

CLOTHING BODY AND SPIRIT

A Wisdom House Conference

May 4-5, 2012

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Outline, Notes, and Worship Liturgies

based upon

The Bible Theme of Clothing

by

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This book is dedicated to

Veronica Mouser Tovar

*my fourth daughter
and companion in this study,
in gratitude for her
season of bridal preparation,
during which we learned anew
to put off the old man
and put on the most costly
and radiant of all garments—
our Lord Jesus Christ.*

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What you hold in your hands is not a finished book with exposition and illustrations, well-proofed and polished. Rather, what you hold is an extensive outline with my preliminary notes on the Bible theme of clothing. This outline is offered as a tool and reference for use at Clothing Conferences I will teach in May, 2012, and as an accompanying aid to audio or video versions of those conferences.

Perhaps in the future I will be able to accomplish a more finished work on this theme. This outline is not that completed work; but it is, I think, a useful beginning for Bible students who would learn God's vocabulary of clothing and the great truths He tells us through this poetic language. Please study the Glossary in Appendix J for help in understanding the Bible-theme vocabulary, which informs the structure and purpose of this work. Indeed, please use all of the Appendices extensively, as they summarize and highlight the progression of God's revelation through clothing.

Many thanks to Priscilla Fisher for her friendship and help in editing and formatting this work. It's rough condition is due to the preliminary nature of my work, and should not in any way reflect on the faithfulness of her labors. As always, I thank Bill for being my husbandman as well as my husband. Whatever fruit I may bear, Jesus produces and Bill cultivates.

With prayers that each of you may clothe yourself wisely and always put on the Lord Jesus Christ,

Barbara Mouser
April, 2012

PART I
OVERTURE
IN
GENESIS

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*God introduced His great themes
at creation.*

CHAPTER 1

GOD CLOTHES THE HEAVENS, THE EARTH, AND MAN

The first words about clothing

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A. PORTRAIT OF GOD: 1 The Creator Clothes Heaven and Earth

In Genesis 1, God created light, darkness, waters, vegetation, and animals. Later Scriptures described all of these basic creation elements as garments created by God to clothe the heavens and earth. Thus, the first clothing picture in Scripture is God clothing the heavens and the earth in the white and gold of light,¹ the black of darkness, the blue of water, the multiple greens of plant life, dotted with endless flowering colors. We even see Him clothe the meadows with flocks. To see these references, consider the following verses:

Job 38:9—*When I made the clouds² its [earth's] garment, and thick darkness its swaddling band;*

Ps. 104:2b, 6—[God] *stretch out the heavens like a curtain. ... 6 You covered it [the earth] with the deep³ as with a garment;*

Is. 64:1—*Oh, that You would rend the heavens! That You would come down!* [Rending the heavens extends the metaphor that they are curtains of fabric.]

1. Light is the clothing of God Himself, but this was not revealed in Genesis 1. Here we see God as the creator of clothes, not yet as the wearer of clothes.

2. Clouds are God's symphony of glory in the medium of water and light. Their endlessly varying beauty is constructed of water vapor struck and suffused with light.

3. Another verse linking the oceans with clothing is Prov. 30:4—*Who has ascended into heaven, or descended? Who has gathered the wind in His fists? Who has bound the waters in a garment? Who has established all the ends of the earth? What is His name, and what is His Son's name, if you know?*

Ps. 65:13 (NASB)—*The meadows are clothed with flock, and the valleys are covered with grain; They shout for joy, yes, they sing.*

Is. 50:3—*“I clothe the heavens with blackness, and I make sackcloth their covering.”*

Luke 12:27—*“Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.*

B. FIRST FOUNDATIONAL STORY ABOUT CLOTHING: Adam and Eve in The Garden—Genesis 2-3

1. Naked and not ashamed (innocence)

Gen. 2:24-25—*Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. 25 And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.*

- a. **Naked**: Without clothes or covering
- b. **Not ashamed**: Feeling accepted, approved, loved, worthy, and therefore free to be at ease with oneself and others. In Genesis 2, man and woman were not ashamed for two reasons:
 - (1) **Because of innocence**: Like a child—untested, not guilty or righteous, unaware (eyes not opened). A child’s body is immature and his soul is unaware, therefore he can run around naked and be unashamed.
 - (2) **Because of marriage**: We can put our clothes off in marriage, because we put other clothing on—the covering of each other⁴ and the covering

4. In the act of marriage, the man covers the woman with himself, and the woman encompasses the man.

of enduring, covenant love. This committed love creates a safe haven of acceptance and approval for a lifetime.⁵ Being uncovered physically (naked) and soulishly in such a structure of love and trust is legitimate intimacy and does not bring shame.

2. Their eyes were opened, and they knew they were naked (loss of innocence)

Gen. 3:6-7— So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate. 7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked.

