

Garments of Grace: Clothing Imagery in the Bible

Garments of Innocence

Lesson #3 for April 16, 2011

Scriptures: 2 Timothy 3:16,17; Luke 21:36; Genesis 2:20-25; 2:15-17; 3:6-11,21.

1. Why do intelligent people believe in evolution? If you choose not to believe in God, evolution is the only other choice you have! Why do 40% of scientists still believe in creation? Or, at least, intelligent design? What are the most compelling reasons for believing that God created us in His Own image versus our being the result of a long chain of millions of years of violence and death as we evolved from slime to the top of the food chain? For some additional information about science and evolution see <http://www.detectingdesign.com/>
2. Have you ever tried to imagine what the Garden of Eden was really like? Try to imagine a life with nothing but the most pleasant work to do. There was no competition, no money, no houses, no cars. They had personal, daily—and perhaps more often than that—contact with angels and God. There was no disease, disability, or death. Everyone was completely open in his communication. There was nothing to hide, and there was no deceit. There was no death, violence, storms, destruction, rain, snow, hurricanes, earthquakes, tsunamis, or tornadoes. Would you miss those things? The trees, flowers, birds, and animals, were not only beautiful and gorgeous; but also the creatures were all friendly. Adam and Eve felt completely comfortable in the very sight of God.
3. How long do you think Adam and Eve continued to live in the garden? Unless God was performing some kind of divine birth control, they must have been out of the garden within 9 months. Otherwise, the first baby would have been born there. Were they growing in strength of character day by day? What impact would it have on a person to have daily face-to-face communication with God and with angels? Compare Lucifer!
4. How are we supposed to make up for the loss of all this in our day? We need to communicate with God and the angels through Scripture, prayer, meditation, and sharing with others. We are told to be alert and not to worry. How close is your personal walk with God? Do you feel comfortable speaking of anything with Him?
5. As we know, Adam was created first. After learning a bit about his environment and “naming”—which likely means much more than calling them bears or lions or tigers—all of the animals (no doubt with God’s help), he realized that there was no suitable companion for himself. (As some ladies have asserted, after looking at Adam, did God say, “I can do better than that”?) Then, Eve was created. And Adam immediately recognized that she was “bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh.” (Genesis 2:23)
6. What was it like to wear a garment of light?

The sinless pair wore no artificial garments; they were clothed with a covering of light and glory, such as the angels wear. So long as they lived in obedience to God, this robe of light continued to enshroud them.—Ellen G. White, *3 Spiritual Gifts* 34.1 (1864); *1 Spirit of Prophecy* 25.1 (1870); *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 45; *LDE* 292.1; *SR* 21.1.
7. Whereas clothing worn today is to conceal our nakedness, certainly, we must recognize that light does just the opposite of concealing! (John 3:19, 20) Adam and Eve did not have anything to hide. Was clothing of light a little like a barbed-wire fence: “It protects the property without obstructing the view!”
8. Those clothes needed no cleaning. They never wore out. They fit perfectly. Did the light of

the clothing help to identify where a person was? After Adam and Eve sinned and then made for themselves garments of leaves, they must have recognized very quickly that those garments would wear out or fall apart with very little use. Later, when God made them garments of animal skins, how were the skins prepared? To prepare skins today in quality condition is a fairly lengthy process using a lot of chemicals, etc. Did God slaughter the animals, skin them, tan them, sew them, and then present them to Adam and Eve? Did He teach them how to do it? How often did God expect them to change their garments?

The atmosphere was changed, and it was no longer unvarying as before the transgression. God clothed them with coats of skins to protect them from the sense of chilliness and then of heat to which they are exposed. 3SG 46.1; SR 46.1.

9. We are urged in Scripture to put on the “robe of Christ’s righteousness.” Is that something like a garment of light? Were the very first animals killed to provide the garments of skins? Is there any evidence that God killed animals?
10. What were the physical, mental, spiritual, social, and emotional consequences of the fall?
11. In our day, so far from the tree of knowledge and so buried in sin all around us, it is hard for us to imagine what it was like to be naked and unashamed. But, Adam and Eve lived in a time of purity and innocence. They were all alone in the garden (except for God and the angels). So, there was no question about privacy.
12. Does a garment of light tell us anything about their physical closeness—especially to each other? Were they always open and transparent in all their interactions until they sinned? What about us today? How often are we hiding, cutting moral corners, doing things we do not want others to find out about? Read Matthew 10:26. Will our every evil action eventually be open to the entire universe? Is it now?
13. How difficult was the task that God placed before Adam and Eve? With every kind of imaginable wonderful fruit and every kind of beautiful flower and tree surrounding them, why did they think they needed the fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil? Why did Eve choose to take that fruit and give it to Adam? Why did Adam also eat the fruit? No one had ever lied to Eve before. She wanted to be more like God. Apparently, the snake had learned to talk by eating the fruit!
14. Eve should have said, “This tree has been here since before I was created. Let me go and talk to my husband and to God so we can discuss it together. If it is a good idea, I will be back tomorrow!” Wouldn’t that have prevented many of the sins that we are tempted to commit today?
15. What changes took place almost immediately after they ate of the fruit?

After his transgression Adam at first imagined himself entering upon a higher state of existence. But soon the thought of his sin filled him with terror. The air, which had hitherto been of a mild and uniform temperature, seemed to chill the guilty pair. The love and peace which had been theirs was gone, and in its place they felt a sense of sin, a dread of the future, a nakedness of soul. The robe of light which had enshrouded them, now disappeared, and to supply its place they endeavored to fashion for themselves a covering; for they could not, while unclothed, meet the eye of God and holy angels. *Patriarchs and Prophets* 57.1

16. After Adam and Eve were thrown out of the garden, did God continue to communicate with them? In what way? He talked to Cain. (Genesis 4) Did Adam and Eve hold communion with

the angels at the gate of the garden? How did Jesus as a child communicate with God and the angels?

