

The Kippah Covering the Matter

A Most Extensive Lecture on the
Headcovering



Perhaps no article of attire is more debated over than the head covering for Messianic men. People are usually passionately against it or passionately for it. There are few who sit in the middle. What is it about this little cloth dome that adorns the head of Jewish men that ignites so many positive and negative responses within the wider Messianic community?

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Four Main Reasons Messianics Refuse to Wear Head Coverings

1. It's absence as a direct Torah command outside the Priesthood.
(Exodus 39:28)
2. It's supposed criticism by Rav Sha'ul in 1 Corinthians 11:4-12
3. It's Jewish.
4. It's a tradition and generally traditions are rejected because many Messianics think Yahshua rejected just about every Jewish tradition in existence.

This issue of the kippah, when you put the subject under the microscope, is simply a reservation to be associated with Jews. It can range from antisemitism to a fear of wearing it because the person fears what other people might think, say or do.

There is no serious debate over the issue of wearing head coverings for men that are not typically Jewish. We just don't see churches or Messianic communities renouncing the wearing of baseball caps or hats in general.

The truth is, that most Messianics do not have an issue with head coverings.



Early Church Fathers wore some sort of head covering, whether it was a turban or some sort of religious hat. The custom to remove hats indoors or at cemeteries came from an ancient tradition of taking off the helmet when no danger is at hand. A man takes off his hat to show that he dares stand unarmed in someone else's presence. Knights removed helmets in the presence of a king as a display of vulnerability and trust that the king would not kill them. Knights also removed helmets in church as an expression of security in one's sanctuary.

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Cyril of Alexandria (A.D. 376 – 444)



Tertullian (A.D. c. 155 – 245)



Origen (A.D. 185 – 253/254)



Theodoret of Cyrus (A.D. 393 – 466)



Augustine of Hippo (A.D. 354 – 430)



Epiphanius of Salamis (A.D. c. 315 – 403)

Head Coverings Were a Part of Normal Attire, Even Among the Goyim

Photo's of the 1900 Melbourne Cup depict the majority of people in attendance wearing hats and bonnets. Again in 1930, attendees at the Melbourne Cup are mostly wearing hats. In fact, in most parts of the world, some sort of headwear up until the late fifties was a simply considered a normal part of any attire, whether formal or informal.



Melbourne Cup 1900

Notice the multitude of head coverings.

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Melbourne Cup 1930 Again, notice that most people are wearing hats.

Traditionally, all US president elects wore top hats to their inauguration ceremonies. Though some wore the less ostentatious homburg hat, it wasn't until John F. Kennedy's inauguration in 1961 that the tradition ceased, after he discarded his top hat during the course of the day.

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The military hat is actually referred to as a "cover," and it is never called a hat. There are specific military cover etiquette that applies to various situations, indoors, outdoors, when being saluted, when at a funeral and when flying in military aircraft. If you are in the military it is crucial that you follow these etiquette procedures regarding your cover. Etiquette in the military is not just a guideline but an act of respect to those around you and to the military in general. - *Military Hat Etiquette* by Naomi Vogel



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Whenever you are covered and someone salutes you, or you see an officer of higher rank, it is proper etiquette to salute him. In the military it is considered poor etiquette if you salute someone while you are uncovered. This means that whenever you are in a situation where you are uncovered, such as being indoors, you should not salute someone, even if they are a higher rank than you. Instead you should simply greet the person with a "Good afternoon, ma'am," or "Good morning, sir." - *Ibid*



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The Mitznefet is a helmet covering for the infantry helmet used by the Israel Defense Forces as of 1994. It is considerably larger than the helmet, giving the impression of a militarised chef's hat. The purpose of the floppy helmet cover is to break up the distinctive outline of a helmeted head and thus assist in the camouflage of the wearer. It was originally adapted in the 1990s for guerrilla warfare in the wood and bush land of south Lebanon, later adding a two sided camo, one for desert and one for woodland terrain. The Mitznefet is easily removable, and can be attached to the helmet while folded.



Few people actually study the history of the Jews during the diaspora and all the restrictions and laws that were imposed upon them by various nations and communities. For, example, during mediaeval times they were forced to wear pointy hats, to distinguish them from Goyim.

