

## Holy garments They are everywhere in the scriptures.

Written by Administrator

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One of the most sacred symbols that the man has received from the Lord is the holy garment.

Before Adam and Eve were cast out of the Garden of Eden, God made for them a coat made out of the skin of an animal. For most of the world, the significance of this covering is often overlooked and very much misunderstood. It was this covering that provided the way for them to be protected from the assaults of the Devil. More than that, it also provided them with the keys to their own salvation, which keys relate to every ordinance necessary to become exalted in the kingdom of God. And these keys are part of the priesthood, which is the power of God, and the priesthood is connected to the wearing of special garments.

Most Christians don't believe that the Bible teaches such things, but we will look at some scriptures and analyze the important significance which special clothing symbolizes.

We read in Genesis 3:21, "The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them." This was in Eden and was the last gift He gave them before they were driven out. Satan thought he had foiled God's designs, but that was only because he didn't understand God's purpose. God was not angry with Adam and Eve. In fact, everything was going according to His plan. How do we know this? Because of several reasons.

It was Eve who admitted that she had been beguiled, or tricked, by Satan (Genesis 3:13). The apostle Paul confirmed this when he said in 1 Timothy 2:14 "Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression." Yes, Eve did eat of the forbidden fruit but she did so out of ignorance. She had been deceived! Eating the fruit gave her knowledge concerning good and evil (Genesis 3:5). That means, BEFORE she ate the fruit, she had no concept of good or evil. The scriptures plainly teach that it was only AFTER they had eaten the fruit that "the eyes of them both were opened" (verse 7).

Every parent understands this kind of a situation. When a small child disobeys, it doesn't really understand what it's doing. And neither did Eve until AFTER she had transgressed, so how could she have truly sin?

Another way we know that God was not angry is because of His reaction to their transgression. A careful reading will show that God did not curse Adam and Eve. The Lord told Adam, "In sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground" (verse 17-19). Was that a curse? No. The curse was upon the ground, not Adam. But notice that the ground was cursed FOR ADAM'S SAKE! (Genesis 3:17). In other words, the earth was cursed for Adam's good! It was good for Adam to be in sorrow. It was good for Adam to be afflicted with thorns and thistles. It was good for Adam to work by the sweat of his face.

And what about Eve? Was she cursed? The Bible only states "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee" (verse 16). Some view this as a curse, but no curse was

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mentioned. If it was good for Adam to live in sorrow, then would it not be just as good for Eve as well?

But there is one other curse mentioned with this story, and that is upon the serpent, who was the real cause of all this trouble. He was the one who instigated the situation in the first place. Without his enticement and without his deceit, none of this would have ever happened. So the true curse was upon him, not Adam and Eve.

Then there was the coat of skins that God made for them. Why would He have done such a compassionate thing if He was truly angry at them? In comparison, did God perform any compassionate deed toward the serpent? If He did it isn't mentioned in the Bible, so we are left with the impression that He didn't.

So, in reality, the expulsion from the garden of Eden was a blessing, not a cursing. And the wonderful gift of a coat of skins was an act of love, not hate. But why did He do this? What was the purpose of God covering the man and woman? God didn't seem to mind their nakedness before their transgression, so it couldn't have been because He was disturbed by such a sight. Then, if it wasn't for His sake that He covered them, then it must have been for their sake.

Before we look at this question, we need to consider something else. There is no dispute that God is holy. Since God made everything, is there anything He makes that is not holy? It wouldn't make sense for a holy person to make something unholy, except as a curse. When God first made the earth, it was pure and holy because there was no sin in it. When God made Adam and then Eve, they too were holy because they were pure and innocent. Then what about the coats of skin that God made for Adam and Eve? If they were made by God, then they also must have been holy until such time that the man or woman defiled them and made them unholy. Therefore, the coats of skin which God provided for His creation before sending them out into a world of sorrow and pain were a holy garment.

The next thing that we read in the Book of Genesis is that Cain and Abel offered up a sacrifice unto the Lord. It is not reasonable to assume that they offered up sacrifices but Adam and Eve didn't? I don't think so.

With this in mind, in Exodus 28:2 we read, "And thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron thy brother for glory and for beauty." And what was the purpose of these holy garments? "The cloths of service, to do service in the holy place, the holy garments for Aaron the priest, and the garments of his sons, to minister in the priest's office" (Exodus 35:19). Thus we see that these holy garments were part of the clothing that Aaron and his sons were to wear while performing their duties as priests. As such, we see that the holy garments and the performance of priesthood ordinances were meant to go together.

Was Adam's holy garment somehow connected to the duties of a priest? At first glance, there may seem to be no connection, but upon a deeper look at the scriptures, we find something rather interesting. We know that Aaron and his sons performed ordinances in the tabernacle, but what were those ordinances? For one, there was a sin offering. In Leviticus 4:35 we learn, "And he [the priest] shall take away all the fat thereof, as the fat of the lamb is taken away from

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the sacrifice of the peace offerings; and the priests shall burn them upon the altar, according to the offerings made by fire unto the Lord; and the priest shall make an atonement for his sins which he hath committed, and it shall be forgiven him"

In Genesis 4:4 we read "And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering." Notice that Abel offered up the same kind of offering as Aaron was instructed to do as an ordinance for the atonement for sins. We know that Aaron had to perform this ceremony clothed in a special, holy garment. Was this true for Abel as well? If we say "no", then we must ask ourselves why God would change His requirements for this ordinance from the time of Able to the time of Moses. Therefore, unless we can justify God changing His requirements, we are forced to admit that Able must have performed his offering as a priest who was wearing some sort of a holy garment. Furthermore, if Abel was making an offering, it is unreasonable to think that Adam didn't make a offering himself, otherwise, how would Abel know to make an offering? And we know that Adam was given a holy garment when he left the garden of Eden.

