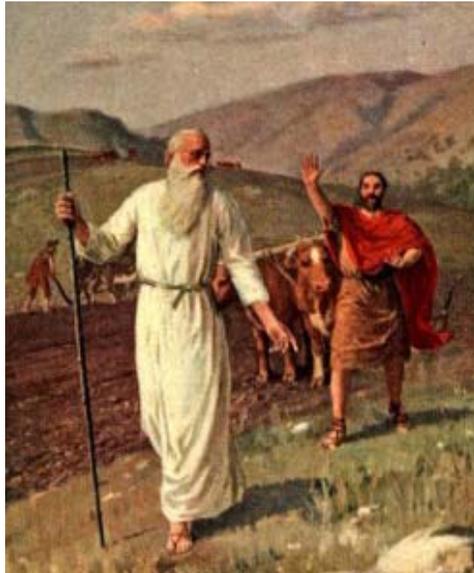


Mantle



A mantle is usually a piece of white cloth three or four yards long and eighteen to twenty inches wide. They fold it over and over until it is 4 to 6 inches wide yet still the same length. They wear it folded about the neck and let it hang down to the knees or even below. When this cloth or garment is folded it is technically called a mantle in the Bible.

The mantle is always a sign of authority and power. In the East it is called "The mantle of authority" worn by priests. No priest would think of preaching or administering the sacraments unless he had on the "mantle of authority" which in the Christian Church is called the stole.

Many times in the East the mantle is unfolded and worn on the body like a shawl, or a shirt or it may even be called a sheet. The poorest use the mantle to cover with during the night.

The Eastern people dress with their underclothing and then with a long piece of clothing that hangs from the shoulders to the ankles called the robe or cloke. Over this they wear a garment that hangs from the shoulders to the knees only and this is called the coat. Then over this they still wear or hang the mantle.

Jesus instructed his followers that if any men should ask them for their coat they were to give their robe also. According to Bible customs when you get rid of your coat and robe you still are not naked although in the Bible it is called naked. You still have your "under clothes," but it is an indication of giving your all. For in the East many times a man has no other possession than what he wears.

The twelfth chapter of II Kings describes the translation of Elijah and the beginning of the ministry of Elisha, his successor. Elijah had just been taken up to heaven by a whirlwind.

II Kings 2:12:

And Elisha saw *it*, and he cried, My father, my father,...and he took hold of his clothes and rent them in two pieces.

To rent clothes, garments or mantle is all one and the same thing. People rent the mantle in two pieces at times of death, sorrow, distress or anger, showing thereby, that the authority is broken, gone. There by the Eastern people indicate to those round about them as to what is going on inside of their hearts. To rend the clothes, garments or mantle is always a sign of some great calamity or happening.

Elisha saw the ascension of Elijah and the word Elijah means "God himself" so Elisha did what every Oriental of Bible times would do, tore his mantle in two pieces and threw it away, indicating great sorrow of heart and the authority of Elijah gone.

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