In 1215 at the conclusion of the Fourth Lateran Council, presided over by Pop Innocent III, a decree went out invoking the command that all Jews wear particular clothing. Part of this clothing consisted of a *Judenhat* (a pointed Jewish hat). Some Jews at this time, usually scholars, already had the custom of wearing them (probably due to former edicts enforced on them by other foreign powers).

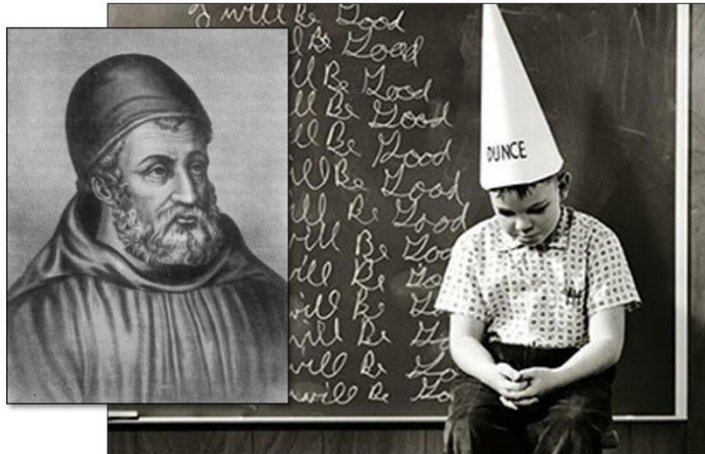


Image is a still from the 1920 silent B/W Horror Film, *The Golem*.

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In Medieval times some Jews were forced to wear pointy hats to distinguish them from the Gentiles of their host nations. The head apparel of a person supposedly incapable of learning called a 'duns hat' perhaps originated from this era. The term 'duns' itself comes from John Duns Scotus who was a 14th century philosopher. When the 16th century ushered in the new learning perspective of the English Renaissance period, John's followers apposed it thereby associating the term 'duns' with one who is incapable or unwilling to learn.



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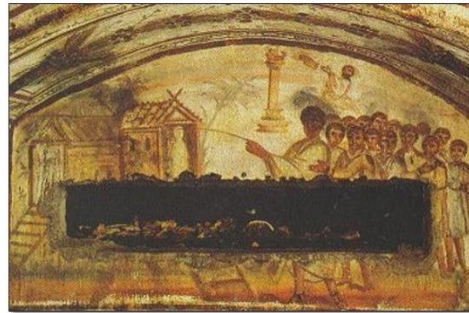


The classic image of the pointy hat wearing magician or wizard hunched over a pile of dusty books with chemicals bubbling away in the background originated from the appearance of the typical medieval Jewish Sage. Their flowing robe, long white beard, constant proximity to scrolls, ointments, incenses and trinkets, formed the basis of the popular look of such fantasy characters as *J.R.R. Tolkien's* Gandalf the Grey and *J.K. Rowling's* Wizard Headmaster Dumbledore.

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Saint Joseph is shown wearing a *Judenhat* in a 12th century German nativity scene, whilst Jes-s' is shown in one on the road to Emmaus (*Luke 24:13-32*) in quite a few etchings and paintings from the same era. A 5th century painting in a Roman catacomb also shows Jes-s using a wand to raise Lazarus from the dead.



While there was no direct command in the Torah to wear a particular head covering for the common Yisraelite, the tallit, the four-cornered garment from which the tzitzit are tied was used to entirely enwrap a person to provide privacy in large gatherings during tefillah.

