

Biblical Glory-Covering Theme: Implications for the Cross-Cultural Application of the Gospel

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Abstract

Corruption, pain, nakedness, sickness, death and the state of existing as a disembodied spirit are abnormal to God's original design and involve shame, that is dishonor and lack of glory. All nakedness that is abused or violated is a deliberate attempt to destroy the honor of the one attacked and to gain more power and honor in a twisted manner for self. The result is a profound personal shame and feelings of guilt in the created conscience of the abused. The father of shame, Satan, uses this violence to sow accusations of shame and doubts of value/worth in the mind and spirit of the abused and before people and God. The same occurs concerning a violated person's gender identity if same sex abuse occurs. Ultimately, the Destroyer sows doubt about the goodness of the Creator because each person is created to thank, glorify, trust, and follow him alone and to receive glory and acceptance only from him (Rom 1:18-31).

Since honor must come from the Creator, only he is capable of healing this destruction of honor and shame and removing the feeling of guilt before God and people. He does this through the finished work of the Second Man, Jesus Christ, who bore extreme shame, dishonor and nakedness for his children's sake.

Introduction

A blogger recently wrote the following about the horror of shame and its deep and sometimes devastating effects in our lives:

Shame is universal and started in the garden of Eden. God covered our shame over and over but Christ absorbed it once and for all at the Cross. We get that intellectually, but those who have been abused hear other voices—voices of condemnation and humiliation. Their shame seems so much deeper. It can easily enter the soul like deadly venom. Shame drives us undercover, but the cost is great. We can hide so well. God calls us out of hiding, asking us to consider, "Where are you?"

Shame can indeed be more devastating and long-term than the actions that caused the pain and humiliation in the first place. It is our purpose in this paper to discuss the cause of shame and how the Creator has made provision in Christ by the Spirit, the Word and prayer for inner healing. However, first we need to define shame. Juanita Ryan writes: "Shame is that terrible, private feeling that something is wrong with us—that we are somehow defective as a person. That we are irreparably damaged. That if anyone really knew what we were like we would be rejected." She then continues: "A part of the experience of shame is the fear of being found out and exposed. We want to run and hide and protect ourselves from exposure to other

people’s judgement.” In other words, guilt causes a person to think “I have done wrong” but shame causes one to feel “There is something wrong with me. I am defective and damaged before God and man.”

This leads us to a more academic definition of honor and shame, the topics this conference is designed to address. Brené Brown defines the two terms in a helpful way:

- Honor is “the worth or value of persons both in their eyes and in the eyes of their village, neighborhood, or society.... The critical item is the public nature of respect and reputation.” To this we would add that the most critical factor which Ms. Brown leaves out is a person’s value before the Creator of both the human body and spirit.
- Shame, on the other hand, is “the intensely painful feeling or experience of believing that we are flawed and therefore unworthy of love and belonging . . . the fear of disconnection.”

Table 1: Nakedness Motif in Scripture: Two Possibilities

English Translations	Early Church Consensus
Consensus of contemporary scholars.	Most early Christian and Jewish scholars.
Both Adam and Eve were completely naked, innocent, and yet had no shame.	Both were covered with a basic glory-covering but experienced no shame in sexual union.

I will suggest that God created humanity from the beginning covered with his glory through in a non-permanent form. The first option, though more contemporary, is not as tenable. We will discuss why I make this choice in the second more exegetical section of this paper. However, at this juncture, I will point out that taking this consensual option of the early church fathers and Jewish rabbis introduces the primary biblical soteriological theme of honor-shame reversal. Last, I will disclose how these principles can be applied to two key aspects of human shame. First, the biblical glory-covering theme speaks directly to the healing of all types of shame but also especially that of sexual shame. Second, this motif speaks directly to the issue of whether female exposure of the upper body in many majority world cultures in hot and humid climates is wise and honorable. Furthermore, the principles discussed in the paper, I believe, are cross-culturally valid because they deal with the universal themes of Creation, Fall, Redemption, and Restoration, which every individual and people group have experienced, or could experience in the future. These themes in turn minister directly to the inbuilt sense of propriety in every humans’ heart and conscience (Rom 1:18-2:16) and help aid the Spirit’s healing ministry.

Concerning the three options above dealing with the original clothed or unclothed state of the first couple, it seems best to understand that God created humanity from the beginning covered with his glory. We will discuss this extensively in the second section of this paper. However, at this juncture we will point out that this choice introduces the primary biblical soteriological theme of honor-shame, in our opinion. Last, we will disclose how these principles can be applied to shame, especially of sexual shame and what insights this discussion brings to bear on forms of human nakedness (according to Euro-American standards) in many majority world cultures in hot and humid climates. These principles, we believe, are cross-culturally valid, because they deal with the Creation, Fall, Redemption, and Restoration, which every individual and people group have experienced, and can experience. These themes in turn minister directly to the inbuilt sense of propriety in every humans’ heart and conscience (Rom 1:18-2:16).

If one chooses the third alternative above, human nakedness has, thus, always been a shame and a curse before people and angels apart from a covenanted marriage. Marriage creates a one flesh relationship of mutual love and ownership (Gen 2:24-25; 1 Cor 7:2-5; Eph 5:28-31).

No matter which of the three one choses, God's solution to the experience of shame experienced by Adam and Eve was for him to (re)clothe them with slain animal skins (Gen 3:21; Eze 16:7-8; see 1 Cor 12:23-24) – a picture of the glory-covering of the coming Victor (Gen 3:15). The proper human response to God's offer of covering was repentance, trust in God's provision and a return to trusting in his word for daily life and interpretation of the natural phenomena around them. As the Sethite line (ultimately leading to Noah) ultimately demonstrated, this new trust and symbolic covering in a blood sacrifice leads inevitably to a new life-style of righteousness, boldness, and true worship in every area of life.

Nakedness and Glory-Clothing in Redemptive History

In this second section, we wish to discuss the exegetical basis for choosing this biblical vision of moving from created temporary glory, to shame of the Fall, to the permanent, redemption glory in Christ, received in two stages expressing the eschatological tension of the already-but-not yet of the present time.

