



*Shepherds need to Know the Biblical Meaning of “Restrained,” “Nakedness,”  
“Vision,” “Leadership,” “Covering” and “Crafty”*

Part Three of Three  
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*So Aaron[Aharon] said, “Do not let the anger of my lord become hot. You know the people, that they are set on evil. For they said to me, “Make us gods that shall go before us; as for this Moses[Moshe], the man who brought us out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.” And I said to them, “Whoever has any gold, let them break it off.” So they gave it to me, and I cast it in the fire, and this calf came out.”*

*Now when Moshe saw that the people were **unrestrained** (for Aharon **had not restrained them**, to their shame among their enemies), --“  
Exodus 32: 22-25 NKJV*

*And when Moshe saw that people **were naked**; For Aharon **had made them naked** unto their shame among their enemies—“  
Exodus 32: 22-25 KJV*

*Where there is no vision, the people are **unrestrained** but happy is he who keeps the law. Proverbs 29: 18 NASB*

Comparing the concepts of **nakedness** and **restraint**; and the desire to learn from the lessons of the first Exodus as we contemplate the second greater one to come, led to the exploration of the use of the term “**naked**” about the Assembly of Laodicea (Rev. 3: 17.)

This word is Strong’s # 1131, “**gumnos**” from the Greek, meaning “nude, absolute or relative, literal or figurative, of an uncertain origin.” Vine’s declares it to be “unclothed, poorly or scantily clad” generally, and for Rev. 3: 17 specifically, to refer to the “carnal condition of the local church.” Zodiates Word Study New

Testament Lexical Aid notes this same usage to refer to “naked of spiritual clothing that is, the imputed righteousness of faith.”

*<sup>17</sup>Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and **naked**: <sup>18</sup>I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be **clothed**, and that the **shame of thy nakedness** do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. Revelation 3: 17-18 KJV*

(See [Poor Blind and Naked From Eden to Laodicea](#) for additional thoughts on this subject.)

Here we recognize not only the concept of being “**naked**”, but also “**covering**” as in “clothed” and the familiar phrase associating “**shame of thy nakedness**” just as it was in Exodus as observed by Moshe. KJV, NKJV and NASB all use the same words.

The connection with the Hebrew word for “**naked**” comes in an indirect path because there are several related words, as well as related words for the concept of “**covering(s)**.”

Looking for the most common usage of “*gumnos*” in its various forms in the Tanakh through the Septuagint takes us to Genesis 27:16 and the Hebrew word Strong’s # 2513, “*chelqah*” “ This portion is from the well known story of Rebekah and Jacob working together to obtain the firstborn blessing for Jacob:

*<sup>15</sup>And Rebekah took goodly raiment of her eldest son Esau, which were with her in the house, and put them upon Jacob her younger son: <sup>16</sup>And she put the skins of the kids of the goats upon his hands, and upon the **smooth** of his neck: <sup>17</sup>And she gave the savoury meat and the bread, which she had prepared, into the hand of her son Jacob. KJV*

NKJV and NASB both concur with the use of the word “**smooth**” here. It makes sense that this could refer to bare skin. Checking the word “smooth” brings us back to Strong’s #2513, which is “chelqah” and is said to mean: “prop. Smoothness: figuratively flattery; also an allotment of a field; flattering (-ry) ground, parcel, part piece of land (ground), plat, portion, slippery place, smooth (thing).”

#2513 is the feminine form of #2506, “cheleq” which refers to: smoothness (of the tongue), also an allotment, flattery, inheritance, part, partaker, portion.” “cheleq” has the primitive root of #2505, “cheleq”; “to be smooth, figuratively by implication (as smooth stones were used for lots); to apportion or separate; deal, distribute, divide, flatter, separate self, give, take away receive.”

All of this conveyed in the “**smooth**” of his neck? Who would have thought from the English! We can see the sense of **nakedness**, being uncovered, as having a meaning of smoothness, a slippery place or thing. Putting the hairy skins on the “smooth” of Jacob’s neck did indeed result in allotment or distribution and required Jacob to be smooth in tongue (flattery). Interesting, too, to note that the meaning of Rebekah’s name has to do with “tying up the fetlock” or “ensnarer.” He well knew he was “uncovered” as he participated in Rebekah’s plan, yet Rebekah also knew that YHWH’s plan was to bless Jacob as “firstborn.” There seems to be an element of deceit or cunning indicated here, though ultimately for accomplishment of YHWH’s plan. Can that be connected to “naked” in any other way?

