

November 13, 2005 AM

DIVINE CLOTHING
GENESIS 3:20-21

1. GOD GRANTS THEM OFFICE

A. Man's original position

When God created the man and the woman, he created them with a particular end in mind: Cf. **Gen 1:26**- dominion of the world

The world need forming and filling. Adam had to reflect the image of his Father and go and form and fill it. Before this could be done completely, Adam had to be brought to a state of maturity in wisdom before he could wisely rule the world.

Though "perfect" in one sense, he was not mature. He was a finite creature who had to learn (cf. e.g., **Gen 2:18ff.**). Nakedness is illustrative of his immature condition. Man was always intended to be clothed. As man matured and learned how to work with the creation, he would be clothed with the work of his hands.

Note: the last Adam is clothed as the great Priest-King in Revelation.

B. The Tree of Judgment

Note the sequence of events between Genesis 1 & 2. **1:29** - promise that *every* true could be eaten. Sequence of events on the sixth day are given to us in chapter 2: (a) God creates the man. (b) God plants a garden and places man in it. (c) God forbids man to eat of the Tree of Knowledge. (d) God creates the woman.

Chapter 1: Words spoken to both man and woman. (The prohibition of the Tree is given while Adam is alone in the garden.) So, it seems that this is a promise of future things to come. The man and the woman will eat of *every tree* of the Garden. But this privilege is something that is still yet future. For now, God has kept from them the Tree of Knowledge.

Why would God do this? Because of the nature of the Tree. The Tree of Knowledge is withheld from the couple because they are not mature and able to make wise judgments (note the name of the Tree: the Tree of the Knowledge of good and evil).

"Knowing good and evil": is a regular phrase in the Scriptures to denote someone who is able to exhibit wise judgment. Cf. e.g., **1Ki 3:9; 2Sam 14:17; Deut 1:39**

Cannot be referring to the fact that man and woman have no moral perceptions whatever. God had laid down a law and defined for them what was good—i.e., abstinence from the Tree—and what was bad—i.e., eating from the Tree.

This Tree is the Tree of Judgment. It is the place where God would give them the office to make judicial decisions as they rule the world. But they must mature so that they will make wise judgments.

This is the way life is supposed to work from that time to this. Only as children mature should they be given greater authority and responsibility.

C. Inadequate Self-clothing

Note the "seeing" alluded to in **Gen 3:6** (before sin) and then **3:7** (after sin). "Seeing" and "eyes" are instruments to make judgments. The man and his wife had their eyes opened and judged themselves to be naked. And, consequently, made loin clothes of fig leaves in order to cover themselves.

"Seeing" as "judgment" follows God's pattern in creation: "and God saw that it was good" (**1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31**). God sees and then renders a judgment upon that which he sees. Cf. also **11:5; Jer 32:18-19; Ps 11:4; Ez 5:11; 7:4; 20:17**

Clothing is inadequate. The man and the woman had seized office ahead of time. They took a short cut to the end and discovered that God is just as concerned about the means to the end as he is the end itself.

With this new position in the world, the man and his wife are given the opportunity to exercise wise judgment when God comes to them in the Garden. God's asking questions give them this opportunity. He is also revealing to them that they are not ready for the office that they so eagerly wanted. Nevertheless God grants them the office.

D. Clothing and office

God's decision to grant them the office they desired is one of the things shown in the action of clothing the man and the woman with the tunics of skin.

"Coats" or "tunics"- quite specific in the OT. It *may* be used in a more general fashion to speak about clothing that covers and protects from the elements (cf. **Job 30:18; Song 5:3** [?]), most all of its uses (and arguably all of its uses) have to do with vestments for a particular "office" or denoting some type of position.

Cf. e.g., **Gen 37**: Joseph and his tunic. He was given authority over his brothers because he showed wise judgment (**37:2-3**). Priestly garments: The tunics made for Aaron and his sons are clothes which set them apart from others according to their office (cf. **Ex 28:4, 39, 40; 29:5, 8; 39:27; 40:14; Lev 8:7, 13; 10:5; 16:4**). Cf. also **Isa 22:21** "and I will clothe him with your *robe*, and will bind your sash on him, and will commit your authority to his hand...."

The fig leaves with which they tried to clothe themselves were not fit for the office they had. They had not been granted by God, the One in authority. Because of this they were inadequate.

A few things are established by this act of clothing. (1) Authority, position, vestment is not something that can be taken to oneself. It must be granted by those in authority. God establishes to the man and the woman that he is indeed still the authority by this act of clothing.

(2) God's actions reveal both grace and curse. They reveal grace in that the man and the woman deserved to die immediately for what they did. They deserved to suffer the full wrath of God. But God clothes them. The curse side of the equation is that they will have to live with this responsibility for which they were not prepared.

(3) The only way to have the office is through sacrifice. The only way man is going to "rule the world" now is through death.

Cf. **Psalm 8**: man's dominion is his crown of glory and honor (cf. **8:5-8**). For commentary see **Heb 2:5-9**.

Note the process by which Jesus is crowned with the glory and honor (i.e., the dominion, the kingship of the world) as spoken of in **Psalm 8**: "crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death."

This is how the office must be attained. The only way to the throne of the world, the only way to legitimately eat of the Tree of Knowledge/Judgment now is through the suffering of death.

But we need to note something else also that the author of Hebrews says later in his epistle that speaks of the need for the process of maturity, even in Jesus: ^{ESV} **Hebrews 5:8** "Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered."

Jesus *learned* obedience. He went through a process—not simply popping out of heaven and dying on a cross—he learned throughout his life so that he might rule wisely as a priest-king.

Now, Jesus as our Priest-King makes wise judgments for us and the world. He can sympathize with our weaknesses and knows how to help us when we suffer (**Heb 4:14-15**).

Because he went through the suffering and death we see him as he is in the book of Revelation: on his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, "King of kings and Lord of lords" (**19:16**).

Application: (1) Be patient in growth.

Application: (2) Older people need to act mature.