

Grave Clothes

Clothes are important. Try to go out without them you would quickly run into trouble, get arrested, and then get charged for indecent exposure. Clothes are interesting if you think about it. Of all the living things on the planet, only humans wear clothes. Other animals were created with their covering. Fish and reptiles have scales, birds have feathers, and other animals have fur.

So why are we mostly naked without natural covering? Because we were once clothed in the glory of God. This is also what left at the Fall, which is why that it was only after this that Adam and Eve knew that they were naked.

Genesis 3:7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings.

Instead of going to God, they reached for what was around them and tried to fix it themselves.

Genesis 3:21 Also for Adam and his wife the Lord God made tunics of skin, and clothed them.

God fixed the problem Himself. Instead of leaves that could wilt and tear easily, He made them leather jackets. It would keep them warm, dry, protected, and insulated. It wasn't glory, but it is the best thing, the only thing that God used to cover His fallen children.

This was a prophetic picture of what Jesus did for us on the cross.

Hebrews 9:22 Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.

We have been wearing clothes as covering ever since.

Clothes linked to identity / social status

Beggars: Rags

Kings: Royal robes

Priests: white linen

Prophets: Camel's Hair

Prisoners: orange jumpsuits

In the ancient world, clothes were expensive. It was like trying to buy Gucci while making minimum wage, not impossible but if it does happen, it's not going to happen that often.

The average person would have one or two changes of clothes. It is odd that Bible also records, many times, that people would actually tear their clothes in response to extreme emotions or circumstance.

Joshua tore his clothes when he heard the disbelief of his companions that caused them to not go into the Promised Land for 40 years – and again when his army suffered a massive defeat at Ai.

Kings tore their clothes in repentance and grief over their sin, and in other places they were chastised for not doing so.

Even the High Priest tore his clothes when he thought Jesus was speaking blasphemy.

But what stands out to me is when someone tore their clothes in response to the death of a loved one.

David tore his clothes at the news of the death of Saul, and also when he thought all his sons were murdered.

In 2 Kings 6 the King of Israel tore his clothes when he heard that the people were starving so greatly because of their enemies that were fighting over killing and eating their babies.

Tearing clothes was in response to great grief, anger, or remorse.

When studying the Bible, to understand something's significance, you look at the context of the first time it is recorded. We call this study principle the **Law of first mention**. The first time someone tears their clothes is when Joseph was thrown into a pit and then sold into slavery by his brothers. His oldest brother, Reuben, did not know about the sale and went to get him.

Genesis 37:29, 34 Then Reuben returned to the pit, and indeed Joseph was not in the pit; and he tore his clothes.

Reuben was full of grief, regret, and remorse over his sin against his brother. Then he told Jacob, Joseph's father the news.

Genesis 37:29, 34 Then Jacob tore his clothes, put sackcloth on his waist, and mourned for his son many days.

There was another time when a father tore His clothes because of the death of His Son. It was on a hill called Calvary. 2000 years ago, the Son of God was tortured and killed, not for His own crimes, but for the sins of the entire world.

Matthew 27:46 About the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?”

The Father had to turn away from the Son.

“I’m forgiven, because You were forsaken. I’m accepted, You were condemned. I’m alive and well, You Spirit is within me, because You died and rose again.” – *You Are My King*

He didn’t just take on our sin, He became sin. All of God’s wrath and fury was poured out on His Son, so that we did not have to suffer the consequences of our sin – eternal death.

Matthew 27: 50-51 Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit. Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split

The veil was in the temple, and it separated the holy place from the most holy place. It was a separation of sinful man from a holy God. It was about a foot thick and was torn from top to bottom. This wasn’t a result of the earthquake. This was not possible to tear unless God Himself did it. The Father’s heart was broken over our sin and what it cost His Son. But that moment of God’s grief, was also when we were granted access to God’s presence.

Isaiah 53:5-6 He was pierced for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on Him, and by His wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

Hebrews 12:2 for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross

The death of the Son grieved the Father, but He did it because you are worth it.

Isaiah 53:10 Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief.

It pleased the Father? Yes! because it gave us access to Him once again. The Father tore the veil of separation of His people and His presence.

Galatians 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

The Father tore His clothes in grief over the torture and death of His Son, in anger over the price of our sin, and offers a way back home for us if we repent and have remorse for the sin in our lives.

Joel 2:12-13 “Now, therefore,” says the Lord, “Turn to Me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning.” So rend your heart, and not your garments; return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness; and He relents from doing harm.

Jesus was crucified for our sin, but He didn’t stay in the grave.

John 20:1-5 Now Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. Then she ran and came to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and said to them, “They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him.” So Peter and the other disciple started for the tomb. Both were running, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent over and looked in at the strips of linen lying there

He took the grave clothes, those things that have been torn because of our sin, and left them in the tomb.

If you choose to repent of your sin, turn to God, and trust Him for your life, He can leave the torn rags of your sin and shame in the grave.

Because of what He did, He washed away our sin in His blood and redeemed us from the consequence of what we did.

Isaiah prophetically declares about Jesus.

Isaiah 61:1-3 The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me... to bestow on them a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair.

Where our sin caused death, grief, and anger, Jesus invites us to leave the grave behind and to begin to live a life of praise because of His goodness toward us. Just as He removed the fig leaves from Adam and Eve and clothed them with His solution, God now invites us to be clothed in His righteousness, to repent of our sin, and cover our shame.

Revelation 3:18 I counsel you to buy from Me... white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed