**Dress Reform and the Sanctuary (2001)**

We are researching God’s ways in a series of studies on the sanctuary. When it comes to the subject of dress, unfailingly it is one of those subjects that we always fall into difficulty with. It is imperative that we look at the subject in the framework of the sanctuary. This study deals with the true motive of dress reform and the motivation behind dress reform.

When the motivation is correct, then your dress will be correct. If you look at it from the perspective of what is the requirement of dress without the beautiful inspiration of the sanctuary, it is only looking at the fruits of the tree instead the roots of the tree. You are trying to pick off fruits that aren’t good and place good fruits on there when the tree needs to be dealt with. It is of vital importance that we understand the subject of the dress reform. The word of God dealing with the covering of the human body in the sanctuary is what we are looking at.

When we studied the sanctuary in relation to the soul and the heart, we discovered that the courtyard of the temple is our body, and that our mind and brain, where the seat of the affections is, is in another part. The part of the brain which is the intellectual part is the first apartment, and the forehead or the frontal lobe is the most holy place.

Our body is the courtyard. As you look at the courtyard of the Hebrew sanctuary, what is it surrounded by? White linen. That white linen was of a certain height so that a person on the outside could not see in. It was well covered by the white linen. The body is to be covered with righteousness. The sanctuary itself was not to be seen into. You had coverings one after the other. Under the woven goat hair covering was the blue purple and scarlet. You will notice that each layer covered it so thoroughly that you couldn’t see through. It was a covered sanctuary. In the human representation of the priest, what do we read in reference to the covering of the priest?

**Exodus 28:1 And take thou unto thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister unto me in the priest’s office, [even] Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron’s sons. 2 And thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron thy brother for glory and for beauty.**

What sort of garments were they to make? Holy garments. Garments for glory and for beauty.

**Exodus 28:40 And for Aaron’s sons thou shalt make coats, and thou shalt make for them girdles, and bonnets shalt thou make for them, for glory and for beauty. 41 And thou shalt put them upon Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him; and shalt anoint them, and consecrate them, and sanctify them, that they may minister unto me in the priest’s office.**

How were Aaron’s sons dressed?  With plain white coats. Underneath the high priestly attire was the plain white coat.

**Exodus 28:42 And thou shalt make them linen breeches to cover their nakedness; from the loins even unto the thighs they shall reach:**

What sort of covering was made for them? As you look at the priest, can you see the covering? Can you see anything of the human form of that person? Just like the sanctuary, you couldn’t see in. That was for glory, beauty and holiness. These are all the ingredients of this dress that the priest had. The nakedness was covered and breeches were made because underneath those coats the nakedness was still to be covered from the loins to the thighs. Why were they to be covered from underneath? Here is a description of the altar where the offerings were made:

**Exodus 20:26 Neither shalt thou go up by steps unto mine altar, that thy nakedness be not discovered thereon.**

Why was there to be covering underneath? It was in case there was an opportunity to see underneath the garment. That was if there was such an occasion, but they were not even to go up on steps to reveal the nakedness. God reveals here the fact that covering has to do with holiness. Everything was covered. It is to do with holiness and beauty.

**One of the points upon which those newly come to the faith will need instruction is the subject of dress. Let the new converts be faithfully dealt with. Are they vain in dress? Do they cherish pride of heart? The idolatry of dress is a moral disease. It must not be taken over into the new life. In most cases, submission to the gospel requirements will demand a decided change in the dress. {6T 96.1}**

**There should be no carelessness in dress. For Christ’s sake, whose witnesses we are, we should seek to make the best of our appearance. In the tabernacle service, God specified every detail concerning the garments of those who ministered before Him. Thus we are taught that He has a preference in regard to the dress of those who serve Him. Very specific were the directions given in regard to Aaron’s robes, for his dress was symbolic. So the dress of Christ’s followers should be symbolic. In all things we are to be representatives of Him. Our appearance in every respect should be characterized by neatness, modesty, and purity. But the word of God gives no sanction to the making of changes in apparel merely for the sake of fashion, that we may appear like the world. Christians are not to decorate the person with costly array or expensive ornaments. {6T 96.2}**

According to the inspired word the sanctuary counsel of dress is the principles which the Christian should adopt. We are to understand from the sanctuary the detail given in reference to the priests for holiness, for glory and for beauty. That is the manner in which they were to be dressed. We recall what is written in the New Testament about the priesthood. Does that have anything to do with us as Christians? Who is Peter writing to? The Christian church:

**1 Peter 2:9 But ye [are] a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:**

What are we as Christians? A royal priesthood. The instruction which God gave to the priesthood, would He not also give that to us that we would have holy garments for glory, for beauty and for holiness? What is glory in the study of God’s word? God’s character. It is interesting that our dress is an indication of character. If the character is the glorious character of the Lord it will be revealed in the dress. Dress is important in reference to our spirituality.