Creation and Fall

The story starts at the very beginning when the Creator made Adam and placed him and later also his wife into his earthly palace-residence, which is the core meaning of the Hebrew word, *hêkal*. Thus, it was a garden-temple with a wall and a single door, cherubim to guard it (cf. Gen 3:24), and a task to “serve and guard” it as the Hebrew states (Gen 2:15). To serve and guard are two terms that appear together elsewhere only in contexts of the work of priests in a palace of the King (Num 3:7-8, 18:4, 7). In addition, in the garden-palace of the King, he placed his royal palace servants, that is his priests, because that is what “priest” (*köhên*) means in Hebrew. Furthermore, every priest of Yahweh after this time is dressed in white linen to cover their nakedness (Ex 20:26; Lev 6:10), a picture of the first and second Adams' glory covering.

Next, Yahweh, the King, then tested Adam, and his wife Eve about the necessity, sufficiency, and authority of his Word, which he gave them to use to interpret the physical environment around them. Because the Creator designed all things and is the only Being transcendent and outside of the universe, he alone has the wisdom, external perspective, and authority to give the meaning of each phenomenon in the universe that Adam and Eve experienced. This is the meaning of “wisdom” – seeing all of life from above, through the eyes of the creator (Jas 3:15, 17). Especially in the Proverbs and related books, wisdom is connected with righteousness, glorious light, health, life, prosperity and long life. Sin as rebellious folly, these books state, result in seeking another wisdom, which in turn always results in darkness, dishonor, evil, sickness, death, and poverty. This in short is what the curses of Genesis 3 summarize.

At first glance with our present translations, nakedness is first mentioned in the context of marriage, the one-flesh arrangement, and sexuality before God, with no shame. If this viewpoint is accurate, the NT emphasizes the same teaching that marital sexuality is good and pure (see e.g., 1 Cor 7:2-5, 35; 1 Tim 4:3; Heb 13:4; cf. Prv 18:22, 19:14). For those who hold this

perspective, the fact that Genesis 2:24 (“one flesh”) and 25 (“naked ones” ~,yMiêWr[], `árûmmîm from ~roy[e, `árôm)) are immediately juxtaposed in the same immediate context is important. The next topic clearly begins in Genesis 3:1 when Moses introduced the serpent and his temptation describing him as ~Wr[', `ârûm, which indicates possibly a wordplay because the consonants are exactly the same for “crafty” and “naked.” The Masoretic text pointed the two differently with different vowels possibly to emphasize the wordplay. Interestingly, the word `ârûm can mean cursed nakedness (Eze 16:39, 23:29) or positive prudence (e.g., Prv 12:16, 23) or negative craftiness (Job 5:12; 15:5) depending on the context. The use in Genesis 3:1 is clearly negative. Further, although the word for “naked” here in Genesis 2:25 (~roy[e, `árôm) can be used for absolute unclothed nakedness (e.g., Gen 3:10-11; Job 1:21, Eccl 5:15; Is 20:2-4), it is not necessarily always so (see Dt 28:48; Job 22:6; 1 Sam 19:24;). The context determines the meaning.

A second possible meaning is the translation the Targum Pseudo-Jonathan gives by equating the meaning of the homonym-homograph (~ry[]) in both Genesis 2:25 and 3:1. His version reads, “they were both wise, the man and his wife, but they did not remain in their glory.”

Targum Pseudo-Jonathan ... translates the word arum as “wise” in [both] Genesis 2:25 and 3:1. ... The second clause of the verse had to be changed, since the verse is not discussing nakedness and there is no reason to bring up any feeling of shame or lack thereof. Rather than being understood to mean “ashamed”, the word yitbosheshu is translated as “remain”, as in [“]The people saw that Moses had delayed (boshesh) in descending the mountain[”] (Ex. 32:1). The interpretation of Pseudo-Jonathan teaches that Adam and Eve were wise and glorious; this state of glory was not to persist, however, due to the cunning of the serpent.

The third view, takes ~roy[e; `árôm to mean proper absolute nakedness in the marriage union. However, considering the Davidic commentary on the original state of the first couple (Ps 8:6) – as we shall see, the word in the context of Genesis 2:25 does not deny the possibility that the couple could have had an internally generated glory-covering which they could have turned on and off at will as the Lord seemed to have been able to do in the Transfiguration (Mt 17:2; Mk. 9:2-3; Lk 9:29).

I come to this conclusion based on several lines of evidence. First, God created Adam in his image and likeness, two terms that Paul clearly connects in the case of the Second Adam with glory and light:

The god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. . . . For God, who said, “Light shall shine out of darkness,” is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. (2 Cor 4:4-6).

Second, ironically, the Serpent promised “enlightenment” – a form of honor and glory, but instead brought the first couple the curse of “blindness” and darkness in his rebel Domain. Light and glory are only now restored in the Second glorious Adam, Jesus of Nazareth and in his kingdom (Col 1:12-13). He, who was the eternal Word of God (Jn 1:1) was always clothed along with his Father with unapproachable light and glory (Col 1:15; 2 Tim 6:16; Jn 17:5, 24). The Word veiled his glory in his conception (Jn 1:12) with the express purpose that his glory as the only-begotten One, himself God, would be revealed in the face of Jesus.

In his veiled human state, Christ, the Second Adam, revealed his glory as the firstborn head of Adam’s kin on only one occasion (see e.g., 1 Jn 1:1-5; Jn 1:14-18). Peter comments on this Transfiguration as an eyewitness. Peter writes:

We were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For when He received honor and glory from God the Father, such an utterance as this was made to Him by the Majestic Glory, “This is My beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased” and we ourselves heard this utterance made from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain” (2 Pet 1:16-18).

Note how he mentions Christ’s “majesty,” “glory,” and “honor” at the transfiguration. These are exactly the terms David applies to the first Adam in the Eighth Psalm (8:6). Clearly, Jesus, the Second Adam, was the perfect and only glorious image of the invisible God in bodily form (Col 2:9). He was what Adam failed to be, and what he is now is like what the Father planned for all “in him” to become. His desire is for us also to be clothed in glory. Peter again writes: “After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you” (1 Pet 5:10 NAU). Paul agrees: “But we should always give thanks to God for you . . . , because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth. It was for this He called you through our gospel, that you may gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Thes 2:13-14 NAU; see Rom 8:17, 30).