17. Have you ever committed some action that you almost immediately regretted? Have you ever made a split-second decision that had enormous implications for your later life? Adam and Eve's decision was one of those very regrettable, but irreversible, decisions. We all know what the consequences have been.
18. Why couldn't God just have forgiven Adam and Eve, warned them, even punished them for their misbehavior, and allowed them to stay in the garden? What do we do with our children? Or, should God have simply allowed Adam and Eve to die as He had warned and then start over? What do God's actions teach us about Him? Was God telling the truth when He said, "In the day you eat of it, you will die"? (Genesis 2:17) Is sin deadly? (Isaiah 59:2) Or, does God have to add His punishment to sin to make it deadly?
19. One thing is clear: God has the deepest respect for human freedom. Only free people can be truly moral people, and only free people can truly love.
20. Why do you think the tree of knowledge of good and evil had such a name? We can easily understand why it was called the tree of knowledge of evil. But, why was it called the tree of knowledge of good? Didn't they already have a knowledge of all that was good?
21. Shouldn't God have somehow protected Adam and Eve from that tree? Maybe a fence? Couldn't He have sent an angel to warn Eve as she wandered ever closer? As human parents we try to do everything we can to protect our children, even our grandchildren.
22. How many of the evils we face today are very subtle? Do we often face blatant manifestations of evil?
23. What is implied by Genesis 3:7, "Their eyes were opened"? The *Good News Bible* says, "They were given understanding." They immediately recognized their nakedness. There are two apparent possible explanations for this statement: 1) They had always been naked as suggested by earlier verses, but then, they suddenly felt embarrassed about it. Or, 2) Somehow, eating the fruit actually changed their covering of light.
24. So, why do we wear clothing today? Clearly, it is for the purpose of covering our nakedness. Although there are areas in the world where very little clothing is normally worn, in western societies we think that going without clothing is shocking. Clothing is also often an indication of social status.
25. Ellen White talked about the borders on the garments of martyrs in heaven being red. (*Day Star*, January 24, 1846 par. 1; *ExV* 14.1 (1851); *2SG* 53.1; *1T* 68.2; *EW* 18.2; *Hvn* 87.4) Priests wore borders of blue. There may be those with borders of other colors to indicate other backgrounds.
26. Last week, we talked about Satan being clothed with gems set in gold. How does that relate to garments of light?
27. Are we ashamed of the bodies that God has given us? How much time and money do we spend trying to cover over or change the way we look? Do those efforts involve covering over our nakedness?
28. What did Adam and Eve do when they realized they were naked? How did they go about deciding to use fig leaves? Did they have to sew them together in some way? What did they use for that purpose? Were the fig leaves large so they would only needed two or three of them to cover themselves? How comfortable do you think they were wearing fig leaves? Those fig leaves were a pathetic attempt at solving the sin problem. Do we sometimes make pathetic attempts to solve our sin problems today?
29. When God came to visit them in the garden, they tried to hide! Didn't they recognize the

futility of that? How often do we try to hide from God?

30. Surely, it did not take long for Adam and Eve to recognize that their fig-leaf garments were not adequate. But, God did not make fun of their nakedness. He set about immediately to help them solve the problem.
31. Did God have to “shed blood” in order to provide animal skins for Adam and Eve? (Galatians 3:21; Romans 3:21-28, especially verses 25,26)
32. As we know, there is a long history of blood used in connection with the model of the plan of salvation displayed in the sanctuary services in the Old Testament. (Genesis 3:21; Leviticus 17:11; Revelation 12:11; 1 Peter 1:18,19; Hebrews 9:22) If we focus on the “blood” as if it had some magical power, that is hematolatriy, making an idol out of the blood. How long did God take in preparing those skin clothes for Adam and Eve? With the temperature changes which resulted from their sin, did they need the animal clothing by the first night?
33. In any case, it is important to recognize that God, although He was not responsible for their being naked and had done everything possible to try to prevent it, took upon Himself the task of clothing Adam and Eve. God has always promised to deal with the sin problem Himself. (Romans 8:3)
34. There are at least two themes that become apparent from this story: 1) We see the incredible responsibility that goes along with love and human freedom. It is a beautiful and terrible responsibility allowing us to love God or to spit in His face. And, 2) We notice the love and forgiveness of God that went to work immediately.
35. Will we wear robes of light when we get to heaven? Ellen White says that is what the angels wear. Do the angels have anything to hide? Ellen White also describes a “white robe of innocence worn by our first parents.”

The white robe of innocence was worn by our first parents when they were placed by God in holy Eden. . . . Nothing can man devise to supply the place of his lost robe of innocence. . . . Only the covering which Christ Himself has provided can make us meet to appear in God’s presence. This covering, the robe of His own righteousness, Christ will put upon every repenting, believing soul. . . . This robe, woven in the loom of heaven, has in it not one thread of human devising. Christ in His humanity wrought out a perfect character, and this character He offers to impart to us.—Ellen G. White, *Christ’s Object Lessons*, 311-312; *Maranatha*, p. 78.

A beautiful soft light, the light of God, enshrouded the holy pair. . . . But when sin entered, they severed their connection with God, and the light that had encircled them departed. Naked and ashamed, they tried to supply the place of the heavenly garments by sewing together fig leaves for a covering. {AG 24.3}

36. How is that related to the robes of light? In our innocence and purity, will we eventually reach the place where we will once again be able to wear robes of light?
37. What do we learn about God from this whole story? God had made every possible provision for Adam’s and Eve’s future. But, when they sinned, God did not give up on them. He stepped in immediately and helped them.

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