What about the use of the English word “naked” as in the description of the outcome of the fall?

*<sup>7</sup>And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were **naked**; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.*

*<sup>10</sup>And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was **naked**; and I hid myself. <sup>11</sup>And he said, Who told thee that thou wast **naked**? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? Genesis 3: 7, 10-11*

This word translated as “**naked**” is Strong’s # 5903, “**arome**”; ayin, resch and mem. Meaning just ‘nudity’ or nakedness.” It is from #6191, “**aram**”, same consonants, but the primitive root word meaning: “to be (or make) bare; but used only in the derogatory Sense (through the idea perhaps of smoothness) to be cunning, usually in a bad sense. It can also be connected with the ideas of “wary, beware, take crafty (counsel), be prudent, deal subtly.”

Taking this word back to the Ancient Hebrew Lexicon, # 5903 brings us to Benner’s word #1365 (A) which is an ayin and a resch; literally “eye man”; combined it can be “see a man”. It is described as: “when the enemy is captured he is stripped of his clothes to the skin and carefully watched.” And the root word #6191 takes us to Benner’s #2908 (v) ayin, resch, mem; “to be subtle in craftiness or prudence.”

Yes, we can connect craftiness or cunning with “**nakedness**” which takes us beyond the impression of vulnerability and exposure alone that had been apparent to me before.

In the original verses under discussion then we have:

*And when Moshe saw that people **were naked, uncovered, out of control, smooth and subtly crafty**; (For Aharon **had made them naked, uncovered, out of control, smooth and subtly crafty** unto their shame among their enemies—)*  
Exodus 32: 22-25

We can easily perceive that “nakedness” indicates shame or vulnerability and a need for protection, but how is it that the concept of cunning or craftiness has entered in? Perhaps in the connection of the thought of dealing with an enemy who needs to be closely watched or “covered?” In what way could Aharon be an enemy to them? Recalling Moshe’s words:

*Then [Moshe] said to [Aharon], “What did this people do to you, that you have brought such great sin upon them?”* Exodus 32: 21 NASB

Is it realistic to consider that there was enmity between Aharon and the people? Failure to “cover” for them is another way to say that he did not restrain them, which was the absence of the authority he should have wielded on their behalf and for their protection. But would this be crafty or cunning of Aharon? What could he have gained in the process? Absolution of responsibility seems to have been a goal. We have already seen that Aharon seems to have attempted to “cover” himself with both the people and Moshe, failing all the way around and showing his weakness in leadership, his own “uncovering.” But the whole incident represents a much larger picture. This was no small incidental rebellion! It was nothing less than a replacement for the pure worship of YHWH, an abomination. Whether the loss of restraint came because of personal weakness in leadership or threats from the people matters less when we begin to see the entire picture here. In the sense that Aharon was trying to get himself “off the hook” we could consider his actions to be “cunning” or “crafty.” Despite the effort, this failure to provide “cover” or “restraint” in truth, left them all exposed and naked! It was certainly to their shame considering their recent vows of faithfulness to YHWH!

How did the concept of “covering” become so important? Surely we need to understand this better as we, also, need to “cover” our people as we stay “covered” in Messiah.

It would seem that “nakedness” calls for clothing or covering just by normal understanding. In response to the first awareness of nakedness, YHWH provided a “**covering**” for His wayward children.

<sup>21</sup>*Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and **clothed** them.* <sup>22</sup>*And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever:* <sup>23</sup>*Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken.*  
Genesis 3: 21-23 KJV

NKJV and NASB agree in choice of the word “**clothed**” which could also be seen as a covering for nakedness. It is Strong’s # 3847, “*labash*: a primitive root, lamed, bet, sheen, meaning “to wrap around, by implication to put on a garment or clothe oneself or another. Literal or figurative apparel, arm, array, come upon, put on, wear.” Ancient Hebrew #2304 uses the same terms, noting the consonants to indicate a shepherd’s staff, tent floorplan and two front teeth.

Both Clark and Vine concur with this description for which Vine offers some examples, including “took control” and “came upon.”. By far, the best description comes from TWOT which indicates “3 levels of usage: 1) being clothed, 2) being clothed as a sign of rank, status or character and 3) poetic figures likening abstract qualities to clothing.” Many examples of the second level are offered including a brief observation on the usage here in Genesis 3: 21. While the clothing with skin is generally interpreted to be symbolic of the need for sacrifice of life to get skin to cover it is also noted by extra Biblical observation of Gilgamesh and Utmapishtim that “the wearing of skin clothing might also symbolize all the frailties of fallen human beings.”<sup>1</sup>

Before this time, it is stated that both were “**naked**” and “not ashamed”, in Genesis 2: 25. If nakedness carries within itself the concept of shame and cunning, how could this be? How could they have been both naked and unashamed? What happened?