In the transfiguration, therefore, Jesus produced out of himself the outshining glory of his single, sinless person that is both fully divine and fully human. His face and clothing were brilliantly clothed with glory – the glory of the only-begotten of the Father and of the perfect Son of Man, the Second Adam (Mt 17:2; Jn 1:14). Certainly, this was only a temporarily revelation of his glorious person. However, at the resurrection, he put on his permanent glory and immortality (Php 3:21), which Paul and John saw after the Resurrection (Acts 22:5, 26:13; Rev 1:12-16). Then he became “life-giving Spirit” as the perfected Second Adam with incorruptible glory and life, so that he was forever unable to die (Rom 6:6-8). He is the “new man/mankind,” the true image of God, clothed again in the righteousness, knowledge and glory of the truth that Adam had at the beginning. However, now, the Second Adam permanently shines forth the glory of God, something the first Adam did in a typological and temporary manner before the Fall (Eph 4:24; Col 3:8-10; Col 1:15; 2 Cor 4:4-6). As a result, all humans in union with Christ, have turned from their shameful, naked darkness to his honorable light and will share his permanent glory when he comes (Col 3:1-5; Acts 26:18; Col 1:12-15). These will again be crowned with an unfading wreath-crown of glory (1 Pet 5:4), granted in creation (Ps 8:6), lost in the Fall, but granted by grace in the Resurrection “in Christ.”

With all this in mind, it is clear that Jesus came naked into the world in the “likeness of sinful flesh” (Rom 8:3) yet without sin (Heb 4:15, 7:26; 2 Cor 5:21). At his birth, he possessed all the glory of the Godhead though veiled (Php 2:7-8), hence he appeared naked thus needing the clothes, which Mary wrapped him in (Lk 2:7, 12). In his human body, Jesus fully represented his people, the sons of Abraham (Heb 2:9-17) so that at the cross he could bear their ultimate shame. He did this by being exposed in shameful nakedness before all humanity so that the Father’s chosen people would be permanently clothed with glory “in him.”

Third, in Psalm 8 David comments on the original glorious state of the first Man. David describes his original clothing in verse six: “And surrounded/clothed him [Adam] with glory and honor.” This seems to be a description of what the “image and likeness of God” meant. Contrary to most English translations, except notably the Young’s Literal Version and the JPS Tanakh, translators render the Hebrew as “crowned” following the Septuagint’s *stefano,w*. However, that word does not always imply a royal wreath – though it can. The basic meaning of the term is a status reward especially for a victor in the Greek games. What this seemed to mean to the translators of the Septuagint, based on their reading of the original Hebrew verb, was that the

Creator granted ascribed honor-status to Adam and his wife. They were to be vice-gerents (administrators, representatives) not vice-regents of their Creator-King. They were to rule as governors as the physical image and likeness of their Monarch upon earth, receiving his delegated glory and honor (Ps 8). A good illustration of this kind of royal service is found in the ministry of Joseph under Pharaoh (Gen 41:38-45), who was a picture of the first Adam here. Hence, the first couple were not to be kings with original judicial, law-making, and royal right to save: “For the LORD is our judge, The LORD is our lawgiver, The LORD is our king; He will save us (Is 33:22).

The root meaning of the verb *rj*[, `†r used in Psalm 8:6 substantiates this idea of delegated glory. It has three potential meanings depending on context: 1. “Surrounded” as when Saul’s troops were moving in on David and his band (1 Sam 23:26), 2. “Adorned” (JPS Tanakh 1985) as when the head is surrounded with gold and silver symbolizing authority of a high priest (Zec 6:11, 14) or of royalty (Ps 21:3). 3. “Clothed/invested with honor,” “figurative of honor” (Prv 12:4, 14:24, 17:6; possibly Job 19:9; Lam 5:16) (see BDB).

Consequently, translating the term “surrounded” is not out of bounds and was common among many of the ancient Hebrew and early Christian interpreters in this context (Ps 8:6) as we shall see. Paul’s discussion of worship in the Corinthian assemblies seems to confirm this. In the midst of his complicated argument, the Apostle is crystal clear: “For a man ought not to have his head covered,” what that means is immaterial to the argument here, “since he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of man” (1 Cor 11:7). Here Paul seems to be echoing the creation account in Genesis and reflected in Psalm 8. It seems best, then, to believe that the first couple were surrounded by glory just as YHWH himself is clothed with “light,” “honor and majesty” as the Psalmist states: “Bless the LORD, O my soul! O LORD my God, You are very great: You are clothed with [or “You have put on”] honor and majesty, Who cover Yourself with light as with a garment” (Psalm 104:1, 2).

A last line of evidence is that the word used in the beginning context of Genesis (2:24-25) is not the same intensive word *hw*"r>[, `erwäh used later for “naked ones” who are shamefully and completely bare before the mocking world and the offended justice of God. This second term is always related to a curse, sexual sin, shame, and/or judgment. As applied to Adam and Eve’s original condition, this word for nakedness used in Genesis 2:25 can connote a relative nakedness, indicating a person clothed in an inner garment but lacking an outer garment like a cloak (see e.g., Job 22:6; note, Ex 22:26-27; Dt 24:13; Ps 104:2; Isa. 3:6-7) or a robe (e.g., Job 29:14: “I put on righteousness, and it clothed me; My justice was like a robe and a turban”).

Redemption: Permanent Honor-Status Reversal

Covenantal, biblical theologians emphasize the past glory and the future glory to come in Christ, the Second Adam. Their conclusions are based partly on exegesis and partly on sound deduction using the Reformation’s *bona consequentia* principle. They accurately deduce that before and after the Fall of Adam, the legal covenant’s requirements remain the same (Job 31:33; Hos 6:7; Rom 7:1; Gal 4:1-8). In other words, before the Fall, Adam was placed in a indeterminate period of testing to see if he would listen, trust and follow all of his King’s instruction. The text gives us no hint on how long it would have been. Furthermore, he was given the life-giving Spirit (Gen 2:7; Job 33:4; Eze 37:14; Rom 8:2), who left after the Fall. At this time, his body became “perishable,” “dishonorable,” and “weak” (1 Cor 15:42-44). We are groaning in this sin-cursed body that is “naked,” “longing to be clothed” with a heavenly body that is clothed with life. The Father, Paul states, has given believers the Spirit as the pledge that this resurrection-clothing will certainly occur. This is “the redemption of the body,” Paul states

in another context, that comes without any more groaning caused by the curse (2 Cor 5:2-5; Rom 8:23-26).

