

## Garments of Grace Clothing Imagery in the Bible Lesson 7 2Q 2011

### In the Shadow of His Wings

What comes to mind from the lesson title?

- What does the eaglet feel in the shadow of the eagle's wing?
- What does the field mouse feel in the shadow of the eagle's wings?

Do some people relate to God like the eaglet? When they think of being under His wings they feel safe and secure.

Do others feel like the field mouse, terrified, afraid and looking for a place to hide – just like Adam and Eve?

Does the eagle have a different attitude toward the eaglet and field mouse?

Does God have a different attitude toward those who love Him and those who don't? If so what would that difference be?

Does God love one and hate the other? Does God want to protect the one and destroy the other?

Would God's attitude difference be more like the eagle toward the eaglet and field mouse – or would God's attitude difference be more like a parent who has one child with leukemia and one child who is healthy? Does the child with leukemia get many more restrictions, interventions, attentions, and treatments from the parent?

What lessons can we derive from the eagle? What do you think an eagle looked like before sin?

SUNDAY

Read third paragraph, "At the pinnacle..." thoughts? What is the significance of understanding this point?

As we approach the end of sinful earth, the events leading to the second coming – where is the battle between good and evil fought? Is it in the mind?

What weapons are used? How does Satan get us to miss this point?

Is the battle of Armageddon fought with tanks, artillery, jets, nuclear weapons – or is it a battle for the mind? What will this battle center upon? (2Cor 10:3-5).

The lesson reports that after David's sin with Bathsheba he attempted to "cover" his sin in various ways – what ways?

- Having Uriah come home to sleep with his wife
- Having Uriah murdered

Why do we attempt to "cover" our sin? What motivates us to act in this way? Is it fear? Fear of what? What is the source of this fear?

As soon as Adam and Eve sinned they ran and hid because they were afraid – where did that fear originate? Did God do something to incite this fear?

During that long time spent in communion with God, the face of Moses had reflected the glory of the divine Presence; unknown to himself his face shown with a dazzling light when he descended from the mountain. ... Aaron as well as the people shrank away from Moses, and "**they were afraid to come nigh him.**" Seeing their confusion and terror, but ignorant of the cause, he urged them to come near. **He held out to them the pledge of God's reconciliation, and assured them of His restored favor. They perceived in his voice nothing but love and entreaty,** and at last one ventured to approach him. Too awed to speak, he silently pointed to the countenance of Moses, and then toward heaven. The great leader understood his meaning. In their conscious guilt, feeling themselves still under the divine displeasure, they could not endure the heavenly light, which, had they been obedient to God, would have filled them with joy. **There**

**is fear in guilt.** The soul that is free from sin will not wish to hide from the light of heaven. {PP 329.5}

Did God do something to incite the fear the Israelites experienced at Sinai? Where does the fear originate?

What does the fear cause one to do?

What are we afraid of in the aftermath of sin? Are we afraid of reprisal, embarrassment, rejection, punishment, exaction, hostility, animosity?

Are we generally more afraid of the natural consequences of sin or the perceived imposed consequences?

- Is the child more afraid of teeth rotting from not brushing or a spanking?
- Is the drug addict generally more afraid of destroyed brain and health or going to prison?
- Is the child molester generally more afraid of the destruction of their character or going to prison?
- Is the sinner generally more afraid of how sin damages and destroys them or the perceived idea that God will inflict punishment?

Does society, including Christianity, distort the reality of what we are to fear?

Was there any reason, in fact, for Adam and Eve to fear God? Did God have any attitude to harm Adam and Eve? Did the children of Israel at Sinai have any reason, in fact, to fear God?

Did Adam and Eve have reasons to fear what sinfulness was doing to them?

Does Satan work to get us to place on God the consequences of what sin does?

Could the fear we experience of God all be based in lies, distortions and misunderstandings?

If you were to commit a sin – would you have fear? If not fear of God would you fear people finding out? Why?

- We wouldn't need to fear if members of our own church were to find out about our sin would we?
- No member of the church would use knowledge of a historic sin to injure another member of the church would they?
- What does it mean when this happens? If you find out a pastor has been divorced and remarried – what do you think?
- If you find out an evangelist was once a drug addict – after he finished seminary – what do you think?
- If you find out a deacon once had an intimate relationship outside of wedlock, what do you think?
- What should we think? How should we act?