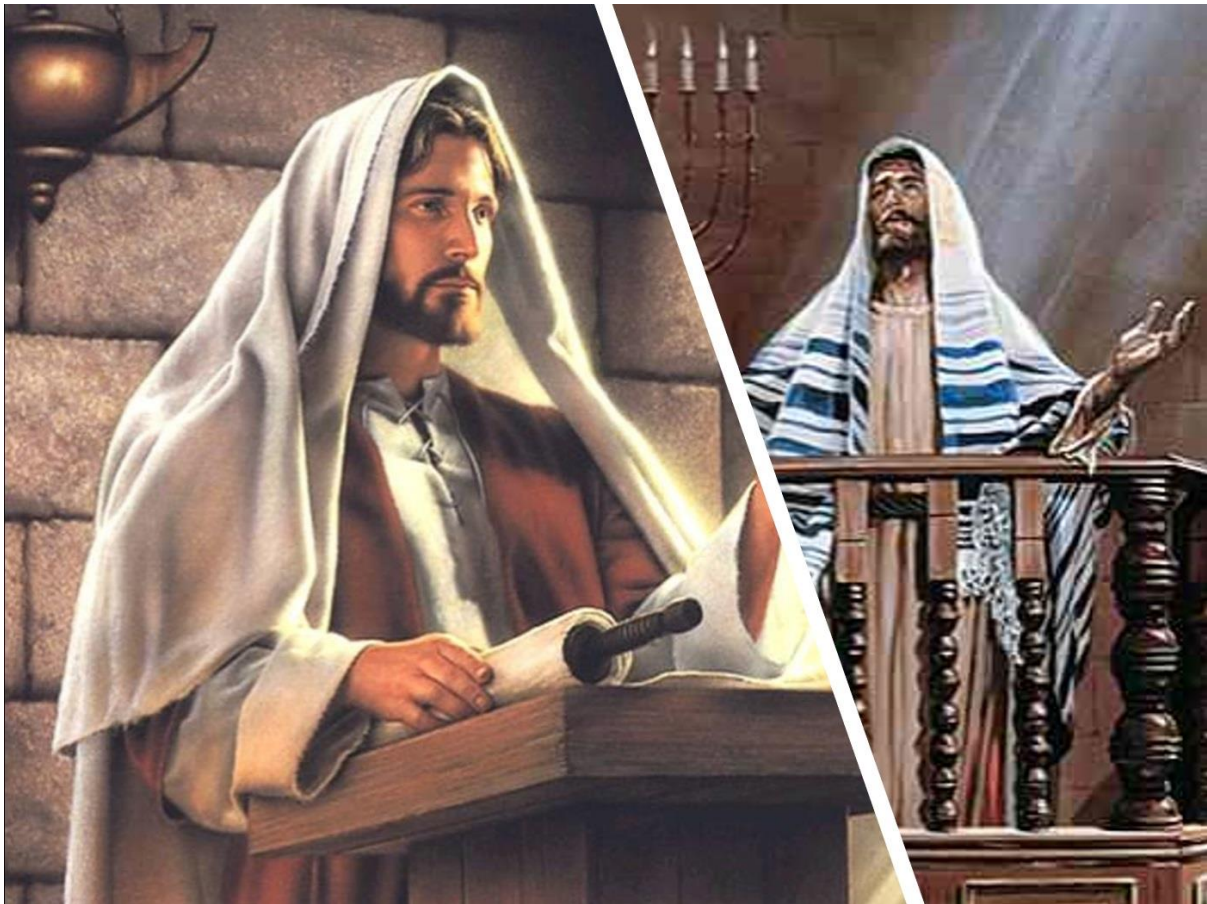
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“Blessed are You, Yahweh our Elohim, King of the universe, who has sanctified us with His commandments, and commanded us to **enwrap** ourselves in Tzitzit.”



Jes-s is often depicted as wearing a tallit with it often pulled up and covering the back of his head.



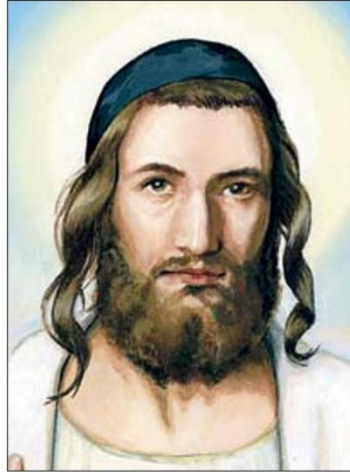
The head covering is part of the tallit, which foreshadows the heavenly garment all members of the Commonwealth of Yisrael will receive in the New Kingdom. Adam and Hava were not naked before the fall, as we perceive someone to be naked today. They were clad in a heavenly covering. To be fully attired, whether in glory light or conventional clothes always included the head.

Middle Eastern people wore head coverings from ancient times to the present day. The Scriptures never portray the Almighty commanding or requesting a Yisraelite to uncover his head. However, HaSatan is eager for the kippah to be removed. How so?