In addition, the Creator unequivocally stated the negative stipulation of the covenant would surely occur. If Adam rejected any aspect of the listen-faith-follow principle, he would die – just as he did – contrary to what the Slanderer claimed (Gen 2:17, 3:3-4). However, if he had passed the probation, the flip-side of the covenant would have been operative – he would have had perfect and incorruptible life with permanent honor and glory. Certainly, this is a deduction but it is logically certain based on what occurred in the example of the Second Adam, who was “born under the law” like the first Adam (Gal 4:4). Second, as well shall see, Paul assumes that the first Adam was glorious but the glory of the completed stage exemplified in the resurrection-body of the Christ would be even more glorious (1 Cor 15:40-45). Logically, then, after passing his probation, the first Adam would have been clothed in a permanent glory-cloak or glory-robe flowing out of an incorruptible body incapable of death, sickness, and sin.

Therefore, the life of the Second Adam provides the anti-type of the first Adam’s probation period and serves as the deductive model for what would have happened with the first man if he had persevered in faith. When Jesus became fully man, the perfect Servant of YHWH, he continued in his life of perfect trust without any rebellion and sin. He even listened to, trusted in, and completely followed his Father up until the death upon a Roman cross. As a consequence, the Father subsequently exalted him with a permanent, undying body and glorified him beyond all others (Php 2:5-11; Eph 1:1-22). Anyone in Christ, Paul writes, will receive a body like unto that of our Lord’s “glorious [resurrection] body” (Php 3:21). Certainly, Christ is a “Spiritized body” (sw/ma pneumatiko,n) (1 Cor 15:44) rather than a glorious “living soul,” possessing the in-breathed Spirit-Breath of God (Gen 2:7) as was Adam. As such, he can make all in him gloriously alive. Daniel predicted God would grant this type of glory-covering for believers in Daniel 12:3: “Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever” (NIV; see Mt 13:43). In fact, John foresees the departed saints being clothed in blood-washed, linen robes evidencing, in this symbolic book, the honorable and glorious “righteousnesses of the holy ones” in and through Christ (literal; see e.g., Rev 7:14, 19:8, 19:14, 22:14; see also Rev 1:5 in the TR; cf. the KJV).

Hence, covenant theologians deduce that if Adam had perfectly passed his probation period, he would have also been clothed with the full administrative glory as the under-shepherd of the Lord and destined to rule with his Lord forever without ever being able to sin (Genesis 1:26-28). When Jesus passed his probation, he inherited perfected glory as the Son of Man (Dan 7:13-14). By analogy, Adam would have inherited the same. Notice the clear honor-status reversal after the Fall. According to Paul, Adam was the image, likeness, and glory of God (while Eve was the image of the first man, sharing his glory) (1 Cor 11:3-8; Gen 1:26, 9:6; Col 3:10; Jas 3:9). As such, Adam was a foreshadowing picture or “type of Him who was to come,” as Paul wrote in Romans 5:14 (NAU). Therefore, as John Chrysostom stated, when Adam and Eve rebelled in the Fall, God divested them of the benevolent grant of his divine glory and honor. This was and is the primary “honor-status reversal” in Scripture as Werner Mischke states. This produces what Paul describes as all humanity “lacking the glory of God” (Rom 3:23 – my translation), following a long line of Rabbinic interpretation according to Ernst Käsemann, Jung Hoon Kim, G. K. Beale and others. William Wilder and Peter Enns, on the other hand disagree, believing this view is erroneous. Wilder thinks that God would have clothed the truly naked couple if they would have waited for their Lord’s timing. I agree with his perspective that the Father wanted the first couple to be clothed with the permanent glory of God. However, as

shown above, it is also best to agree with the consensus of Rabbinic and early Church Fathers about their original state of glory.

Therefore, the view teaching that the first couple were clothed in an impermanent lesser glory before the Fall, seems best. Just as our Lord was the fulness of the Godhead in bodily form, the very visible eikon-image of God on earth, so was Adam in a symbolic and foreshadowing manner. Christ shown out the glory of the “only-begotten Son, himself God,” especially at the Transfiguration as Peter describes (2 Pet 1:16-17; Jn 1:14-18), so did Adam and his wife typologically. Hence as G. K. Beale points out, the Pauline teaching on the contrast between the first and last Adam presupposes an original created bodily glory as well. 1 Corinthians 15:45, Beale points out, is “the preeminent biblical text” showing how the Creator’s design was for Adam to move from a preliminary glory to “an eschatologically escalated existence as the final goal.” In this passage, Beale continues, Paul contrasts the original glory of the pre-Fall Adam in Genesis 2:7 (Adam became a “living soul”) with the glory to come in the resurrection. Hence, even the first couple’s original glorious state “was insufficient for qualification to ‘inherit the kingdom of God’ (1 Cor. 15:50).” Consequently, as Paul did in 2 Corinthians 3, he contrasts a preliminary, lesser with a future greater glory. In fact, Beale continues, “Paul’s argument through 1 Cor. 15:39-53 appears to involve contrast of lesser and great glories.” Last, he points out that in the whole context Paul speaks about degrees of relative glory. “Adam’s prefall body had a degree of glory” that pales into insignificance with the glory of the “resurrected last Adam” – and us in him.

This means, then, that their first body was “soulish” (yuciko,j, psuchikos), a term, however, which does not preclude being dominated by the Spirit [“spiritual”]. On the other hand, the second, resurrection body will be permanently Spiritized. According to Paul, a something physical, contrary to the Platonists of various types, does not preclude being “spiritual.” The second body is thus a “spiritual body” (1 Cor 15:44) even though it is still physical. As Wayne Grudem points out, “‘Spiritual’ . . . never means ‘nonphysical’ but rather “consistent with the character and activity of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 1:11; 7:14; 1 Cor 2:13, 15; 3:1; 14:37; Gal. 6:1; Eph 5:19).” Adam and Eve possessed original creational glory covering their pudenda. It was an out-shining or radiant covering but was not permanent. They probably could extinguish it at will, exposing the underlying nakedness in their marriage bed. It perhaps was like the loin cloth or broad belt used in later Israelite clothing (rWzæa', 'äzûr') but made up of light/glory. Further, I can deduce that God had inseparably connected this glory covering to their original, life-filled and Spirit-indwelled bodies. They were, by deduction, in Christ by the Spirit. Their glory was that of the only-begotten of the Father in and through them. The first couple were full of created, Spirit-provided gifts of true righteousness, wisdom, holiness of truth. These gifts I will summarize as “life” “and “light” because God, who is life and light (Col 3:4; Jn 1:1-4, 9; 1 Jn 1:5, 5:11) made him in his image and likeness.