Are there reasons, based on experience in our society, that teach people to “cover” their sins?

Is there a difference between David's effort to “cover” his sin and God's “covering” of our sin? – see TUESDAY

TUESDAY

Memory verse: “Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.” Ps 32:1.

When you hear the word “cover” what do you think?

- If someone says get under cover – it means?
  - In the military concealment means to hide, cover means to get behind something that offers protection

- If someone says to a friend, who forgot their wallet at a restaurant, “Don’t worry I’ll cover it” what does it mean?
- If someone says, “I’m going to be in so much trouble with the boss for being late.” And their friend says, “Don’t worry I’ve got you covered.” What does it mean?
- If a person is in combat and their commander says, “run I’ll cover you.” What does it mean?

How is God’s covering of our sin different that our covering of our sin?

When man attempts to “cover” his sin what is he attempting to do? Is he attempting to “hide” or cover-up his sin, to conceal it, to prevent it from being known?

Is that what God does when God “covers” our sin? Does He cover over it, conceal it, cover it up? Is the plan of salvation the great “cover-up?”

Or is God’s “covering” just like in the military a protection from sin rather than a concealment of sin?

Is God’s covering the opposite of human covering, where human’s attempt to hide, God’s covering requires full exposure. What did David actually pray when he pursued God’s “covering?”

“Search me and see the wicked way in me...” does this sound like a covering over? And “create in me a clean heart oh God...”

The sinner covers over an infection without treating it, or providing remedy, God covers by exposing and curing, recreating, regenerating so the infection of sinfulness in the heart is gone.

Or do you think the last paragraph says it more clearly, “God does not overlook...” thoughts?

I received an email this week from a class member who came across a quotation which was difficult to understand and made God sound like a harsh judge. He asked how do we understand it.

The Lord Jesus Christ has prepared a **covering--the robe of His own righteousness--that He will put on every repenting, believing soul** who by faith will receive it. Said John, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). **Sin is the transgression of the law. Christ died to make it possible for every man to have his sins taken away.** {Upward Look 378.2}

**A fig-leaf apron will never cover our nakedness. Sin must be taken away, and the garment of Christ's righteousness must cover the transgressor of God's law.** Then when the Lord looks upon the believing sinner, He sees, not the fig leaves covering him, but Christ's own robe of righteousness, which is perfect obedience to the law of Jehovah. Man has hidden his nakedness, not under a covering of fig leaves, but under the robe of Christ's righteousness. {UL 378.3}

**Christ has made a sacrifice to satisfy the demands of justice. What a price for Heaven to pay to ransom the transgressor of the law of Jehovah.** Yet that holy law could not be maintained with any smaller price. In the place of the law being abolished to meet sinful man in his fallen condition, **it has been maintained** in all its sacred dignity. In His Son, God gave Himself to save from eternal ruin all who would believe in Him. {UL 378.4}

**Sin is disloyalty to God, and [is] deserving of punishment.** Fig leaves sewed together have been employed since the days of Adam, **yet the nakedness of the soul of the sinner is not covered. All the arguments** pieced together by all who have interested themselves in this flimsy robe will come to nought. **Sin is the transgression of the law. Christ was manifest in our world to take away transgression and sin, and to substitute for the covering of fig leaves the pure robes of His righteousness.** The law of God stands vindicated by the suffering and death of the only begotten Son of the infinite God. {UL 378.5}

The transgression of God's law in a single instance, in the smallest particular, is sin. And **the nonexecution of the penalty of that sin would be a crime in the divine administration. God is a judge, the Avenger of justice,**

**which is the habitation and the foundation of His throne. He cannot dispense with His law; He cannot do away with its smallest item in order to meet and pardon sin.** The rectitude, justice, and moral excellence of the law must be maintained and vindicated before the heavenly universe and the worlds unfallen.--Manuscript 145, Dec. 30, 1897, "Notes of Work." {UL 378.6}

Thoughts?

How do we understand such language? Is this literal? Is it metaphorical or some other imagery? Let's break it down to its constituent parts and see what it means.

Sin is what?