Well, few people know that Scripture attests to Yahshua's own practice of wearing a head covering. Notice something interesting with this exchange between HaSatan and Yahshua in this passage from the Bal Shem Tov Matthew manuscript: **"And he (HaSatan) said to Him (Yahshua), all these things will I give you, if you will fall down and worship me and bare your head to me."** (Matthew 4:9)

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*=Hebrew Shem Tov Translation

HaSatan's fatal injury principally comes from being struck in the skull. King David struck down Goliath by hitting him in the skull and Messiah Yahshua overcame HaSatan at Gulgolet (Golgotha), the Place of Adam's skull.

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David smote Goliath in the...

Golgotha אֶלְגוֹתָא
Aramaic: "Skull"

Calvary Calvariae
Latin: "Skull"

Gulgōlet גּוּלְגוֹלֵת
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The Kippah represents the "Place of the Skull"

Answering the Four Major Objections Against the Kippah

Okay, so let's address the four-primary criticism against wearing a kippah.

- 1) There is no direct command for men in general to wear a head covering.

Answer: Remember, technically speaking, there is no direct commandment in the Torah to even pray. We see Avraham speaking with Yahweh, but there is no command at all.

Secondly, the priesthood is instructed to wear head coverings and Yisrael are instructed to be a nation of priests. **"...you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." (Exodus 19:6).**

Just like the kohanim who performed sacred duties and worked together with the High Priest in the Temple, all believers are called to be priests, working in one accord under the headship of Messiah. **"You also, as lively stones, are built up as a spiritual bayit (house), a kadosh (set-apart) priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to Yahweh by Yahshua ha Moshiaich (The Messiah)." (1 Peter 2:5)**

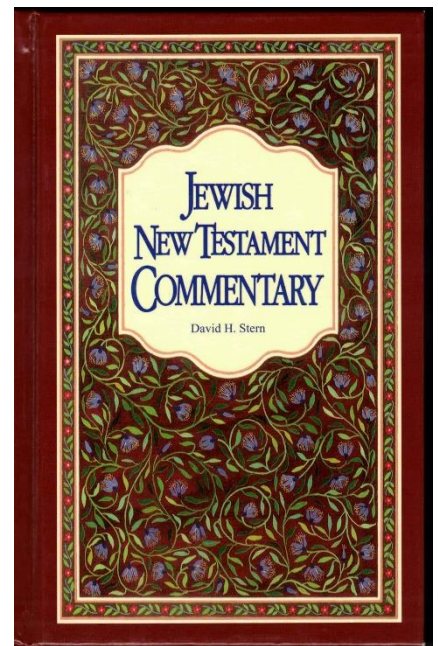
Furthermore, if the kohanim were instructed to wear less distinctive headwear than the Kohen HaGadol, so how much more should we cover our own heads as a nation of priests who are all part of one body whose High Priest is now a crowned and glorified Messiah?

So we can deduce that while the articles of regular clothing do not have to be copies of what the kohanim wore, the number of articles of clothing should not be diminished.

- 2) It's supposed criticism by Rav Sha'ul in **1 Corinthians 11:4-12**. If Rabbi Sha'ul were writing against men wearing a head-covering of any kind here in **1 Corinthians 11**, then he is saying that when performing their priestly duties, the High Priest were, by Yahweh's own command, dishonoring their heads; since the High Priest not only prays and intercedes on behalf of the people but also prophecies in the course of his duties. Remember, Rabbi Sha'ul's newer revelations must not conflict with existing revelation.

The Interlinear Greek-English New Testament, by Nestle/Marshall, translates this passage: **"Every man praying or prophesying down over (Gk. "kata") [his] head (Gk. "kephales") having [anything] shames the head of him.** (The Interlinear Greek-English New Testament, The Nestle Greek Text with a Literal English Translation by Alfred Marshall, D. Litt., copyright 1975 by Zondervan Publishing House, page 685.) In plain English: *"Every man praying or prophesying having anything down over his head shames his head."*

In Dr. David H. Stern's "Jewish New Testament Commentary," copyright 1996 by Jewish New Testament Publications, Inc., Clarksville, MD, Dr. Stern writes: "Every man who prays in public worship meetings or prophecies wearing something down over his head. This is the literal translation, and it is used here to show that Sha'ul is talking about wearing a veil, not a hat. The usual translation, "with head covered," obscures this fact, and as a result an issue has arisen in Messianic Judaism that should never have come up at all, namely, whether it is proper for a Messianic Jewish man to wear a kippah ("skullcap" or, in Yiddish, yarmulke) in public worship. Of course, it is proper, since objection to it is based only on a mis-translation of this verse. For more, see my Messianic Jewish Manifesto, pp 170-171)."