I conclude again that the difference between the two bodies was not that the Second Adam possessed glory, whereas the first did not. Instead, the issue was and is whether the first man’s soulish body was able to die. It was glorious yet able to die. However, only after the Fall, was the soulish body naked, “devoid of the Spirit” (Jude 19 NASB) and of understanding, as Paul states (1 Cor 2:14).

Impermanent Glory-Covering Lost

Therefore, it is best to see that the first couple possessed only an impermanent, limited glory-covering at the beginning. They were holy, righteous, and possessed the direct personal knowledge of God, but were also untested, immature, and able to sin – just as a new believer now is in Christ. Interestingly enough, the Preacher equates actual wisdom from above with an “enlightened face” (Eccl 8:1, see 2:13). Solomon connects the “tree of life” with divine wisdom and righteousness (Prv 3:18, 11:30). Later, Paul closely connects light to righteousness and wisdom/understanding in Ephesians 5:7-17. Ironically, then, the Serpent promised light and enlightened eyes, but their eyes were “opened” only to darkness, shame, and death. They now had to figure out good and evil for themselves using what God calls “folly,” instead of relying on the all-wise and glorious Light of God. Seeking the “wisdom” the Serpent promised, they became fools and their foolish hearts were darkened (Gen 3:5-6; Rom 1:21-23). The Wicked One veiled their hearts in darkness (2 Cor 4:4). The couple had exchanged their glory for an idol – another god, that is “the lie,” as Paul calls them (Rom 1:25, literal). The most blessed God is the glory of humanity and it is for his glory that God had created Adam’s children (Is 43:12). It is perhaps possible then that the Targum Jonathan possibly discovered a true insight in the play on words between Genesis 2:25 and 3:1. The couple were prudent-wise and glorious – though their nakedness together in their marital union was righteous – while Satan was crafty in a twisted and perverse, dark and deceptive manner.

Consequently, after they sinned, God sought them as they ran away in fear because of their nakedness and shame. The slandering Accuser probably taunted them for their nakedness, prompting the Lord’s question: “Who” – not what – “told you that you both were naked?” (Gen 3:1; see Jn 8:44; Rev 12:9). They felt the intense shame, guilt, and fear of their abject and seemingly irreversible nakedness before God, Satan, and all other intelligent beings because they failed their test of faith (see e.g., Rom 5:3-5; Jas 1:2-5; 1 Pet 1:6-7). That nakedness symbolized what the Lord had promised, “you both will surely die.” Their first response was to hide and cover themselves and their glory-less shame with clothing of their own making. Their next response was to blame one another. Adam, blamed the woman God gave, and Eve blamed the serpent. However, neither wanted to take full repentant responsibility at first. Because the first couple “knew” – experienced that they no longer had a glory-covering, they experienced the reality of their nakedness before a watching world. “The eyes . . . were opened,” in the context of Genesis 3, then, is ironic and brought a curse instead of the Serpent’s promised blessing (Gen 3:5, 7). Their new-found enlightened wisdom was an autonomous wisdom (seen in Ecclesiastes as wisdom “under the sun.”), which in this case, again ironically, was a “wisdom” that was and is actually spiritual blindness and folly (1 Cor 3:18-20). With their newly enlightened, self-wise eyes, they sought to re-cloth themselves with the works of their own newly gained self-defined righteousness.

Instead of a sense of peace and righteousness, they had shame, guilt and fear. “I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid myself,” Adam explained in answer to the Lord’s question about his nakedness (Gen 3:10; see Rom 5:1-3). The couple’s created conscience, no longer indwelt with the Spirit (see Rom 9:1), now shamed, accused and condemned them, locking them in the bondage of fear (Heb 2:14-15; Rom 8:15, 2:14-15). God-created conscience still provides every human with the sense of justice (accusation vs. justification) and propriety (honor and shame) before the face of God as Romans 1 and 2 demonstrate. Adam and Eve taunted by the Accuser and by conscience had sought to escape from God’s presence and cover up themselves.

They invented coverings that tried to blot from view their reproductive parts, which would not now, they instinctively realized, reproduce life, light, righteousness and wisdom. Instead, they would bring forth offspring bound by shame, guilt and death, darkness, rebellion and folly (Rom 5:12-20).

As a consequence of their misplaced faith in Satan's word, the man and woman turned from trusting their glorious God and his Word to trusting themselves and Satan, becoming Satan's chattel as a trafficked slave-son (Jn 8:44; Eph 2:1-2; Col 1:13) instead of being God's servant-son (Lk 3:38; by implication Php 2:7-8). Instead of reigning in life with God's radiant glory, wisdom, and life, they were naked slaves of death (Rom 5:17; Heb 2:14) with Satan as their god (Jn 8:44; 2 Cor 4:4). Desiring their own independent glory and wisdom (Gen 3:6; Rom 1:22-23), they became fools and exchanged the glory-covering of God for folly, nakedness, and a comprehensive curse upon all nature (Gen 3:14-19; Rom 1:20-23, 8:18-23). They lost his glory (Rom 3:23) and his wisdom (Dan 12:3; Rom 1:21-23). Our first father and mother worshipped the creature instead of the Creator, who alone is to be glorified and praised forever (Rom 1:21, 25). Instead of shining like lights in the world forever (Mt 5:14-16; Php 2:14-15; Dan 12:3), they became the epitome of darkness, nakedness, and sin (Eph 5:8; Acts 26:18; Col 1:12-13; 1 Thes 5:4,7).

Adam communicates his fallen and marred image, his nakedness and shame (Job 1:21, 31:33; 2 Cor 5:2-3), and his earned death unto all his seed (descendants) (Rom 5:12, 17). Seth was born in the image and likeness of Adam, possessing his naked shame, instead of his rightful Father's glory. He was only meditatively through Adam the (now marred and broken) image of God (Gen 5:3). Note also the legacy of death and shame Adam brought to the race in that same chapter of Genesis (Gen 5:5, 8, 17, 20, etc.).