- Transgression of the law?
- Which means what?
- What law?
- What does it mean to transgress?
  - If someone jumps off a building does gravity act differently or is it constant? Would this be an example of transgressing the law?
  - If someone ties a plastic bag over their head, will the law of respiration act differently? Is this an example of transgression of the law?

What about the law of love?

- How do you understand it?
- Is it something arbitrary that God enacted and imposed and now enforces or is it the construction protocol upon which God built life to operate?
- And if one transgresses that protocol what happens?

What is justice? Doing what is right or just?

- What determines the standard of justice?
- Is it not the law of the realm?
- And what is the law of God's realm?
- Is it not the law of love?

- Then what does justice look like in God's realm?

With these points in mind, what does this paragraph mean:

**Christ has made a sacrifice to satisfy the demands of justice. What a price for Heaven to pay to ransom the transgressor of the law of Jehovah.** Yet that holy **law could not be maintained** with any smaller price. In the place of the law being abolished to meet sinful man in his fallen condition, **it has been maintained** in all its sacred dignity. In His Son, God gave Himself to save from eternal ruin all who would believe in Him. {UL 378.4}

- What did justice demand?
- What does the phrase "the holy law could not be maintained..." mean? Or what does "the law could not be abolished to meet sinful man" mean, why not?
- Why did it have to be maintained? Because the law is the design protocol for life, it is the way God built life to operate, it cannot be changed and life continue.
- Therefore, justice demanded that the sinner be restored to harmony with the law! Christ's death was the means whereby God could actually accomplish this outcome. Notice this statement:

**The law requires righteousness,--a righteous life,** a perfect character; and this man has not to give. **He cannot meet the claims of God's holy law.** But Christ, coming to the earth as man, lived a holy life, and **developed a perfect character.** These He offers as a **free gift** to all who will receive them. His life stands for the life of men. Thus they have **remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.** More than this, **Christ imbues** men with the attributes of God. **He builds up the human character** after the similitude of the divine character, a goodly fabric of spiritual strength and beauty. **Thus the very righteousness of the law is fulfilled in the believer in Christ. God can "be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."** Rom. 3:26. {DA 762.2}

What does the law demand? What does justice look like?

What about this section, how do we understand it:

**Sin is disloyalty to God, and [is] deserving of punishment.** Fig leaves sewed together have been employed since the days of Adam, **yet the nakedness of the soul of the sinner is not covered. All the arguments** pieced together by all who have interested themselves in this flimsy robe will come to nought. **Sin is the transgression of the law. Christ was manifest in our world to take away transgression and sin, and to substitute for the covering of fig leaves the pure robes of His righteousness.** The law of God stands vindicated by the suffering and death of the only begotten Son of the infinite God. {UL 378.5}

Is sin disloyalty to God? Yes, God is love, sin is violation of the law of love. It is not maintaining faithfulness to the law of love which is disloyalty. What does it mean, sin is deserving of punishment?

- If someone jumps off a tall building is that act *deserving* of pain and suffering, and possibly death?
- If someone is shot in the chest with a bullet is that *deserving* of pain, suffering and possibly death?
- Now does this mean such pain and suffering is a *requirement*, even though it is deserving? If someone jumped off a building, it would be deserving of punishment, but what if someone intervened and inflated a landing cushion to save them? Or what if the person shot in the chest had been given a bullet proof vest?
- Must every sin be punished? Who urged that idea? Satan did – DA 761 – but Romans tells us that God left the sins committed beforehand “unpunished.” (3:25).

- Sin is deserving of punishment, just like jumping off a building is deserving of pain and suffering, but what if someone intervenes to save, can the punishment be averted?

What was Christ manifested to do?

- Take away our transgressions – what does this mean?
- Take them away from where?
- Is it to take them away from history, to change historical fact so that David never had an affair with Bathsheba, and subsequently never murdered Uriah, and therefore Solomon and all his children were never born (including Christ), Absalom didn't rebel and die etc.
- Does Christ take our transgressions away from history?
- From where does He remove our transgressions?
- Is it not from our characters, minds, hearts, motives, cleansing us and healing us?

He came to remove transgression from the sinner by writing His law in our hearts and minds!

