven golden lampstands in 1:12-16 is a striking portrayal of Jesus. The dress imagery contained within this visionary description potentially opens a unique vista into an understanding of the identity and role of Jesus. The focus of my investigation in this chapter has been to examine three individual dress elements of the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου—his ποδήρης (1:13), his golden ζώνη (1:13), and his (bare) feet ὅμοιοι χαλκολιβάνω ὡς ἐν καμίῳ πεπυρωμένης (1:15)—in order to determine whether these sartorial images communicate a high priestly identity and role for Jesus.

The literary context of John's inaugural vision provides elements that communicate a cultic orientation and perspective. First, John's description of Jesus as the "firstborn of the dead" prior to the vision itself (1:5), in parallel with John's reference to Jesus having "freed us from our sins by his blood" (1:5), points to the sacrificial death of Jesus on the cross, one that referred to the sacrificial system in Judaism centered on the sanctuary and its cultic rituals for the forgiveness of sins. Second, John's description of Jesus as "the ruler of the kings of the earth" (1:5) parallels his description of believers being "a kingdom, priests [serving] his God and father" (1:6), reflecting the ancient story of the Israelites in Exod 19:5-6. This latter priestly designation is the first of John's three explicit references to the priesthood of the believers (cf. Rev 5:10; 20:6). The fact that the kingdom is comprised of priests assumes that Jesus, the ruler of the kings of the earth, is not only royal but also priestly. And third, within the vision itself, the seven golden lampstands (1:12-13) would initially have evoked an image of something like the golden lampstand(s) utilized in the tabernacle/temple. Furthermore, reference to the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου standing in the midst of the golden lampstands would have likely recalled the one legislatively

delegated in the OT with tending the lampstands, the high priest.

As for the specific dress motifs of the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου in Rev 1, the first one, ποδήρης (1:13), is the most compelling of the set, overwhelmingly pointing to high priestly dress imagery. Its usage in Jewish and Christian literature up to this time is virtually unanimous in describing high priestly dress either literally or symbolically. Moreover, the relationship between the implicit lampstand of Exod 27:20-21 and the dress of the high priest in Exod 28:1-5 helps illumine John's vision of the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου dressed in high priestly clothing while standing among the golden lampstands. As such, the ποδήρης may be *the* salient dress item indicative of high priestly identity.

The second dress motif of the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου, the ζώνην χρυσαῖν located πρὸς τοῖς μαστοῖς (1:13), also points to an item of dress worn by the high priest. While a ζώνη does not necessarily indicate a high priestly identity and role and by itself may be ambiguous in terms of identity perception, the cultic motifs in Rev 1:1-11, along with the golden lampstands and ποδήρης of 1:12-13, strongly suggest a temple-related and even high priestly sartorial image. Between the LXX and Josephus, there are at least six ζωναί mentioned that were worn by the high priest. The one that best parallels the evidence in Rev 1:13 is the first high priestly ζώνη of Josephus (*A.J.* 3.159), since it was attached to the ποδήρης, visible to onlookers, interwoven with gold, and located at the area of the breasts. This would suggest that John is not only drawing on the deep well of OT texts, motifs, and backgrounds, but that he is also drawing on cultic Second Temple realities as well in describing this image.

That John describes the feet of the ὅμοιον υἷδον ἀνθρώπου (1:15) indicates that the ὅμοιον υἷδον ἀνθρώπου is barefoot, in itself a credible (though not absolute) indicator of sacerdotal status. The fact that these feet appear like χαλκολιβάνω burned in a furnace could reasonably indicate some obscure or unknown type of refined metal or metal alloy. But because the enigmatic compound apparently has, as its right-hand component, the feminine word λίβανος (i.e., in the sense of “frankincense”), the compound word may instead allude to the story of the high priest Aaron and the (bronze) censer that he used in a mediatorial way to make atonement for the Israelites in Num 16.

