

Session 4 Heavenly Garments: Glorious, Beautiful, and Diverse

I. REVIEW: PRINCIPLES OR PREMISES MENTIONED IN OUR LAST SESSION

- A. Principle #1: Eternal rewards are expressions of God's grace.
- B. Principle #2: Eternal rewards are given according to works—our faithfulness.
- C. Principle #3: We compare Scripture with Scripture to gain insight.
- D. Principle #4: We gain insight from the natural—God's handiwork is seen in creation and society.
²⁸“...consider the lilies of the field...²⁹Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.
³⁰Now if God so clothes the grass of the field...will He not much more clothe you? (Mt. 6:28-30)
- E. Principle #5: Eternal rewards are glorious beyond anything that we can imagine (1 Cor. 2:9). We must be careful to not reduce eternal rewards to something that we can easily imagine. They are commensurate with the glory of the King, and the eternal city, and are befitting of royalty, and express His beauty. The glory of the daughter in Psalm 45 is symbolic of the Bride of Christ.
⁹“Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.” (1 Cor. 2:9)
⁹But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation... (1 Pet. 2:9)
- F. Jesus imparts beauty to His people in various ways including heavenly garments (Isa. 61:1-3). Moses prayed for God's beauty to be seen on God's people (Ps. 90:17). Isaiah spoke of putting on beautiful garments (Isa. 52:1) and compared them to a bride adorning herself (Isa. 61:10).
¹“The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me...³to give them beauty for ashes...” (Isa. 61:1-3)
¹⁷Let the beauty of the LORD...be upon us, and establish the work of our hands... (Ps. 90:17)
¹Awake...Put on your strength, O Zion; put on your beautiful garments...” (Isa. 52:1)
¹⁰“for He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness...as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. (Isa. 61:10)
- G. Principle #6: Eternal rewards are given in varying measures. Believers will differ from one another in the measure of God's glory expressed in and through them. The realm of “the resurrection” includes more than our body. It includes heavenly garments, thrones, crowns, and more.
⁴¹There is one glory of the sun...and another glory of the stars; for one star differs from another star in glory. ⁴²So also is the resurrection of the dead. (1 Cor. 15:41-42)
- H. I assume that each will have a varying measure of God's glory in their garments according to how they lived (Rev. 19:8) and that there will be different types of clothing with unique design, fabric, brightness, coloring, fragrance, etc. Garments are related to our function in the New Jerusalem.

II. WHITE GARMENTS: BRIGHT AND DAZZLING

- A. There are eight references in Revelation concerning “spiritual garments” (Rev. 3:4-5, 18; 4:4; 6:11; 7:9, 13; 19:8, 14). White garments are mentioned on six occasions—the saints in the church at Sardis were promised white garments (3:5). The Laodiceans were exhorted to buy them to avoid spiritual shame (3:18). The 24 elders (4:4), the martyrs (6:11), and the heavenly armies wear them (19:14). The great multitude wear robes made white in the blood of the Lamb (7:14). It seems that there are different types of white garments—ones that *all believers* receive related to the gift of salvation and various garments given to *some believers* according to their faithfulness.
- B. We consider two words that describe heavenly garments—*leukos* (white, bright; Rev. 3:5) and *lampros* (bright, radiant, white; Rev. 19:8). The Intermediate Greek-English Lexicon translates *leukos* as *light, bright, brilliant* (of sunlight or metallic surfaces). *Leukos* speaks of the shining garments of angels or of Jesus (at the Mount of Transfiguration; Mt. 17:2; Mk. 9:3; Lk. 9:29).

III. RECEIVE HEAVENLY GARMENTS AS A REWARD (REV. 3:5; 19:8)

- A. Heavenly garments will be given according to the saints’ obedience and righteous acts (Rev. 19:8). Each believer will receive clothing that expresses the quality of their devotion to Jesus in this life.
- ⁷*...and His wife has made herself ready. ⁸And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints*. (Rev. 19:7-8)
1. **Made herself ready:** John emphasized her personal response of love to Jesus—her devotion was not forced on her. She voluntarily chose love expressed in her faithful and diligent acts.
 2. **It was granted:** There is a theological tension between the bride “preparing herself” (19:7) and being “granted” garments (19:8) by the power of grace. Our garment are related to both the righteous acts of Jesus done *for the saints* and righteous acts done *by the saints*. All of the righteous acts in our life are wrought by the Spirit or by the work of God’s grace in us.
- ¹⁰*For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works*... (Eph. 2:10)
3. **Acts:** The word is plural suggesting many specific acts done by the saints. This is distinct from the imputed righteousness of Christ—a singular righteousness (Rom. 4:22-25; 5:15-19).
- B. We are to “buy” garments (Rev. 3:18)—this is distinct from the free gift of salvation. Jesus exhorts us to “buy” or engage in the God-ordained process of acquiring garments. “Buying” does not imply earning, but investing ourselves in a costly way to express our love as the way of acquiring them.
- ¹⁸*I counsel you to buy from Me gold...and white garments, that you may be clothed...* (Rev. 3:18)
- C. Walking “with Christ in white” is one reward for being faithful. The reason for the receiving these white garments is given—“for they are worthy.” This makes it clear that this reward is for personal faithfulness and acts of righteousness as in Revelation 19:8. No person is worthy of salvation which is freely given only through faith in Jesus being based on His worthiness (Eph. 2:8-9; Titus 3:4-7).
- ⁴*You have a few...who have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy. ⁵*He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments...* (Rev. 3:4-5)*

IV. SCRIPTURE GIVES US INSIGHT INTO GOD'S THOUGHTS ABOUT GARMENTS

- A. *Jesus' garments*: we gain insight into heavenly garments by considering His garments which signify how He relates to us—as a King who rules in the compassion of a high priest.