Nakedness Before and After the Fall Equals Shame Outside of Marriage

After the Fall, Adam and his found himself themselves in abject, total dishonor and nakedness, which uniformly throughout Scripture indicates "shame." Therefore, "uncovering the nakedness of" a person, apart from marriage, is from then on a biblical idiom that always involves a sexual sin from which Christ lived, died, and rose again to deliver us (Lev 18:6ff; 20:11, 17ff; see 1 Cor 7:1 NKJV). Clearly, a person "seeing/looking upon ... nakedness" (Gen 9:22-23) throughout Scripture is a Hebrew euphemism for sexual relations with (see e.g., Is 57:8). This probably explains the culturally strange story about Noah's nakedness and the judgment God brings because of Ham and Canaan's reaction to it versus Shem and Japheth's reaction (Gen 9:20-29). Hence, when "Shem and Japheth took a garment and laid it upon both their shoulders and walked backward and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces were turned away, so that they did not see their father's nakedness" (Gen 9:23) portrayed an attitude of great respect and kindness for their father. After the Fall, when humans violate nakedness, it causes further deep shame and hurt for an individual as many stories indicate such as the defilement of the seduced Dinah (Gen 34; see ESV) and the rape of Tamar (2 Sam 13). Two other key passages in Scripture illustrate the horror of violation of nakedness. The first is that of the slave-wife's death by abuse in Judges 19 and the case law of Deuteronomy 22:25-26, which equates the penalty for the horror of rape with that for murder.

Consequently, after the Fall, Scripture always sees humanity as absolutely without power, and as shame-filled enemies of their gracious yet just King (Rom 5:6-10, 8:7). In our rebellion and shame, we are all like ones defiled, whose nakedness is exposed before God, the angelic world, and mankind. This is what Yahweh correctly accused Israel of doing with false gods (Eze 16, 28). Furthermore, the Bible uniformly portrays humans as those who always try to hide their

profound shame with “dead works” (Heb 6:1, 9:14 NAU). Isaiah is forthright in his denunciation of any human attempt at self-covering and self-healing of our absolute shame and nakedness before God: “Their webs will not become clothing, Nor will they cover themselves with their works; Their works are works of iniquity” (Is 59:6 NASB). In sins against a person’s nakedness, this principle applies to both the victim and victimizer, neither can cover their naked shame. To demonstrate the uselessness of our self-covering, Yahweh additionally curses his adulterous – yet still beloved -- wife with an exposure of her shame before the watching world (see e.g., Jer 13:22-17). This again applies both the victimizer and the one who still tries to cover shame with his or her own covering. Nahum speaks against the victimizer Assyria (Nah 3:4-7). Hosea speaks against the defiled people of Israel, who were unfaithful to YHWH and pretended to be clothed in honor (Hos 2:1-5).

Nakedness, especially after the Fall of Adam, is thus a symbol of two fundamental realities. First it is a symbol of shame for being unclothed with divinely given, radiant clothing before the holy and light-covered God. Second, nakedness outside of marriage is a symbol of guilt for violating God’s inherent justice (Rom 5:1-3; 1 Tim 6:16). Our Lord’s Parable of the Wedding Garments speaks directly to this issue (Mt 22:1-14). The Jews spurned the gracious offer of the King to come to the wedding feast for his son. The King in his justice burnt their city and then sent his servants out into the streets and highways – by implication, into the whole earth – to invite all to enter the banquet hall to be (re)clothed with suitable wedding clothes for his presence.

Nakedness and Glory-Clothing in the Restoration Symbolic Restoration in the Garden after the Fall

This powerful human emotion of shame produced in humanity after Adam’s Fall a deep longing for the lost glory and honor. They longing for honor to be restored but refuse the relationship and life found only in their rightful Father. Because the Holy Spirit departed from humanity, that longing is now always suppressed and rejected. Humanity uniformly seeks that glory in any other god (or king) besides the one true God (Rom 1:18, 21, 23; see Rom 3:11).

After Adam bit into the forbidden fruit, Lord came to the Garden, called for his fallen son and daughter, and gifted them with grace and honor for the first time in the sense of de-merited kindness. He graced them with a symbolic glory-covering for their nakedness. God made tunics (tAnõt.K’, Kotnôt) of skin or hide [rA[à,`ôr] to clothe them, made, by implication, from slain animals. He removed their self-covering of fig leaves, which was a picture of self-clothing, self-glorying, and self-righteousness (Gen 3:21). He replaced these leaves with a tunic that was a total covering of their torsos. Moses states that God gave them “tunics of skin” (rA[tnOt.K’). A Hebrew tunic typically covered the body from the neck down. Several early Rabbinic commentators saw a play on words here. “Skin” is rA[, `ôr but light is rAa, `ôr. The two terms have only one letter difference and were close homonyms. The Rabbis took this to mean that they were clothed originally in tunics of light and then YHWH clothed them in skins to replace their lost glory, and I might add, to foreshadow the glory-covering of the coming Victor (Gen 3:15). He rejected their excuses, mutual blame-games, and self-manufactured garments and instead provided them with status-reversing honor.

Interestingly, God’s act of slaying innocent animals for Adam and Eve’s covering symbolizes the coming glory-covering of that the Second Adam will give Adam’s kind. This first covering, hence, was only a temporary, symbolic glory-covering. The shame, fear, running away, and the nakedness itself were symptomatic of a broken covenant relationship (Hos 6:7). The sacrificed animal skins given to the first couple were symbolic of a new fact in the

relationship between God and mankind. To approach the Creator, men and women must come by faith through a blood sacrifice (Heb 9, 11). This is indeed how Abel, Noah, and Abraham later approached their holy God. Certainly, it seems, the original couple needed to receive this gracious covering by returning to God, again trusting his word and taking his provision for their naked shame (Gen 3:21). From the beginning, the shamed and unrighteous person is only saved, justified, honored and then must live by the gift of faith in his new-found honor (Rom 10:8-11 ESV). Paul illustrates this by using Habakkuk 2:4 as a key proof text (see, Rom 1:17; Gal 3:11; Heb 10:38). Certainly, this one act of shame-honor reversal and guilt-justification exchange is a paradigm for the rest of history and introduces the creation, fall, and redemption theme in Scripture. This preliminary covering of a sacrificed animal (Gen 3:21) also introduced the first picture of the ultimate glory-covering of the coming Victor (Gen 3:15). God answered their need by sending the Victor to destroy the oppressive lord who conquered them and holds them in fear and spiritual nakedness (see e.g., Acts 10:38; Jn 12:31; Col 2:12-15; 1 Jn 3:8). Christ, however, destroyed in principle all fear, shame and guilt. As redeeming Victor, he now has brought humanity peace and acceptance in the place of guilt and fear (Rom 5:1), glory in place of shame (Rom 5:2), and cleansing in place of defilement (1 Cor 6:11).