Reasoning this out, it seems that they had no experience of shame in their original “uncovered” state but after partaking of the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, suddenly they became aware of having become “uncovered” and needed to be “covered” again. Despite what must have been His unspeakable grief at the (anticipated) loss of the original vision yet, even in this sadness, YHWH’s actions spoke of mercy and covering. He had a plan!

If they had no experience of personally being “uncovered” would it follow that there must have been a “covering” provided for them in some other way?

Perhaps Ezekiel provides us with a clue.

*“ You were the seal of perfection, Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.”<sup>13</sup> You were in Eden, the garden of God; **Every precious stone was your covering:** The sardius, topaz, and diamond, Beryl, onyx, and jasper, Sapphire, turquoise, and emerald with gold. The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes Was prepared for you on the day you were created.<sup>14</sup> **You were the anointed cherub who covers;** I established you; You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones. <sup>15</sup> You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created,*

*Till iniquity was found in you.<sup>6</sup> “ By the abundance of your trading You became filled with violence within, And you sinned; Therefore I cast you as a profane thing Out of the*

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<sup>1</sup> Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament; Harris, Archer, Waltke; copyright, 1980.

mountain of God; And I destroyed you, O **covering cherub**, From the midst of the fiery stones. Ezekiel 28: 12-16 NKJV

General understanding is that this description of the earthly king of Tyre is yet also the description of Lucifer; the shining cherubim, who is part of YHWH's preternatural creation. He had freedom and direction to walk up and down in the garden of God and on His mountain as he carried out his duty to cover. The English word, "**covering**" here is Strong's # 5526, *sakak* which is a primitive root which means: "to entwine as a screen, by implication to fence in, to cover over. Figuratively, to protect, cover, defend, hedge in, join together, set, shut up." This word appears to have much in common with words that are related to concepts such as a *sukkah*, a temporary dwelling, and the mercy seat or throne under the cherubim's wings as on the Ark of the Covenant.

These verses also note that the covering cherub was, himself, under the covering of "every precious stone" in the Garden and later notes that he "walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones." So who or what was **his** covering? It appears to me that his covering was no less than the Spirits of YHWH, as represented in the fire and stones or "eyes" of Elohim since fire, stones, eyes and wells are often Scriptural representations of Him. I see a picture here of the covering cherub, Lucifer, walking among the Spirits/fire that darkly mirrors Yeshua in the midst of the lampstand representing the 7 churches, and the 7 Spirits as recorded in Revelation.

So, the intention was that the natural creation had the service of the preternatural angelic realm for protection and defense to maintain its "very good" state. Of those angelic beings, one was formed specifically to lead in that protection; Lucifer. The "covering" cherub, who was also covered, was to have provided the protection and defense of YHWH's throne and creation through entwining them, fencing them in and hedging them about so that they could continue to enjoy all that had been created for them. Lucifer, who fell through the corruption of his beauty and wisdom, is the very one who used an animal of YHWH's creation to lure man out from under the "covering" of YHWH's provision and ways and made them 'naked.'

These verses indicate that violence came within through "the abundance of your trading" which KJV has rendered as "multitude of your merchandise." What does this mean? "Multitude" indicates a large amount of something with no further enlightenment in any source. "Merchandise", is Strong's # 2165a. This Hebrew word is pretty directly related to "merchandise" and "traffic." Vines lists it only in the NT within 3 possible contexts, one of them being Revelation 18, in which the Greek word is said to be "*gomos*", 1117 which is again said to be just "merchandise." There is a cross reference to the word "burden" as well: same number 1117, "*gomos*" from a root "*gem*" signifying "full, or heavy" and noting it is "merchandise in general" as used in Rev. 18.

In the ancient Hebrew, Strong's #2165a brings us to #2770, meaning "trade" from the idea of traveling. The root letters are a "*resh*," "*kaph*," and "*lam*" referring to a "head of a man", "open palm" and "shepherd staff." A man raising up the shepherd

staff used to travel safely with the palm of his hand perhaps representing exchange of goods?