**Lead the youth to see that in dress, as in diet, plain living is indispensable to high thinking. Lead them to see how much there is to learn and to do; how precious are the days of youth as a preparation for the lifework. Help them to see what treasures there are in the word of God, in the book of nature, and in the records of noble lives. {Ed 248.1}**

**Let their minds be directed to the suffering which they might relieve. Help them to see that by every dollar squandered in display, the spender is deprived of means for feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, and comforting the sorrowful. {Ed 248.2}**

**They cannot afford to miss life’s glorious opportunities, to dwarf their minds, to ruin their health, and to wreck their happiness, for the sake of obedience to mandates that have no foundation in reason, in comfort, or in comeliness. {Ed 248.3}**

**At the same time the young should be taught to recognize the lesson of nature, “He hath made everything beautiful in its time.” Ecclesiastes 3:11, R.V. In dress, as in all things else, it is our privilege to honor our Creator. He desires our clothing to be not only neat and healthful, but appropriate and becoming. {Ed 248.4}**

**A person’s character is judged by his style of dress. A refined taste, a cultivated mind, will be revealed in the choice of simple and appropriate attire. Chaste simplicity in dress, when united with modesty of demeanor, will go far toward surrounding a young woman with that atmosphere of sacred reserve which will be to her a shield from a thousand perils. {Ed 248.5}**

**Let girls be taught that the art of dressing well includes the ability to make their own clothing. This is an ambition that every girl should cherish. It will be a means of usefulness and independence that she cannot afford to miss. {Ed 248.6}**

**It is right to love beauty and to desire it; but God desires us to love and to seek first the highest beauty–that which is imperishable. The choicest productions of human skill possess no beauty that can bear comparison with that beauty of character which in His sight is of “great price.” {Ed 249.1}**

For beauty and for glory. With this concept in mind we will look at the right principles and when we go into the details we can see that it is God given. Looking at the principles we can see that the covering of the body represents the glory of God – a glorious character of modesty, beauty and nobility. We are now familiar with the connection of the covering of the body with the beauty of holiness and righteousness. The following verse is talking about holiness in reference to dress:

**Revelation 3:18 I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and [that] the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.**

The white raiment is symbolised in the sanctuary by the priests with their white coats so that their nakedness does not appear. God is very particular about nakedness not appearing. It has to do with holiness because holiness is a covering for sinfulness.

**Revelation 16:15 Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed [is] he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.**

Do you see how God is particular?  We will learn further in regards to what nakedness He is talking about. We are so used to having around us nakedness which God shuns, but for us we take it as normal, but God is saying, It is nakedness. We are to watch that we do not appear naked as written here in verse 15, which is also connected with Isaiah:

**Isaiah 64:6 But we are all as an unclean [thing], and all our righteousnesses [are] as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.**

Observe how clothing is connected with righteousness and unrighteousness. Purity and holiness are related to the dress. Our righteousness which is very short of God’s righteousness is like wearing filthy rags.

**Isaiah 59:6 Their webs shall not become garments, neither shall they cover themselves with their works: their works [are] works of iniquity, and the act of violence [is] in their hands.**

People want to cover themselves with their works. Their webs will not become garments. The spirituality of a person is reflected in their garments. They end up not covering themselves up anymore. God is going to do something for those who are clothed with this unfit clothing.

**Zachariah 3:4 And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment. 5 And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the LORD stood by.**

Did you notice what they dress him with? The priestly garment. This was Joshua the high priest. This is a story of the people living in the last days. This aspect of spiritual renewal has to do with a change of garment, and will this not reflect also in a physical garment?

**Revelation 19:8 And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.**

We identified the fine linen that surrounded the sanctuary. It is all part of the same story. Righteousness and clothing belong together. What is the righteousness that we are to be clothed with?