Each of these elements does not provide the same level of persuasive appeal to the hypothesis of high priestly dress imagery in Rev 1; some are certainly more compelling than others. Despite the distinct possibility of dress ambiguity resulting from the association of these dress elements, their combined weight is nevertheless impressive and worth consideration. Each element collectively and cumulatively fashions a sartorial network of role-related meaning and underscores linguistically, allusively, and contextually a high priestly meaning, providing iconic coherence to the overall high priestly portrayal.

Furthermore, such high priestly imagery provides role-related identity triggers for understanding Jesus in succeeding chapters of Revelation. In particular, Jesus’ messages to the seven churches in chaps. 2-3 entail the equivalent of high priestly mediation between those who are alive and those on the verge of death. There he encourages, rebukes, warns, and comforts the believing communities in their various states of spirituality. I would suggest that the groundwork for understanding and

appreciating such intercessory ministry by Jesus in these chapters has been laid via John's visual description of Jesus in chap. 1 in terms of high priestly dress imagery.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS

Summary of the Research

In this study I have attempted to examine how dress imagery in the book of Revelation can contribute to a better understanding of the identity of Jesus Christ. In particular, I have examined whether or not John specifically portrays Jesus in chap. 1 with high priestly dress as a means of evoking a high priestly, role-related identity. In the first chapter of this study I introduced the subject and indicated that not only is there no scholarly consensus with regard to any portrayal of a high priestly identity for Jesus in Revelation, but also that a number of discussions about the subject are polemical in nature. This is particularly the case with Rev 1:13, a crucial text often at the center of such discussions, largely on the basis of John's reference to the dress term *ποδήρης*.

In chap. 2 I examined contemporary understandings of dress in academia. Scholars of dress have concluded that the concept of dress includes not only clothes but also ornaments, cosmetics, devices, treatments, equipment, and tools. Anthropologists, psychologists, and sociologists in particular have frequently discussed the significant and potent communicative properties of dress. They have notably underscored the fact that dress communicates various types of identities (e.g., age, ethnic, gender, political, socioeconomic, and other identities). Furthermore, contemporary discussion has

concluded that dress can also communicate a role-related identity. At the same time, a number of interpretive obstacles can potentially distort, inhibit, or block the correct perception of dress communication, and thus one needs to utilize both caution and balance in decoding such dress messages.

In chap. 3 I surveyed the copious evidence from the ANE to the Roman world and from the OT to the NT that illustrates that dress was not only understood to be an important necessity but also a means of communicating much critical information to others. Dress was perceived to be an extension of one's personality and consequently an aid in the personal identification of others. Furthermore, literary evidence clearly demonstrates that dress could also assist one in formulating a number of identity constructions, such as those in reference to economic status, ethnicity, gender, occupational role, and status transitions. In several ways the communicative properties of ancient dress were more direct, efficient, and effective than those of contemporary dress, since such modern dynamics as globalization and mass marketing have contributed to a more ambiguous visual identity construction. At the same time, ancient texts unsurprisingly indicate that clear or correct identity perception via dress was not automatic; the use of disguises, for instance, could distort and obstruct, even as they can today. This chapter nevertheless indicated that any texts in Revelation that evince an interest in the dress of Jesus would be fruitful for examination in terms of high priestly identity markers.

In chap. 4 I surveyed the literary evidence regarding the dress of the Jewish high priest. The dress of the high priest was powerful in identifying his status and role within the Israelite cultus. Scholars have nonetheless faced obstacles in interpreting not only

the meaning but even the actual nature of various high priestly dress items (e.g., the ephod and the Urim and Thummim), with OT catalogs of the ritual dress elements of the high priest themselves not being uniform. Furthermore, in comparing these high priestly dress elements with those of the common priests, some elements are identical, some similar, and others unique. Both ancient and modern interpreters have consequently exhibited difficulty cataloging, describing, and interpreting the specific ritual dress elements of the high priest. Despite all of this, it remains possible to categorize the high priest's ritual dress into dress items utilized regularly during the year and dress items utilized once a year on Yom Kippur. Fluidity in descriptions also suggests that metonymy and synecdoche were in play in some of the texts. In addition, on the basis of contemporary understandings of dress, I have suggested that high priestly dress should include such elements as bare feet, the censer, and incense, since bare feet are an example of negative dress, a censer can be classified as a dress tool, and incense can be viewed as a dress cosmetic.