The symbol of a garment is an ancient one. Often it represents ones "authority." We know that kings wore ceremonial garments as a symbol of their power. But is there Biblical evidence that a garment also represented spiritual authority? In 2 King 2:9-15 we read, "And it came to pass, when they were gone over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee. And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me. And he said, Thou hast asked a hard thing: nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so. And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And he saw him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces. He took up also the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and went back, and stood by the bank of Jordan; And he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and smote the waters, and said, Where is the LORD God of Elijah? and when he also had smitten the waters, they parted hither and thither: and Elisha went over. And when the sons of the prophets which were to view at Jericho saw him, they said, The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha. And they came to meet him, and bowed themselves to the ground before him."

The mantle that Elijah wore was passed to Elisha. Although it was just a piece of cloth with no power in and of itself, yet it represented the power of God was with the person who wore it.

In Matthew 21:6-8 we read, "And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them, And brought the ass, and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and they set him thereon. And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strawed them in the way."

There is a lot of symbolism in this. First of all, riding into Jerusalem, the capital of Israel, on a donkey is symbolic of a peaceful conqueror. (The opposite would be the conqueror riding in on a majestic steed, all arrayed in battle dress, to represent his all powerful authority over them.)

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Jesus came peacefully, riding on a lowly ass. He didn't demand their allegiance, yet they still hailed him as their king. Secondly, "a very great multitude spread their garments in the way." In other words, by throwing their garments at His feet they were symbolically throwing down their own personal authority before Him, thereby voluntarily submitting themselves to His rule.

The priests and the scribes and the workers of the Temple all wore ceremonial garments that represented their authority or power. To rend this holy garment was a symbol of great distress, signifying the desecration of God. Consider the story found in Matthew 26:63-65 " And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy."

It is clear in all these examples that the garment which one wore represented their authority. But is there some special garment, other than that which the priests wore, that IS holy and has power from God?

In the third chapter of Daniel we read about three Jewish lads by the name of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abendnego who were cast into a fiery furnace at the direction of King Nebuchadnezzar. Beginning at verse 20 we read "And he commanded the most mighty men that [were] in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abendnego, [and] to cast [them] into the burning fiery furnace. Then these men were bound in their coats, their hosen, and their hats, and their [other] garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace."



We know that instead of being burned, the king looked into the furnace "and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God. And the princes, governors, and captains, and the king's counselors, being gathered together, saw these men, upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was an hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them."

Notice that it says that "neither were their COATS changed." Yet, in the verse 21, it was stated that these men also wore other garments besides their coats, such as hats and hosen. Then why were only their coats specifically mentioned as not being changed, and not the other articles of clothing they were wearing? Could it be that there was something particularly sacred about these coats?

Another important clue is found in the parable of the wedding guests as recorded in Matthew

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22:11-14: "And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment: And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast [him] into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few [are] chosen."

It must be remembered that this is a parable about the Kingdom of Heaven. The wedding spoken of in this parable refers to those being invited into the God's kingdom. But notice that Jesus makes reference to "a wedding garment" as being necessary to enter into this kingdom. Then He talked about someone who tried to enter the kingdom without having the proper wedding garment. Obviously this person wanted to enter into God's grace, but carefully notice that despite his desire, he was still cast out because he wasn't wearing the proper garments

In Revelation 7:13-15 we read, "And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed [is] he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame."

Why did God give Adam and Eve a coat of skins before being driven out of the garden? Was it not to hide their nakedness so that they wouldn't be ashamed? The idea that those who inherit the kingdom of God also wear a garment is stated often in the Bible. But why?

Consider this: "For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins" (Hebrews 5:1) The duty of a priest is to offer both gifts and sacrifices. In the law of Moses, the priest performed his duty while wearing a holy garment.

"Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus" (Hebrews 3:1). "And no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee. As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec" (Hebrews 5:4-6).

Jesus Christ is a High Priest and He not only offered up Himself but he also offered up prayers on our behalf (Hebrews 5:7). Did He wear a holy garment? The quick answer is "no" simply because the scriptures don't specifically say He did. But this may not be correct. Concerning those who inherit the kingdom of God, Revelation 5:10 declares : "And hast made US unto our God kings and PRIESTS: and we shall reign on the earth" (emphasis added).

Those who have been saved in glory will be made PRIESTS! (It must be remembered that in order to be a priest you must hold a priesthood.) And, as we've already seen, they will be wearing white robes. So once again, we see holy garments associated with the priesthood. Is it

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reasonable to think that Jesus Christ, our high priest, will be naked?

In Revelation 3:21 we read, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my father in his throne." Jesus is not only a priest but He is a king. More than that, He has promised that those who overcome the trials of life, just like He overcame them, they too will become, not only priests but kings and will sit in Christ's throne with Him, just like He now sits with His Father in His throne.

Kings wear special garments that represent their power and authority. It is unreasonable to think that we shall wear crowns and robes of white garments while Jesus and His Father wear nothing to represent their kingly and priestly authority.

When we come to better understand the importance of holy garments we see what special significance they add to God's plan of salvation.