There is no other distinctively Jewish form of attire more recognisable than the kippah.



- 3) It's Jewish.

Nothing could look more Jewish on a person than wearing a kippah. It's universally known as something associated with the Jews. Even the wearing of tzitzit doesn't normally register with an onlooker. At best they might ask you if it is a thread from your clothing that's come undone.

Many Messianics do not like the Jews. In most cases, it's just jealousy over being part of a newly re-emerging movement facing up to the reality that the Orthodox Jews have thousands of years of refinement in their faith. They have established synagogues, mikvah houses, millions of volumes of insightful ancient and modern Torah based literature, yeshivot all over the world, sophisticated global apostolic programs and most of them know the Hebrew language, verses small groups of ex-Christians with strings tied to their belt loops, sitting in living rooms and arguing over just about everything they can think of.

In some cases, a rejection of outwardly Jewish practices, such as the kippah, observing Chanukah, anything rabbinic, and Israeli flags flying in a fellowship comes from plain old antisemitism.

- 4) It's a tradition and generally traditions are rejected because many Messianics think Yahshua rejected just about every Jewish tradition in existence. I'll answer this in point 1 of the positive aspects of wearing kippah.

Positive Aspects of Wearing a Kippah

- 1) The wearing of a kippah does not impede with the observance of any commandment in the Torah whatsoever. Traditions that did not obstruct Torah observance were not forbidden. Here's two witnesses from the Netzarim Ketuvim that prove that the early apostles also taught traditions: **"Therefore, Yisraelite brothers, stand fast, and hold on to the commandments and the traditions that you have been taught, whether by word or our letter." (2 Thessalonians 2:15)** **"Now we command you, Yisraelite brothers, in the name of our Master Yahshua ha Moshiach that you withdraw yourselves from every Yisraelite brother that has walked disorderly, and not after the tradition that he received from us." (2 Thessalonians 3:6)**
- 2) Wearing one in public advertises your faith and will cause you to conduct yourself in a respectful manner. Wearing a kippah in public is an outward revelation of a one's true identity. It is also an act of piety and a helpful reminder to live a Torah-infused and Messiah minded life. It can serve to disguise a bad haircut, double as a toupee to cover a bald spot or help a vertically-challenged Jew appear taller.
- 3) Wearing a kippah may generate curiosity in a person, who might enquire about the faith.
- 4) All Israel are a nation of priests (**Revelations 1:6**) and the wearing of a head covering by a Jew or Messianic believer is an outward sign of a believer's constant anticipation and readiness for the Bridegroom's return. **Isaiah 61:10b; "He has clothed me with the garments of Yahshua, He has covered me with the robe of tzedakah (righteousness), as a bridegroom decks himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.**
- 5) A head covering is a sign of a changed nature. It signifies a transformation from uncleanness to purity in Messiah. **Zechariah 3:4,5; "And He answered and spoke to**

those that stood before Him, saying, 'Take away the filthy garments from him.' And to him He said, 'See, I have caused your iniquity to pass from you, and I will clothe you with a change of raiment (garments).' And I said; 'Let them set a clean turban upon his head.' So they set a clean turban upon his head, and clothed him with garments. And the heavenly malach (angels) of Yahweh stood by."

Head coverings in Scripture are quite frequently referred to Scripture under different names. The most common Hebrew term is Mitsnepheth. It means turban.

Why do We Wear Kippot?

The source for the wearing the *yarmulke* is brought down in two places in the Talmud. The first place is from the Tracate Kidushin:

"Rabbi Yoshua ben Levi says that it is forbidden for a Jew to walk six feet in the extreme upright position since G-d's glory fills the entire world. Rabbi Huna the son of Rabbi Yoshua says that one should not walk six feet without a covering on his head."

The Talmud says that the purpose of wearing a kippah is to remind us of Elohim, who is the Higher Authority "above us" (Kiddushin 31a).

The Talmud¹ relates that a woman was once told by a rabbi that her son is destined to be a thief. To prevent this from happening, she insisted that he always have his head covered, to remind him of Elohim's presence and instil within him the fear of heaven. Once, while sitting under a palm tree, his head covering fell off. He was suddenly overcome by an urge to eat a fruit from the tree, which did not belong to him. It was then that he realized the strong effect which the wearing of a *kippah* had on him.