Finally, in chap. 5 of this study I examined several verses in Rev 1 that contain clear dress imagery for Jesus. Here I focused on 1:12-16, the primary passage in Revelation in which scholars have debated the presence or absence of high priestly sartorial imagery as an indicator of a high priestly status for Jesus. In these verses I have argued that the reference to the ποδήρης that the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου wears, when seen in combination with the contextually integrated reference to him in the midst of the seven golden lampstands (1:12-13), communicates a high priestly identity. The other dress elements (the ζώνην χρυσᾶν, the bare feet, and the appearance of his feet like χαλκολιβάνω), while contributing in varying degrees to the plausibility of the high

priestly imagery in this passage, combine with the ποδήρης to substantiate a sartorial ensemble impressively communicative of high priestly identity in this inaugural vision in Revelation.

Implications of the Research

The results of this study suggest at least four important implications for interpreting Revelation and the New Testament as a whole. First, the electric impact of the dress of the high priest on observers in the Second Temple period is mirrored by the prominent position it holds in John's inaugural vision in Rev 1: The first thing John mentions after describing the ὅμοιον σὺν ἀνθρώπου in the midst of the seven golden lampstands is that he wears high priestly dress. After describing the rest of his vision of the ὅμοιον σὺν ἀνθρώπου, John writes that he fell down as if he were dead (1:17). While it is true that Jesus subsequently encouraged John to not be afraid (1:17), it is unlikely that his fear stemmed solely from the high priestly dress that Jesus wore. Rather, it is more likely that other elements of this vision (e.g., the blazing eyes, the sword protruding from his mouth) contributed to John's overall fear.¹ In a chapter that implicitly polemicizes against the rule of earthly rulers,² the powerful communicative meaning of the high priestly dress reveals the role-related spiritual superiority of Jesus over any such ruler.

Second, dress imagery implicitly provides profound christological information in

¹Cf. Dan 10:5-9.

²On such polemics in Rev 1:5 cf., e.g., Aune (*Revelation 1-5*, 40), Osborne (*Revelation*, 63, 92), and Smalley (*The Revelation to John*, 34-35).

Revelation. Additionally, christological titles for Jesus in Revelation must not inappropriately shape or restrict the meaning of dress imagery there. For instance, while it is clear that one of the most significant titles for Jesus in Revelation is “King of Kings,”³ some exegetes have assumed that this royal identity appears in the sartorial imagery one finds in 1:12-16.⁴ But as I have demonstrated, such sartorial imagery instead points to a high priestly identity. In addition to the royal role of Jesus that is transparent in Revelation, he also appears as high priest, perhaps suggestive of a king-(high)priest similar to the Melchizedekian identity for Jesus found in the Epistle to the Hebrews.⁵

The third implication is that Revelation and Hebrews—the two most cultic works in the NT—share not only interest in the tabernacle, temple, and related cultic and sanctuary imagery, but they also share a high priestly understanding of Jesus. This demonstrates that the high priestly understanding of Jesus that is so obvious in Hebrews cannot be restricted to just that work in the NT. This consequently opens up the debate

³Rev 17:14 and 19:16: Βασιλεὺς βασιλέων. Cf. “the ruler of the kings of the earth” (ὁ ἄρχων τῶν βασιλέων τῆς γῆς [1:5]).

⁴E.g., Hendrickson (*More Than Conquerors*, 71), Kiddle (*Revelation*, 15), and Metzger (*Breaking the Code*, 27).