**Isaiah 61:10 I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh [himself] with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth [herself] with her jewels.**

God covers us in spiritual terms with beauty, and our dress, as we have read, is to be symbolic of that righteousness. Our dress indicates what character we are of. If we are going to take hold of the glorious character of Jesus what can we see in reference to nakedness and physical clothing? The picture continues with the way in which God is covered. He is the one who gives the perfect revelation of covering;

**Psalms 104:1 Bless the LORD, O my soul. O LORD my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honour and majesty. 2 Who coverest [thyself] with light as [with] a garment: who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain:**

How is He covered? How much of Him is covered? All of Him, so that you cannot see His physical form. His nakedness is not shown. That is nobility and majesty. That is what you see in the priest, thoroughly cloaked.

Isaiah saw God in His heavenly temple:

**Isaiah 6:1 In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple.**

A train?  What is this in the margin? *Skirts*. Skirts of light. They filled the temple. That is how God is dressed. When man was created by God, what is written in reference to it?

**Genesis 1:27 So God created man in his [own] image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.**

**Genesis 2:25 And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.**

That *they were both naked* … *and were not ashamed* is read by many to mean that they could see each other’s nakedness. However if they were made in God’s own image they would have been covered with light because they were like God in majesty and nobility, so they wore no garments but were covered in light. They were naked in the sense that they wore no artificial garments.

**The sinless pair wore no artificial garments; they were clothed with a covering of light and glory, such as the angels wear. So long as they lived in obedience to God, this robe of light continued to enshroud them. {PP 45.3}**

If you were to have met Adam and Eve you would have seen no human frame apart from seeing them from the neck up. The rest was enshrouded with light. Their nakedness did not appear for them to be ashamed. When they sinned, what did they do? They sewed fig leaves because they were ashamed. When God came to speak to them they felt that the fig leaves weren’t good enough. They still went and hid from God and still felt naked. They still saw things that made them uncomfortable in the presence of God. As we watch God dealing with their dilemma, what do we see in God’s way of dress revealing itself now? We have seen it in reference to light as a garment, but when they sinned, what did He do?

**Genesis 3:21 Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them.**

Just like the priests – coats. As you read the word *coats*, it was to cover them in the same way that they were covered with light. This gives meaning to what *coats* means. It is something that covers from the shoulder down and covers neatly and modestly the entire human frame. In heaven we will have a mantle. A mantle is a coat. It is something you wear right down just like the priest, from the shoulders to the feet. That is the picture. Sr. White saw the saints in her vision in the book *Early Writings* with their mantles from their shoulders to their feet.

**Here on the sea of glass the 144,000 stood in a perfect square. Some of them had very bright crowns, others not so bright. Some crowns appeared heavy with stars, while others had but few. All were perfectly satisfied with their crowns. And they were all clothed with a glorious white mantle from their shoulders to their feet.** **{EW 16.2}**

Here we see the meaning of nobility, majesty, and glory in regards to covering the physical frame, the body temple. Now we have the correct appreciation of what the Bible calls modesty. Many men misread the following statement and only apply it to women:

**1 Timothy 2:8 I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting. 9 In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; 10 But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.**

What is the statement? That man shall lift up holy hands. The priest of the household or of God’s kingdom is to have garments for glory, for beauty and for holiness. He is to lift up holy hands as the priest, and *in like manner* women should dress like that too. Men and women are to be dressed as the priesthood was, in a manner of holy covering for the glory of God’s character. This is modesty in God’s way. Many people read this and judge it with man’s appreciation and go along content that they are dressed alright but God says, Your webs shall not cover you. You think you are covered but you are not. The clothing of men and women that bare the upper chest, shoulders and thighs is something that makes godly people shudder. They are not covering themselves the way God would cover. In the past people felt the shame of such exposure:

**Isaiah 47:1 Come down, and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon, sit on the ground: [there is] no throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans: for thou shalt no more be called tender and delicate. 2 Take the millstones, and grind meal: uncover thy locks, make bare the leg, uncover the thigh, pass over the rivers. 3 Thy nakedness shall be uncovered, yea, thy shame shall be seen: I will take vengeance, and I will not meet [thee as] a man.**

What is uncovered here? The leg and the thigh. That is uncovering and nakedness in God’s eyes and it is a shame. Are men ashamed of having their thighs revealed today?