²*He was transfigured before them...His clothes became as white as the light. (Mt. 17:2)*

²*Who cover Yourself with light as with a garment... (Ps. 104:2)*

¹³*...with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band. (Rev. 1:13)*

⁸*All Your garments are scented with myrrh and aloes and cassia... (Ps. 45:8)*

1. Isaiah wrote about the Messiah's garments (Isa. 6:1; 59:16-17; 61:10; 63:1-5).

¹*I saw the Lord sitting on a throne...and the train of His robe filled the temple... (Isa. 6:1)*

¹*This One who is glorious in His apparel?... ²Why is Your apparel red, and Your garments like one who treads in the winepress? ³*I have trodden the winepress...their blood is sprinkled upon My garments, and I have stained all My robes. (Isa. 63:1-3)**

2. People sought to touch Jesus' garments to experience His power (Mt. 9:21). Soldiers cast lots for four parts of Jesus' garments—an outer garment (robe), a tunic, a belt, and sandals (Jn. 19:23-24; cf. Ps. 22:18).

- B. *Angel's garments*: we gain insight into heavenly garments by considering the angels' garments.

⁶*...clothed in pure bright linen, and having their chests girded with golden bands. (Rev. 15:6)*

⁵*...a certain man [angel] clothed in linen, whose waist was girded with gold...! (Dan. 10:5)*

- C. *High priest's garments*: The priestly garments give insight into the value that God has on garments and how they speak of spiritual things. God designed them to be beautiful and to show His glory. God gave directions for the priests' garments (Ex. 28:1-43). There were distinct parts of these garments (trousers, coat, girdle, bonnet, robe, ephod, breastplate, tunic, turban hats, sash and crown. The OT priestly garments had different colors (gold, blue, purple, red, white, etc.).

²*You shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother, for glory and for beauty...⁴*And these are the garments which they shall make: a breastplate, an ephod, a robe, a skillfully woven tunic, a turban, and a sash...⁴⁰*You shall make hats for them, for glory and beauty... (Ex. 28:2-4, 40)***

- D. *Saint's garments*: we gain insight into heavenly garments by considering the garments of saints.

⁹*A great multitude...clothed with white robes... ¹⁴*These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. (Rev. 7:9-14)**

¹⁴*The armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him... (Rev. 19:14)*

⁴³*“The righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.” (Mt. 13:43)*

¹³*The royal daughter is all glorious within the palace; Her clothing is woven with gold.*

¹⁴*She shall be brought to the King in robes of many colors... (Ps. 45:13-14)*

V. GAINING INSIGHT FROM SOCIETY ABOUT THE DIVERSITY OF GARMENTS

- A. We can gain insight from society—seeing elements of God's handiwork in the common responses of people in various cultures—since humans are created in God's image. There is great science in knowing what to wear—when, where, and why. Garments can give insight into one's personality, mindset, accomplishments, as well as their function and station in life. Dress says who you are, how you want people to see and relate to you, what you represent, and who you want to impact. A picture is worth 1,000 words—clothing is not neutral but well planned with a message in it
- B. Clothing styles are as varied as there are people, purposes, and cultures. Clothing is an important part of relationship and communication. By wearing special clothes at a wedding, we communicate our value of the people getting marriage and recognize their wedding as an important event. By wearing a suit for a job interview we communicate to a potential employer that we value the opportunity and will be aware and diligent in our work. By wearing black clothes at a funeral, we communicate that we recognize and share the grief of the mourning family.
- C. Garments declare a person's status or office, or express cultural identity or membership in a group.
- D. There is diversity of clothing of different contexts such as formal occasions (weddings, awards ceremonies, black tie events), religious ceremonies (ordinations, bar mitzvah, etc.), funerals, family gatherings, academic events (officials at a graduation ceremony), ecclesiastical event (bishops, cardinals), legal settings (judges), military events (uniforms denote ranking), casual gatherings, sporting events, and cultural events (reflect historical or cultural preferences).
- E. Our garments will be as diverse as the different occasions we will participate in. For example, a king wears different clothing depending upon the occasion. He may wear certain clothing at home, on vacation, in official banquets, or in military functions (military medals) or with heads of state.
- F. I believe that the saints will have a vast wardrobe of clothing in the New Jerusalem. Each occasion will require different clothes with varying fabric, texture, color, design, fragrance, etc.

VI. THE COMMAND TO BUY GARMENTS

- A. Jesus exhorts us to “buy” or to engage in the God-ordained process of acquiring intimacy with God. We do not earn this, but invest ourselves in a costly way to receive it.
¹⁸I counsel you to buy from Me gold...that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed... (Rev. 3:18)
- B. On three occasions, the Scriptures exhorts us “to buy” in a spiritual way. It was spoken to the foolish virgins (Mt. 25:9), the Laodiceans (Rev. 3:18) and Israel (Isa. 55:1). We buy or acquire in a costly way by *listening* or *watching* then responding out of what we hear (Isa. 55:2-3).
¹Yes, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price...²Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good...³Incline your ear, and come to Me. Hear, and your soul shall live. (Isa. 55:1-3)