⁵Notice explicit references to Melchizedek in Heb 5:6, 10; 6:20; 7:1, 10, 11, 15, 17 and see the discussion in, e.g., Cullmann, *Christology*, 83-107; and Torleif Elvin, “Priests on Earth as in Heaven: Jewish Light on the Book of Revelation,” in *Echoes from the Caves: Qumran and the New Testament*, ed. Florentino García Martínez, Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah 85 (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 274-75, 278. Such a possible implicit Melchizedekian identity in Revelation (i.e., king-priest) would suggest that there is both continuity and discontinuity with the OT high priesthood. This consequently provides another approach towards explicating the apparent lack of a total sartorial identification in Rev 1 with the dress of the OT high priest.

of the origins of high priestly imagery in the NT. Hebrews, which shows no need to argue the case but instead simply asserts it,⁶ cannot be seen as anomalous in the NT in its understanding of Jesus as high priest since Revelation also evinces high priestly imagery for Jesus. Similarly to Hebrews, Revelation does not attempt to argue the point but describes a majestic Jesus with high priestly sartorial imagery in the introductory chapter.

The final implication of this study that I wish to mention is that the overall dress imagery which is so prevalent throughout Revelation indicates that it bears significant weight for John. In fact, it bears more interpretive weight than many commentators have typically granted it. Since Revelation “is liberally strewn with clothes,”⁷ dress imagery there deserves sustained study. This study demonstrates the importance of dress in the opening chapter of Revelation for elucidating the role-related identity of Jesus and is an example of the kind of analysis that one could carry out on other sartorial images found elsewhere throughout Revelation. One must analyze such sartorial imagery to determine whether identity issues are at play and whether such identity triggers could enrich—if not provide a key to—the interpretation of the numerous texts in which such imagery occurs. In other words, one cannot view dress that various characters in Revelation wear as simply describing what these characters are wearing. If one does not attempt to identify and investigate dress elements that potentially have identity triggers, one’s interpretational conclusions will be severely

⁶Cf., e.g., the first three references to Jesus as high priest in Hebrews (2:17; 3:1; 4:14-15).

⁷Neufeld, “Under the Cover,” 71.

diminished—if not shown to be entirely inadequate and even faulty.

Suggestions for Further Research

Because of the limits of this study, a number of potentially rewarding areas for future research remain, and I will list five of them here. First is the need to examine two other textual clusters in Revelation for high priestly imagery in relation to Jesus: 14:14-16 and 19:11-16. In the former text John mentions the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου for the second and final time, and he describes him as sitting on a white cloud and wearing a στέφανον χρυσοῦν (“golden wreath/crown”) on his head, a dress description that may well be high priestly in nature.⁸ In the latter text, at least three dress items in the description of the Rider on the White Horse suggest the possibility of high priestly imagery: (1) the “many diadems” (διαδήματα πολλά) on the Rider’s head (v. 12);⁹ (2) the mysterious “inscribed name” (ὄνομα γεγραμμένον)¹⁰ that only the Rider knows (v. 12); and (3) the “robe dipped in blood [ἱμάτιον βεβαμμένον αἵματι]”¹¹ (v. 13). An examination of these two passages, both of which have linguistic links to the ὅμοιον

⁸Cf. the στέφανον χρυσοῦν worn by the high priest in LXX Sir 45:12.

⁹This may relate to coronal imagery for the high priest found in a Qumran text; see the New Jerusalem text from Qumran (11Q18 14 II, 2-5), which apparently describes a ceremony for crowning a high priest with seven crowns. Wis 18:24 utilizes the same Greek term (διάδημα) to describe the diadem of the high priest.

¹⁰This possibly refers to the tetragrammeton of the high priest, which was inscribed on the plate or rosette of pure gold (Exod 28:36: $\text{יהוה} \text{זָהָב} \text{צִיָּן}$ / πέταλον χρυσοῦν καθαρὸν). On this see, e.g., Barker (*Revelation*, 50-56, 302-309).

¹¹On the many variants in this verse suggesting “sprinkled” instead of “dipped,” see, e.g., Aune (*Revelation 17-22*, 1043, n. 13.b-b.). Barker suggests that a “sprinkled” robe might suggest the robe of the high priest on Yom Kippur (*Revelation*, 308).