Just for consideration as to the identification of this “merchandise” in the context of the fall of Babyon to come as we near Messiah’s return, I submit the following:

<sup>11</sup> *“And the merchants of the earth will weep and mourn over her, for no one buys their merchandise anymore: <sup>12</sup> **merchandise of gold and silver, precious stones and pearls, fine linen and purple, silk and scarlet, every kind of citron wood, every kind of object of ivory, every kind of object of most precious wood, bronze, iron, and marble; <sup>13</sup> and cinnamon and incense, fragrant oil and frankincense, wine and oil, fine flour and wheat, cattle and sheep, horses and chariots, **and bodies and souls of men.***** Revelation 18: 11-13

From this listing, it appears to me that “merchandise” includes the bodies and souls of men, beginning with the first couple and repeated through all history. It is a wicked trade; filled with violence. Adam failed to “cover” for Eve and enmity and death resulted; Aharon failed to “cover” for the people, and idolatry and rebellion resulted in their nakedness; Saul failed to “restrain” his people from disobeying YHWH’s command and lost his anointing. On and on through time the story repeats until the very end.

The one whose given authority should have been their “**covering**”, instead by subtle, cunning, and craftiness for his own exaltation became humanity’s down fall by “**uncovering**” or “**making them naked.**”

In this horrific event, the fruit from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil was consumed by both the man and the woman. It has become more and more clear to me that even the “good” side of this tree is not truly “good” but more of a subtle snare with the appearance of good outside and rottenness within. This is the Tree that YHWH allowed to remain as the option to confirm the free will, faithfulness and honor of His people. Without a genuine choice to do otherwise, obedience to Him would be automatic and meaningless. Is it possible then, that as he deserted his defensive stance of a YHWH honoring “**covering**”, Lucifer’s corrupted nature of cunning subtlety came through to the people? When the test came, Eve was deceived and ate. Adam was not deceived but ate anyway. He did not exercise his authority to provide restraint just as Lucifer abandoned his “covering” of them to take up “cover” for himself. In this act, their awareness of YHWH honoring “good” dimmed as they took on the nature of the one whose character was duplicitous; appearing good but in truth wicked.

(See [Of Men and Trees](#) for additional thoughts on this topic.)

Additionally, we understand that Lucifer’s agenda was to be “like God” and in fact, to surpass him and reign in His place. How would he even begin to do such a thing?

Let’s go back to the “covering” concepts. Strong’s # 5526 *sakak* has connections to the *sukkah* and the throne. This draws our attention to the Fall Feasts, whose

central theme is none other than “coverings.” We have understood for some time now, that walking in the “paths” of righteousness is more Hebraically understood as walking in the “cycles” of righteousness, which are His *moedim*. Since these appointed times are all about Messiah the more we walk in them with a circumcised heart and relationship with Him, the more we become like Him; drawing near under His covering.

Lucifer, now known more often as ha Satan, the Adversary or deceiver is intelligent, sly and cunning enough to know that he cannot directly combat loyalty to YHWH with human beings. In fact, he is under YHWH’s authority and is even used as part of YHWH’s disciplinary work. The more subtle rebellion is to provide something similar that will distract them from what they know to be right, providing enough satisfaction and gratification that they won’t notice how far they drift from the path of righteousness. Isn’t this what Aharon offered? The golden calf must have looked pretty good, for a time.

Shepherds take note of the application for our day.

*And when Moshe saw that people **were naked**; (For Aharon **had made them naked** unto their shame among their enemies—“*

Exodus 32: 22-25 KJV

Now we have: Moshe saw that the people were naked, out of control, uncovered, becoming cunningly subtle and crafty, (for Aharon had not acted as their covering, their authority, their protector, to their shame among their enemies--) No longer knowing or caring whose “covering” they were under.

Perhaps we can see the shadows of the cunning subtlety of the evil one at work here, working in Aharon as he did in Eve and Adam before, and all of them in the long line of leaders/shepherds right up until we watch the destruction of Babylon.

Lucifer was equipped with every good gift in order to be the covering of YHWH’s world and people. He chose to “cover” for himself and try to usurp YHWH’s throne instead.

Eve fell through the subtle questioning of YHWH’s character and heart toward His creation, failing to be the [Ezer Knegdo](#) for her husband., Adam fell with her rather than speak against it in his authority, failing to be her “covering”.