**2 Samuel 10:4 Wherefore Hanun took David’s servants, and shaved off the one half of their beards, and cut off their garments in the middle, [even] to their buttocks, and sent them away. 5 When they told [it] unto David, he sent to meet them, because the men were greatly ashamed: and the king said, Tarry at Jericho until your beards be grown, and [then] return.**

What was involved in their shame? The garments were cut off like a man’s shorts today. Half way of that long garment was what they wore and that was shameful, along with their beards being half cut. We are focusing on the covering. When men looked upon men in uncovered states, men who were godly thought it shame. We have a story of their reaction and attitude in regards to covering as it is in God’s mind:

**Genesis 9:21 And he drank of the wine, and was drunken; and he was uncovered within his tent. 22 And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren without. 23 And Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid [it] upon both their shoulders, and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces [were] backward, and they saw not their father’s nakedness.**

That is the nobility of the Bible so that nakedness was looked upon as both shame and dishonour. Ham was making fun of what he saw so he was cursed and his race was cursed ever afterwards. As in the principle of not having a single one of our sins being uncovered, it is the same principle for dress, there must be no showing of nakedness. Every sin removed and covered. Every aspect of the human manifestation is to reveal the character of God’s holiness and the glory of His character.

**Head Coverings**

There is another area of covering which the Bible defines as a principle which we want to absorb in the light of God’s form of covering having to do with holiness and the position of honour.

**1 Corinthians 11:4 Every man praying or prophesying, having [his] head covered, dishonoureth his head. 5 But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with [her] head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven. 6 For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn: but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered. … 13 Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered? 14 Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? 15 But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for [her] hair is given her for a covering.**

This covering of a woman is spoken of as having to do with the glory of God’s form of covering.

**1 Corinthians 11:7 For a man indeed ought not to cover [his] head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man. 8 For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man. 9 Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man. 10 For this cause ought the woman to have power on [her] head because of the angels.**

Because of the woman’s position she ought to have power on her head because of the angels. It is a covering signifying that she is under the power of her husband because of the angels. How does this relate to angels? What do angels have to do with it? Because of God’s form of positioning and the creation which He has created, the head of every man is Christ. Who is the head of Christ? God. The head of every man is Christ and the head of every woman is man. The angels who are commissioned to do service for God are dependent on the sign to the people they are serving. The sign that this woman is submissive to God’s order is her long hair. When they see a woman with her hair as a covering, then they can see that this is the power on her head. This is the indication that she recognises God’s form of government. We live in a time today when women don’t like that very much and the angels can’t work very well with that rebellious spirit. This kind of insubordination has to do with our dress. It reveals the characteristic of the women of modern society.

**Isaiah 3:16 Moreover the LORD saith, Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing [as] they go, and making a tinkling with their feet: 17 Therefore the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and the LORD will discover their secret parts. 18 In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of [their] tinkling ornaments [about their feet], and [their] cauls, and [their] round tires like the moon, 19 The chains, and the bracelets, and the mufflers, 20 The bonnets, and the ornaments of the legs, and the headbands, and the tablets, and the earrings, 21 The rings, and nose jewels, 22 The changeable suits of apparel, and the mantles, and the wimples, and the crisping pins, 23 The glasses, and the fine linen, and the hoods, and the veils. 24 And it shall come to pass, [that] instead of sweet smell there shall be stink; and instead of a girdle a rent; and instead of well set hair baldness; and instead of a stomacher a girding of sackcloth; [and] burning instead of beauty.**

It is worth studying to see God’s mentality in this. God is particular and the angels are connected with it because when the angels worship God and relate in heaven, notice what they do in full respect and honour of their position:

**Isaiah 6:2 Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. 3 And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, [is] the LORD of hosts: the whole earth [is] full of his glory.**

What were they covered with? Garments of light, and besides being covered with light they covered themselves entirely as a token of respect and honour. Covering relates to holiness. We are to worship God, and how? In the beauty of holiness.

**Psalms 96:8 Give unto the LORD the glory [due unto] his name: bring an offering, and come into his courts. 9 O worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness: fear before him, all the earth.**

Glory, beauty and holiness. Part of the beauty of holiness is not just having the right character in our hearts but is revealed in the dress we wear and in the way we cover ourselves. If you will do His will, you will know the doctrine. If you practise the true principles of dress reform as we have studied, you will experience a sense of holiness. That sense of earthliness that has been manifested in our old way of dress is suddenly not there anymore and you feel an amazing contrast and it is another aspect that draws you closer to the Lord. Many things work together in our walk with God and dress reform is one of them. When I put into practise greater detail of dress reform according to those principles, I began to feel much more acceptable to the Lord. This completes the first part of our study which we will continue with in study number 2.

Amen.