υἷὸν ἀνθρώπου in Rev 1,¹² could potentially corroborate the conclusion made in this study that high priestly dress does indeed occur in relation to Jesus in Revelation.

Second, another potentially fruitful field of study would be to analyze the dress of characters explicitly described as angels in Revelation that are possibly suggestive of angelomorphic christology. Perhaps the most extensive conclusions regarding angelomorphic christology in the book of Revelation were set forth by Gundry in 1994¹³ and updated in 2005, in which he saw angelomorphic christology in John's references to or portrayals of such angelic figures as the sent angel in 1:1 (cf. 22:6), the angel with the seal of God in 7:2-3, the angel who holds a golden censer and stands at the altar of incense in 8:3-5, the mighty angel in chap. 10 with the rainbow on his head, the glorious angel in 18:1-3 who fills the earth with his splendor, the strong angel in 18:21-24 who casts a millstone into the sea, and the angel with the key and chain who throws Satan into the abyss in 20:1-3.¹⁴ While many scholars have not accepted the sweeping nature of Gundry's approach,¹⁵ one cannot deny that some of the descriptions of these angels in

¹²The Rider on the White Horse has eyes like "a flame of fire" (φλόξ πυρός) and "a sharp sword emerging from his mouth" (ἐκ τοῦ στόματος αὐτοῦ ἐκπορεύεται ῥομφαία ὀξεῖα [19:15]); cf. the description of the ὅμοιον υἷὸν ἀνθρώπου in 1:14 (φλόξ πυρός) and 16 (ἐκ τοῦ στόματος αὐτοῦ ῥομφαία δίστομος ὀξεῖα ἐκπορευομένη ["a sharp, double-edged sword emerging from his mouth"]).

¹³Gundry, "Angelomorphic Christology in the Book of Revelation," in *Society of Biblical Literature 1994 Seminar Papers*, ed. Eugene H. Lovering, Jr., Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers Series 33 (Atlanta: Scholars, 1994), 662-78.

¹⁴Gundry, "Angelomorphic Christology (2005)," 377-98.

¹⁵See, e.g., Gieschen (*Angelomorphic Christology*, 261, n. 55), Hannah (*Michael and Christ*, 153-54), and Hoffmann (*Destroyer and the Lamb*, 68-71, 75). These all interact with Gundry's 1994 study.

Revelation contain dress imagery. Since there existed a close, symbolic relationship between earthly priests and heavenly angels in Jewish interpretation,¹⁶ it would thus be prudent to look beyond the dress imagery of Jesus and investigate the dress imagery of such angels in Revelation, since they would constitute a potentially ripe field for testing whether high priestly identity can be ascertained from dress with regard to angelomorphic characters.¹⁷

Third, as I indicated in the introduction of this study, a number of scholars have seen high priestly dress imagery in both the description of the dress of the Great Prostitute in Rev 17 and the description of the foundation stones of the New Jerusalem in Rev 21. Assuming that these conclusions are true, it would be useful to determine precisely what relation the high priestly imagery in these texts might have to John's use

¹⁶For examples of the OT interplay between angels and priests, see Zech 3:1-7 and Mal 2:7 (the latter text in which the priest is called a messenger/angel [מַלְאָךְ / ἄγγελος] of the LORD of hosts). Attridge is one of several recent commentators who have concluded that the image of the high priest in Hebrews derives from "Jewish notions of priestly angels" (*Hebrews*, 103; cf. p. 99, n. 234). On the relation between angels and priests and/or high priests in Jewish interpretation, cf. also, e.g., the following works with their related bibliographies: Barker, *Great High Priest*, 103-45; Fletcher-Louis, *Glory of Adam*, 56-87; Gieschen, *Angelomorphic Christology*, 169-70; Hannah, *Michael and Christ*, 32, 42-45, 60-61, 85-87, 100-101, 150-51; Himmelfarb, *Ascent to Heaven*, 49-51 and 66-69; and McNicol, "Image of the Highest Angel."