This animal covering is a picture of Christ's glorious mantle of righteousness given through His sacrificial death in our place (see Is 61:10; see also Rev 7:9, 13, 19:8 [ta. dikaiw, mata tw/n a`gi,wn, righteousnesses of the holy people]). Ultimately this leads to a new resurrection body that is no longer naked but clothed (2 Cor 5:1-10) with glory/light (1 Cor 15:42-43). Hence, the fallen fleshly body possesses "dishonor" in that it is subject to corruption, is weak, without glory, and "natural"—soulish [yuciko,j]). The new, resurrected body possesses "glory" like Christ's and is dominated by the Spirit [pneumatiko,n] (cf. also Php 3:21: "body of his glory."). The clothing of light and whiteness is the "righteousness of the saints" that is the mantle of the righteousness of Christ (Rev 1:5 [AV], 7:14; 19:8). Since the resurrection is the permanent restoration of all that was lost physically and spiritually by Adam, by deduction the original physical body was glorious, clothed in light correlating with what David says about the original glory and honor of Adam (Ps 8:6). Therefore, since the Spirit is the Spirit of glory and honor, Adam's rebellion caused the Spirit to leave taking with him his acceptance, glory and light. When the light was extinguished, Adam and Eve received an ironic "enlightening of eyes." They now saw that they were permanently naked.

Jackson Wu definitively demonstrates that justification in Scripture is inextricably intertwined with the themes of honor/glory status reversal. The Father puts his Son into extreme dishonor to pay both humanity's "honor debt" and the "sin debt." Humans have neither perfectly glorified him with listening, trusting, and following his tôranic wisdom and surely are incapable of paying the debt of death without eternal fire. "In Romans, Paul uses honor-shame language to explain justification" [see Rom 1:10-11, 9:33, 5:2, 5] . . . In Rom [sic] 3:24-26, justification solves the glory problem of 3:23." The same applies to Jesus' teaching (see Jn 17:22, 7:18). Glory/honor reverses the status of "outcast" and "alien," whereas as justification solves the problem of the shame of condemnation and accusation (Rom 8:1, 33-34) but both are interconnected. Only when both occur do we no longer have any fear of losing the love of the Father forever (Rom 8:32, 34-38). Glory, righteousness, and boldness reverse shame, guilt, and fear first symbolically then in reality in union with Christ.

Permanent Restoration of the Glory-Covering in the Second Adam

Everyone except the “one new man” (Eph 2:15), the Second Adam, enter the world in shame, death, and nakedness. Jesus’ nakedness, then was a voluntary veiling of his glory but not merited (Rom 8:3). Therefore, God’s new covenant of grace restores the glorious image of God to his children in Christ, the Victor, the Second Adam (Col 1:15; 2 Cor 4:4; Rom 8:29). He guarantees through his Spirit the free gift of glory. Isaiah describes this new glory-covering of God: “I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, My soul shall be joyful in my God; For He has clothed me [i.e., my nakedness and shame] with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness” (Is 61:10). Consequently, from that point on, all the redeemed have longed to replace their physical nakedness with a clothed resurrection body, that is with a shining new glory-covering given by the Spirit and coming out of the heavenly realm at the last day (2 Cor 4:16-5:7; 1 Cor 15:35-49). This glorious body comes only in union with the second glorious man, the very image of the glorious and invisible God (Col 1:12-15, 27; Rom 5:2-5). He came to earth to re-indwell us with his honor-granting presence by his Spirit.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the text of Genesis 2:25 does not definitively answer the question of whether Adam and Eve possessed a glory-covering. In my opinion, however, the context of being created in the Creator’s image along with David’s commentary in Psalm 8 does. Therefore, Genesis 2:25 merely states a foundational marriage principle, complementing verse 24. Adam and Eve experienced nakedness in their marriage without shame. Therefore, I conclude that God created Adam and Eve, gifting them with a glory-covering showing their right to administer his creation: He “ascribed them [evstefa,nwsaj auvto,n] with glory and honor” (Ps 8:5-6 LXX; Heb 2:7-8; cf. Ps 82:6).

Applications of Honor-Shame Reversal to Contemporary Cultures

After the Fall, God symbolized the need for legal satisfaction and honor-status reversal through promising his perfectly obedient Son, born of a woman (Gen 3:15; Gal 4:4). He covered Adam and Eve’s fallen nakedness by shedding the blood of the first animals. To this day, their nakedness and our nakedness symbolize the fallen state of humanity, the shame of defilement which rebellion brought and still brings, and the need of compassion and covering (Job 1:21; Mt 25:36). In fact, a baby born naked is a tangible sign in every culture of the reality of original sin, of Adam’s shame, and of sin being imputed to his posterity. Because of Adam’s sin, every child enters the world naked shamed, spiritually dark, dead in the guilt of transgressions and sins, and under the fearful hegemony of the wicked one (Eph 2:1-3; Heb 2:14-15). Certainly, God did not accept their own attempt at covering themselves with leaves. Abel – and all the righteous following him (see Gen 4:4, 26, 8:20-21) – correctly deduced that every person must call upon the Lord Yahweh only after first approaching him through the blood sacrifice of an innocent, clean animal. Only the Creator can truly cover them with the glorious tunic of an slain, innocent one. By implication, then, Cain could have also given an acceptable sacrifice of his fruits, leaves, and herbs if he had first come in the covering blood just as Abel did in faith (Heb 11:4).

Following a key New Testament motif, the historic Western Church has seen the first couple’s covering as symbolic especially of the need for a vicarious, penal substitution to satisfy

God's offended justice. However, the Western Church has neglected the equally biblical motif of covering of shame and defilement, and the conquering of fear through the Victor to come. At first, God demonstrated this shame covering in picture form. Only at the coming of Jesus, did the Creator reveal the fulfillment form of the complete honor-status restoration. It came and still comes through being clothed with Christ alone (see e.g., Rom 13:14). This theme is extremely important for the majority world. The apostle Paul summarizes: "Let us put on the armor of light . . . the Lord Jesus Christ. (Ro. 13:13-14).

