

Sewing Devotion 2

We have talked about Dorcas and I told you she was probably the most famous seamstress in the Scripture. I have to revise my statement. Dorcas is probably the most well-known seamstress in the Bible, but there is a seamstress that is more famous. That is today's lesson.

The book of Genesis tells us about the creation of the world and about God's creation of Adam and Eve, the first people. They were created as sinless beings and lived in a perfect place—the Garden of Eden. I often think of Adam and Eve and wonder how they figured out how to do things. How did they know how to build a fire? How did they know what to eat? How did they know about children or where they would come from? How did they know how to make things? Did God create them packaged with all the knowledge they needed? Or was God pleased to create curiosity in them so they could discover these things by themselves? Since we know that God walked with them each evening during the cool of the day, were they able to ask questions and receive direct answers from God himself?

Scripture does record one specific instruction that God gave them: not to eat from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. A seemingly simple request but you know the story. Satan, in the form of a serpent, tempts Eve. She eats and gives the fruit to Adam as well. Their eyes are opened and they realize they have sinned.

Now other things are introduced into Adam and Eve's world: guilt and shame. They feel within their beautiful and perfect selves, that were once guiltless and shameless, a need to be covered. Not because their bodies suddenly became dirty or ugly. Because of their sin, they are now vulnerable. Instead of perfect trust in their relationship to God and to each other, they have given into putting themselves first. They've been tricked into thinking they can't trust God. There can't even be perfect trust between the two of them. There is rebellion and selfishness, a choosing to be separate from God. There is a vulnerability that they don't know how to deal with.

So they try. Genesis 3:7 tells us they sew fig leaves together to cover themselves. The Hebrew word in Genesis indicates that the garment they made are “aprons”, basically a belt that would have leaves attached to it and hanging down. Perhaps Eve had her chest remain bare in this type of garment. Doing a little research into what kind of fig trees grow in the middle east, we can find out that the trees there would put out a leaf about 10 inches by 7 inches, so think about the size of a piece of paper. Now, I am not the world’s premier seamstress but even I can probably figure out that sewing leaves together doesn’t make a lot of sense. Leaves would tear. They would get brittle and fall apart. They would be scratchy. And this particular type of fig tree has leaves that put out a gel-like substance when torn or punctured, so any garment made from them would be sticky, too. What do Adam and Eve use for thread? Or a needle, for that matter? Can you picture it? Vines, maybe.

Not only do Adam and Eve inadequately cover themselves but they also hide. Hiding from God is never a good idea. God knows where they are and he demands an answer. An answer that he already knows. They are not what they once were and they are trying to conceal it.

God’s response to the sin of Adam and Eve shows us his perfect, Holy character. First, he reveals the plan of salvation. They may not have fully understood it but we can read it in Genesis 3:15. “And I will put enmity between you (Satan) and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.” God says, from now on, there is going to be good versus evil in the world, but someday, the Messiah, Jesus, is coming to crush Satan.

Secondly, God makes it clear that there are consequences for sin. Work moves from being an enjoyable pursuit to being difficult, toiling out a living with sweat and thorns. There is going to be pain in life, and for Eve, pain in child-bearing. No longer is there harmony on earth. Animals are now at odds with people, and even the husband and wife relationship has turned away from being an equitable union.

God’s last response truly shows his love for mankind. God sews for them. Adam and Eve’s apparel is inadequate so God has to become the seamstress. He makes

clothing that covers them, stays together, protects their vulnerability and most importantly, tells a story. God's designer-label clothing made from the skins of animals tells them, and us, that something must die because of sin. An animal's death will be the sacrifice to cover them but Jesus the true Sacrifice is coming. Their leaf creation was meant to conceal their sin. But when Adam and Eve accept the animal skin clothing that God sews, there is a confession that they are inadequate to deal with sin themselves. That's what God wants from each of us.

So, truly, God is the most famous seamstress. The Bible actually has many verses that talk about God's sewing abilities—we'll look at them in the coming months. His garments show that he has made provision for our salvation. He covers both the guilt and the shame of our sin.

Is the clothing that we make telling this story? We are trying to cover the physical nakedness of boys and girls who are unable to cover themselves. I like to think that when I make dresses and shorts to give away, when I pray that this clothing shows God's love and provision, I am helping to convey the spiritual story: God sent his son Jesus to rid us of sin's guilt and shame.

As you sew this month, think of the purpose of clothing. It's a story. There was a perfect world where clothing was unnecessary. Sin ruined that perfection. I am inadequate to cover my sin. My attempts are just as futile as a dress made of leaves. God, the most famous seamstress, loved me enough to provide a way for my salvation.