¹⁷Note the following synthetic statement of Nils Alstrup Dahl: "No New Testament author explicitly speaks about Christ as an angel or as the angel or archangel. The *Book of Revelation*, however, transfers angelic attributes to the risen Christ (e.g., Rev. 1:13-16—cf. especially Dan. 10:5f.). Moreover, the risen Jesus is, like an angelic prince, represented as the heavenly Paraclete, the intercessor or witness, the priest in the heavenly sanctuary, and vice-regent at the right hand of God [emphasis supplied]" (*Jesus the Christ: The Historical Origins of Christological Doctrine*, ed. Donald H. Juel [Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991], 120). Dahl further states that "there seems to be increasing agreement that angelology is one source of christological language" (*ibid.*, 121).

of high priestly dress imagery for Jesus in chap. 1.

Fourth, the results of this study should give more impetus towards ascertaining high priestly imagery for Jesus in texts of the NT other than in Hebrews and Revelation. While much work has already been done in this area,¹⁸ the view has long been held that such high priestly imagery can be found only in Hebrews.¹⁹ Further research in this area could provide the death knell to that viewpoint.

And fifth, as noted in the previous chapter, the motif of Jesus as Lamb is not only repeatedly explicit but much more prevalent in Revelation than high priestly imagery. April D. DeConick has recently indicated that both the high priestly descriptions of Jesus in Hebrews and portrayals of Jesus as the Lamb in Revelation are heir to the Jewish *Kavod* (glory) tradition.²⁰ Study of how these trajectories might relate to each other within Revelation could help to better situate the use of high priestly dress imagery in John's overall rhetoric.

¹⁸E.g., Bond ("Discarding the Seamless Robe," 183-94), Broadhead ("Christology," 21-34), Coppens ("Le messianisme sacerdotal," 101-112), Cullmann (*Christology*, 104-107), Fletcher-Louis ("Messiah: Part I," 155-75; and "Messiah: Part II," 57-79), Friedrich ("Beobachtungen zur messianischen Hohepriestererwartung," 265-311), Heil ("Unique High Priest," 729-45), Hengel (*Studies in Early Christology*, 144-48), Moe ("Das Priestertum Christi," cols. 335-38), Spicq ("L'origine johannique," 258-69), and Zimmerman ("Jesus of Nazareth," 49-59).

¹⁹E.g., Baigent ("Jesus as Priest," 34-44), Lane (*Hebrews*, cxlii), Lindars (*Theology*, 126), and Sowers (*Philo and Hebrews*, 119).

²⁰April D. DeConick, "What Is Early Jewish and Christian Mysticism?" in *Paradise Now*, 14. She references high priestly and Lamb depictions in the following texts: Heb 3:1; 4:14-16; 5:1-10; Rev 5:6-14; 7:13-8:1; and 14:1-5.

Conclusion

As the adage goes, “a picture is worth a thousand words.” John’s rich description of the ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου in Rev 1 reveals much more about the identity and role of Jesus Christ than one might deduce at first glance because of John’s use of sartorial imagery. Without denying or diminishing other aspects of Jesus’ identity in chap. 1, I would assert that part of the complex identity of Jesus in this chapter derives from John’s powerful and revealing use of sartorial imagery associated in Jewish literature and history with the high priest. Such imagery helps to extend the arc of John’s use of such cultic imagery as tabernacle, temple, sanctuary, lampstand(s), incense, court, altar, and priests. And as such, his portrait of Jesus, including high priestly sartorial imagery, expands and enriches the NT understanding of Jesus as High Priest, which is explicit only in the Epistle to the Hebrews, and it further explicates Jesus’ high priestly ministry of mediation and judgment among his faithful followers. John’s prismatic and expansive portrayal of Jesus Christ in this first chapter thus implicitly conveys to the Christian “priests” (1:6; cf. 5:10; 20:6) in the seven churches the powerful message “We have a high priest, Jesus Christ!”²¹

²¹Cf. Heb 4:14.

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