New Research

In 2005 the Vatican opened up some of its archives to some Jewish scholars associated with the Temple Institute in Israel and gave them access to some copies of priestly documents that disappeared around the time of the destruction of the last Temple.

There were 20,000 scrolls reserved for the priesthood only that went into minute detail. This is what the author of the Book of Hebrews is referring to when he writes, **"of these things we cannot now speak in detail."** **"Now the first covenant had both regulations for worship and a Holy Place here on earth...Above it were the cheruvim of glory overshadowing the Mercy Seat. Of these things we cannot speak now in detail."** (Hebrews 9:1, 5)

HEAD COVERING TERMS IN THE TANAK

<p>מצנפת</p> <p>Mitsnepheth</p> <p>Meaning: Turban</p> <p>11 occurrences in the TaNaK</p>	<p>“These are the garments which they shall make: a breastplate, and an ephod, and a robe, and a coat of checker work, a turban, and a sash: and they shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother, and his sons...” (Exodus 28:4)</p>
<p>צניף</p> <p>Tsaniyph</p> <p>Meaning: Diadem, wrapped piece of cloth</p> <p>2 occurrences in the TaNaK</p>	<p>“Then I said, ‘Put a clean mitre on his head.’ So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him, while the angel of Yahweh stood by.” (Zechariah 3:5)</p>
<p>פֵּאֵר</p> <p>Pe'er Pronounced: <i>peh-ār'</i></p> <p>Meaning: Ornamental cap</p> <p>2 occurrences in the TaNaK</p>	<p>“They are to wear linen caps on their heads and linen undergarments around their waists. They must not wear anything that makes them perspire.” (Ezekiel 44:18)</p>
<p>מִגְבָּעוֹת</p> <p>Migba'ah</p> <p>Meaning: hemispherical bonnet</p> <p>4 occurrences in the TaNaK</p>	<p>“...put their special bonnets on them. Then the right to the priesthood will be theirs by law forever. In this way, you will ordain Aaron and his sons.” (Exodus 29:9)</p>
<p>כִּיפָה</p> <p>Kippah Derived from Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement); Kippur (atonement)</p> <p>Meaning: Covering</p>	<p>(Not in Scripture)</p>
<p>קאפל</p> <p>Yarmulke Yiddish word derived from Aramaic</p> <p>Meaning: Cap of Holy Dread <i>yira Malka</i> (Fear of the King)</p> <p>Derived from the expression <i>yarei mei'El</i> ("in awe of Elohim")</p>	<p>(Not in Scripture)</p>

TURBAN-#4021; *migba'ah*: from #1389 a CAP (as a hemispherical) bonnet. The HEMI-means half, SPHERE means globe, ball, round. So, the *migba'ah* was shaped as a half a ball. It comes from #1389 –*gib'ah* meaning a hillock, hill, little hill on just such a place Messiah YahShua was crucified.

Among the manuscripts was information containing the existence of a skull cap that was worn under the priestly turban. The Kohan HaGadol wore a turban **מצנפת** *mitsnepheth* (Exodus 39:28). Around its base he wore a **צניף** *tsaniyph*, a gold plate, with words “Holy to Yahweh” (Exodus 39:30) fastened by two sets of blue cords (Exodus 39:31).

Most Jewish sources site the tradition of head coverings emerging around the second century, however, it has been widely suspected that the custom emerged right after the formation of the priesthood. When you think about it, once the attire of the priests was established, the people would have taken note of the clothing worn by the priests who officiate nearest to the Mercy Seat.

Yahweh cares what his children wear, not just for the sake of modesty, but also for the sake of guarding against assimilation:

“Yahweh has prepared a sacrifice and consecrated his guests ... and on the day of Yahweh’s sacrifice, I will punish ... all who array themselves in foreign attire.” (Zephaniah 1:8)

Conclusion

The wearing of a kippah is not a direct command, however, the wearing of one will increase one’s intimacy in his relationship with the Father. If it were a direct command to wear a

kippah, it would defuse the act of wearing one of its power. How so? Because, it's simply by choosing to wear one, not because one is forced to, that gets the almighty's attention.



Any

Questions?

