

## בגדים כלילי תכלת

אבנר רמו



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We read in the Book of Numbers: **ופרשו בגד-כליל תכלת מלמעלה** - “and they shall spread over it a wholly blue cloth” (Num 4:6).

Similarly, we read in the Book of Exodus that “the robe of the ephod” was **כליל תכלת** - “wholly blue” (Ex 28:31; 39:22).

Yet in the next verse of the Book of Numbers we find: **ועל שלחן הפנים יפרשו בגד תכלת** - “And upon the table of showbread they shall spread a blue cloth” (Num 4:7; see also: Num 4:9, 11, 12).

The Greek translator wrote here: “a wholly purple cloth” which suggests that he believed that here: **בגד תכלת** is a word deletion error of: **בגד-כליל תכלת** - “a wholly blue cloth.”

In the Book of Ezekiel we find:

**ותעגב על-מאהביה, אל-אשור קרובים.**

**לבשי תכלת פחות וסגנים בחורי חמד כלם; פרשים רכבי סוסים.**

“And she lusted on her lovers, to the Assyrian warriors:

**Clothed blue, governors and rulers, handsome young men all of them, horsemen riding upon horses”** (Eze 23:5-6; see also: Est 8:15).

However, the comparison between these verses suggests that here **לבשי תכלת** is a word deletion error of: **לבשי כליל תכלת** - “clothed wholly in blue.”

Six verses later we find:

אל-בני אשור עגבה פחות וסגנים קרבים, לבשי מכלול, פרשים רכבי סוסים-בחורי חמד כלם.  
“She lusted to the Assyrians, governors and rulers, warriors, clothed most gorgeously,  
horsemen riding upon horses, all of them handsome young men” (Eze 23:12; see also: Eze  
38:4).

However, the comparison between these verses suggest that the rare expression: **לבשי מכלול** is a  
letter-insertion and a word deletion error of: **לבשי כליל תכלת** - “clothed wholly in blue.”

Three chapters later we find:

חרן וכנה ועדן, רכלי שבא; אשור כלמד רכלתך.  
המה רכליך במכללים בגלומי תכלת ורקמה,

“Haran and Canneh and Eden, the traffickers of Sheba, Asshur as your apprentice in  
traffic.

These are your traffickers in gorgeous fabrics, in wrappings of blue and embroidery” (Eze  
27:23-24).

It is not clear how the English translator determined that **במכללים בגלומי תכלת** means: “**in  
gorgeous fabrics, in wrappings of blue**.” The Greek translation of this words is different but  
also appears as a speculation. However, the comparison between these verses suggests that:  
**בבגדים כלילי תכלת** - **במכללים בגלומי תכלת** is a letter-substitution and order-type error of:  
“in wholly blue clothes.”