- a. Testing brings knowledge and the loss of innocence in one of two ways:
 - (1) Obedience brings the knowledge of good and evil by discernment, and thus righteous maturity without guilt.
 - (2) Sin brings the knowledge of good and evil by experience, and with it, guilt and shame.

For example, a virgin is without carnal knowledge. Sexual knowledge comes in two ways—sinfully or righteously. Either way, she gains knowledge and her status is changed. A woman who has sex sinfully becomes a fallen woman, a sinner, or a whore with shame. A woman who is known at marriage is a bride who becomes a wife without shame.

5. Conversely, within marriage, to reject or disapprove a person as a whole person is to kill him in our heart. There is a great difference between rejecting an action or attitude of a person and rejecting him (Matt. 5:21-22). To be rejected or disapproved as a person feels like being murdered, dying. We can be angry for a cause; although we should be “slow to anger” and not let the sun go down on it, we must not hate our brother or consider him a fool.

- b. **Ashamed:** Feeling guilt, shame, disgrace, disapproval, unworthiness because we have lost approval, identity, significance, honor, glory. We will be ashamed unless:

- (1) We are innocent.
- (2) We are covered in righteousness and glory.
- (3) Or, we are seared in conscience.

3. Adam and Eve made inadequate clothing for themselves.

Gen. 3:7b—*And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings.*

- a. **Fig leaves:** Man-made coverings that are flimsy and insufficient; represent anything we do to cover our own guilt and shame: denial, blame-shifting, excuses, rationalization.
- b. **To cover shame** is one of the most powerful of all human drives.
Is. 64:6—*But we are all like an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags; We all fade as a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.*

4. Still afraid and guilty—though covered with leaves—Adam hid himself.

Gen. 3:8-11—*And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. 9 Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, "Where are you?" 10 So he said, "I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself." 11 And He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?"*

- a. **Afraid:** Feeling of fear/dread/anxiety/panic/terror in response to or in anticipation of evil or calamity, especially judgment. Because we are guilty, we fear judgment. Christians should be trusting, but many are afraid; non-Christians should be terrified, but most are not.
- b. **Hiding:** Another method for providing cover for oneself, away from disapproval and judgment. (We can't hide from God because He will come looking for us and He will find us.) That Adam hid, even after he had covered himself with leaves, proves that he knew his fig leaves were inadequate covering.

5. PORTRAIT OF GOD: 2 The Divine Tanner/Tailor Made Clothes for Sinners

Gen. 3:21 — *Also for Adam and his wife the LORD God made tunics of skin, and clothed them.*

- a. **Tunics:** Garments or coats which cover the upper and lower body
- b. **Of skin:** Leather, requires shedding of blood, the death of another, and tanning.⁶ Leather endures while a leaf perishes and falls away.

In Genesis 3, we see God as a lowly tanner/tailor making individual garments for a small and shamed couple. We do not know what animal or animals God killed in order to make these clothes for Adam and Eve.⁷ Yet God was the first to shed blood in His

6. According to the Mosaic Law, touching the carcass of even a clean animal rendered a man unclean (Lev. 11:39-40). Thus in the Garden, God not only stooped in humility to help us, but He foreshadowed Jesus' willingness to become unclean in order to make us clean (2 Cor. 5:21).

7. If the animals had not yet had time to multiply another pair of themselves, producing these clothes cost the death of a unique species of God's creatures. Whether this happened or not, we do not know. We do know that clothing us finally did cost the death of the uniquely Begotten Son of God.

beautiful creation, stripping the skin from one or more of His perfect creatures in order to supply true and adequate clothing for sinners.⁸ What lowly and painful work this was for God to do.

C. SUMMARY OF CHAPTER 1

To be naked is to be incomplete or ashamed. The final and mature state of man is to be clothed; clothing is a necessity. However, as sinners, we cannot clothe ourselves. Only God can provide true and adequate clothing.

According to Isaiah 57:15 (NASB), God dwells in two places: *For thus says the high and exalted One Who lives forever, whose name is Holy, "I dwell on a high and holy place, and also with the contrite and lowly of spirit in order to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite."*

This double truth is immediately proclaimed in the clothing language of Genesis 1 and 3. In Genesis 1, God dwelt on high, clothing the heavens and the earth. In Genesis 3, He came low to clothe contrite sinners.

QUESTIONS

1. When you read the passages about how God clothes the world, what stands out to you?
2. According to Isaiah 57:15, God dwells in two places. How is God pictured dramatically in these two places in Genesis 1 and 3?

8. Man and woman were given clothing, but they lost their other great protective covering, their garden home. God was not mocked; Adam and Eve became pilgrims destined to die in a cursed world because of their sin. The dwelling theme is another great Bible theme—another great telling of The Story. Mansions await, but only for pilgrims of faith. In the meantime, food and clothing are the necessities (1 Tim. 6:8). Houses are not included as a necessity in this world, befitting our pilgrim status. If you have a home, you have a taste of heaven.