Just while Moshe was closest to YHWH on behalf of the people, leaving Aharon in charge, Aharon “covered” himself rather than the people, leaving them uncovered, unrestrained, naked. The incident was nothing trivial either; it was nothing less than a replacement for the true *moedim*, substituting a man made idol for His Feasts; usurping the worship for the fallen “covering cherub,” however unintentional it may have been.



When we walk outside the paths of righteousness, in some way failing to keep His commands or remember His Name, we could be said to be coming out from our “covering” or “being made naked.” We are exchanging the Truth of YHWH for a lie, without even blushing, for it is all so much more exciting to be independent of Him! So it seems, for a time.

If any one among us--even those in a leadership role—“knows better,” like Adam, like Aharon, what happens if they remain silent? Perhaps they fear the revenge or violence of others against them for being the voice of reason and Truth; or perhaps they are examining how they themselves might benefit in this trade. Perhaps they love the praises of men more than the praise of YHWH. As long as this goes on, our nature is more and more affected by the subtle cunning of the Father of Lies, often without our awareness. The voice saying what we **want** to hear becomes more and more attractive as our tolerance for righteousness is eroded in the absence of our covering.

*To whom shall I speak and give a warning that they may hear? Indeed their ear is uncircumcised and they cannot give heed. Behold, the word of the LORD is a reproach to them; They have no delight in it. Jeremiah 5: 10*

*..Indeed the hand of the leaders and rulers has been foremost in this trespass.*

Ezra 9: 2b

*Yes, they are greedy dogs which never have enough. And they are shepherds who cannot understand; they all look to their own way, everyone for his own gain, from his own territory. Isaiah 56: 11*

Like the assembly of Laodicea, we actually become poor, blind, and naked—uncovered and unrestrained-- while perceiving ourselves as rich. The leaders do what the people want and the people want what the leaders do. Everybody wins. So it seems, for a time.

*An astonishing and horrible thing has been committed in the land: the prophets prophesy falsely and the priests rule by their own power; and my people love to have it so, but what will you do in the end? Jeremiah 5: 30-31 NKJV*

Then we hear the voice of Moshe, or the shepherd in our fellowship, filled with righteous anger and regret. “What do you think you are doing? Where are you going? The correct path is over here!” Will you “*Shema!*” or will you, too, be so far into cunning subtlety that you won’t tolerate those hard words and the changes needed?

But what if YOU are the one who is to shepherd and speak the Words of Truth, authority and covering? Will you honor Yeshua, the Great Shepherd and Moshe, His bond servant, by your actions or will you be more like Aharon in this example?

## Will you speak to restrain, or will you leave the people naked?

*“Therefore prepare yourself and arise, and speak to them all that I command you. Do not be dismayed before their faces, lest I dismay you before them. For behold. I have made you this day a fortified city and an iron pillar, and bronze walls against the whole land—against the kings of Judah, against its princes, against its priests, and against the people of the land. They will fight against you but they shall not prevail against you for I am with you, “says the LORD, “to deliver you.” Jeremiah 1: 17-19 NKJV*

*Return, O backsliding children,” says the LORD, “for I AM married to you...And I will give you shepherds according to My heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding. Jeremiah 3: 14a & 15 NKJV*

Abba, Father, You alone are worthy of all praise and honor. You have declared the end out of the beginning and have given us Words of Your Wisdom all throughout Your Torah; the written one and the Living One through Messiah Yeshua.

Yet again, in this incident from the first Exodus, we see a picture of the battle for our souls and the inner battle for those who shepherd/lead as we approach the Final Exodus of all the world. Many had no personal goal of leading/shepherding yet You have called them to this post. How do we stand in the face of the preponderance of evil that stalks us, both subtly and boldly in these last days? Even those who have long accepted your calling to be a shepherd stumble along the way. It is often difficult enough to understand our own personal direction from You, yet there is the added blessing and stressing of exhorting others in the right path! The bleating of “sheople” isn’t always easy to deal with.

The evil one has had centuries to perfect his cunning subtlety while we have just one short lifetime to learn to battle well. We see the good that comes from YHWH honoring use of authority and the harm that comes through failure to “cover” and “restrain” the people you have put with us. No less than total loss of control and nakedness leading to rejection of Your ways. Please keep us coming back to You for strength, for love, and for all 7 of Your Spirits to be operating in us in all fullness, as You bring all of Your undershepherds and Your people through the distress and tribulation to come. You are faithful and true. You have promised that You will complete what You have begun in us. You are well able to complete what You have begun as we yield to You. May it be so.

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