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. .. **When we submit ourselves to Christ, the heart is united with His heart, the will is merged in His will, the mind becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him; we live His life. This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness.** Then as the Lord looks upon us He sees, not the fig-leaf garment, not the nakedness and deformity of sin, but His own robe of righteousness, which is perfect obedience to the law of Jehovah. {COL 311.4}

What does this covering sound like? A cover up or a cure?

And what about the final paragraph:

The transgression of God's law in a single instance, in the smallest particular, is sin. And **the nonexecution of the**

**penalty of that sin would be a crime in the divine administration. God is a judge, the Avenger of justice, which is the habitation and the foundation of His throne. He cannot dispense with His law; He cannot do away with its smallest item in order to meet and pardon sin.** The rectitude, justice, and moral excellence of the law must be maintained and vindicated before the heavenly universe and the worlds unfallen.--Manuscript 145, Dec. 30, 1897, "Notes of Work." {UL 378.6}

What does this mean? What would the non-execution of the penalty of sin mean? What is the result of transgression of the law upon which life was built to operate? What is the penalty? What did God tell Adam and Eve would happen? Death.

And Christ who knew no sin became sin for us so that we might become the righteousness of God – what does this mean? Christ took up our infirmities – what does this mean? Christ united His divinity with our humanity in order to destroy the carnal nature and develop a perfect human character which He offers to all of us.

Thus in Jesus, at the cross, He destroyed the infection of sin, destroyed the carnal nature and perfectly restored the law of love into His humanity, developing a perfect character and thus rose again on the third day.

If it was a legal, courtroom, type of penalty rather than a fixing, healing, process, then the penalty for sin is not paid because Christ is not eternally dead.

But because the penalty is death for that which is out of harmony with the law life is built upon, Christ was able to take upon Himself our defective and terminal condition, take that condition to the grave, leave that condition in the grave and rise again in a purified humanity!

What does it mean to be the Avenger of justice – again what is justice? Is it not doing what the law of love demands? And avenger

means to take vengeance. Can we let the Bible guide us on this or must we insist on human understanding of vengeance?

Therefore the Lord, the LORD Almighty, the Mighty One of Israel, declares: “Ah, I will get relief from my foes and **avenge myself on my enemies.** <sup>25</sup> I will turn my hand against you; **I will thoroughly purge away your dross and remove all your impurities.** Isaiah 1:24,25

The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to **bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners,** <sup>2</sup> to proclaim the **year of the LORD’s favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn,** <sup>3</sup> and provide for those who grieve in Zion— **to bestow on them a crown of beauty** instead of ashes, **the oil of gladness** instead of mourning, and **a garment of praise** instead of a spirit of despair. Isa 61:1-3

What is the vengeance of God? Turning enemies into friends – His vengeance is not on sinners but on sinfulness. He attacks and destroys sin! This is His vengeance which purges and cleanses the sinner! The greatest vengeance God can have on Satan is healing and restoring all those who trust Him!

Thoughts?

MONDAY

What do you think about this sentence in the third paragraph, “David’s sin is covered, but the child conceived in sin must die.”

Now the child did die, but I don’t follow the idea of the “child conceived in sin must die” what are they trying to say?

Which of us in this room were not conceived in sin and born in iniquity? Is the lesson trying to help us understand that all of us born in sin, “must die” unless we are reborn?

## WEDNESDAY

The lesson is about being whiter than snow and purging from sin – what does this mean?

What does God purge? Is it not sinners? And how does He do it?

Would it not be through the truth and relationship with Christ?

Isaiah 1:18 – come let us reason together.... Is there a connection with reasoning with God and cleansing from sin? What?

Read last paragraph, “God does...” thoughts

## THURSDAY

Read first paragraph, “Some eagles...” thoughts? From where is sin blotted out?

Was David responsible for the consequences of his sin? Was he responsible for how his children acted or responded? Were they forbidden from forgiving their father, for being gracious? Did they have no responsibility or choice in the matter?

What about today? When we sin does it have consequences? Yes, what is the balance between the consequences from sin and our freedom to choose?

Are there choices we can make to stop the consequences of sin? What about forgiving others? What about loving the sinners among us like Christ loves us?

## FRIDAY

Read and discuss questions 2 and 4