Therefore, the Fall necessitates the primary priority of proclaiming the good news as Jesus states in the various forms of the Great Commission. To receive the good news of the commission, every person must experience his or her own blindness, nakedness, utter shame, wretchedness, and guilt before a glorious and honorable King. Only then can we come to Christ to receive the gift of heavenly gold for our poverty, shining-white garments of Christ's honor and righteousness to cover our nakedness, and anointing eye-salve to heal the eyes controlled by terrifying darkness and folly of Satan (Rev 3:17-18). This utter human wretchedness and shame necessitates the inner healing work and empowering of the Holy Spirit as Paul writes in Romans (5:5) and Ephesians (3:14-19):

For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom his whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in [his] love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge – that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God [the Father]. (NIV, my brackets; see Tit 3:5-6)

Paul also speaks about this healing honor-status reversal in Romans 5:2: "Through . . . [Christ] also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God." From the announcement of the Victor in the Protoevangelium (Gen 3:15), all creation has been longing for the two-stage eschatological status reversal in Christ (Rom 8:23-25). Hence Werner Mischke is certainly correct. Within Christ's kingdom "all persons . . . have their honor located completely in Christ their King (Rev 22:4) and boast in the glory of God (Rom 5:2) . . . [who] is the source of every blessing, all honor and glory, every grace (Rom 11:36)."

This Spirit-given shame-honor renewal comes in a two-step process. First comes a resurrection within the inner man through union with the Second Adam when he re-endows believers with the Holy Spirit lost in the Fall (1 Cor 12:13-14). This first resurrection comes when Christ resurrects the inner spirit of a new believer who has surrendered to the Lord as Christ himself states (Jn 5:24-25, 11:25-26; see Rom 6:11, 13; Eph 2:4-9; Col 2:11-13, 3:1-3). Through the experience of the Spirit he "washes, purifies, and declares righteous in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and through the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor 6:11, my translation). The second resurrection is when, again through the power of the Spirit, he transforms our mortal naked and shameful bodies at the last day and replaces them with everlasting glory-shining bodies (see Jn 5:28, 11:24; 1 Cor 15:21-26). Paul summarizes:

So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown a perishable body, it is raised an imperishable body; it is sown in dishonor [shame], it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a [soul-dominated] . . . body, it is raised a [Spiritized] . . . body. If there is a [soul-dominated] body, there is also a [Spiritized] body. (1 Cor 15:42-44 NASB, my translation in brackets)

Furthermore, then, God never designed Adam and his seed to be self-glorifying, autonomous gods, depending on self-generated wisdom for glory and honor. We are not to be “wise in our own eyes” (see e.g., Prv 3:7). All good things always come from the Father of lights (Jas 1:17; 1 Cor 4:7). Adam was always totally dependent upon the indwelling Spirit of life (Rom 8:2) to understand, to seek after, and to do his covenant Lord’s will (Rom 3:9-10). So are the redeemed today. However, only one act of treasonous unbelief caused Adam to lose the presence of the Spirit, become alienated from the light and life of God, and then experience nakedness, darkness and death (Eph 4:17ff). At the Fall, Adam lost the glory-covering of the Spirit and realized that he was abjectly and permanently naked (see e.g., Rom 3:23). Nakedness was shameful then because sin had forfeited the light-covering demonstrating his honor and righteousness in Christ by the Spirit. Nakedness was a symbol that death had entered the world (Rom 5:12). It remains so until the Resurrection.

Nakedness in Various Cultures

It seems clear, then, that Scripture clearly teaches that God created a shame reflex in the heart and conscience of every person because of nakedness. For men, this shame reflex includes their reproductive organs that now communicate death and shameful nakedness to their children. For women, this reflex includes their lower and upper bodies/breasts because they are organs of reproduction which are reserved only for the one-flesh relationship of marriage from the beginning (Gen 2:24-25).. Scripture further teaches that God created them for reproduction, nursing (see e.g., Job 3:12; Lk 11:27), and marital pleasure (see e.g., Prv 5:19; Song 7:7-8).

However, it is important to discover what in Scripture includes shameful nakedness. In addition, a person’s created conscience can be defiled, burned, calloused, wounded, and weakened with respect to this shame reflex (1 Cor 8:7, 10, 12; 1 Tim 4:2; Tit 1:15). This explains, I believe, why there is variation, for example, in the stigma against the public uncovering of breasts throughout the cultures of the earth. Those cultures that have been more Christianized or influenced by a Judeo-Christian ethic such as Islamic cultures are in agreement that such uncovering is shameful. Many other cultures that are openly idolatrous also include this stigma. Interestingly enough, however, the covering of the pudenda is almost universally seen as shameful even if the covering is a bare minimum. The covering that the first couple made for themselves loin-coverings (Hágöröt, hr'Agx]). These seem to have been covers over the pudenda for both at minimum. However, second, the covering God provided was a full-frontal covering, as far as I can discern based on the normal contextual meaning of “tunic” (tAnõt.K', Kotnôt), a total torso covering from the neck to the buttocks. Hence, he removed and replaced their self-covering of fig leaves, correctly translated “loin coverings/cloths” (hr'Agx], Hágöröh) in several important versions (e.g., NAU, ESV, JPS-THK, see NLV). These were in a certain sense a picture of their desire to cover their shame with self-made clothing, and by extension in self-glorifying or boasting and self-righteousness (Gen 3:21). The reason for shame is that the frontal portions of humanity are involved in sexuality before the Fall, so were reserved for the mutual enjoyment of the couple alone without shame (Gen 3:24-25), as we have seen. Breasts were and are reserved exclusively for the marriage relationship and the babies produced by it. Anything else was and remains shameful as several passages of Scripture lucidly explain.

Let your wife be a fountain of blessing for you. Rejoice in the wife of your youth. She is a loving doe, a graceful deer. Let her breasts satisfy you always. May you always be captivated by her love. Why be captivated, my son, with an immoral woman, or embrace the breasts of an

adulterous woman? 21 For the LORD sees clearly what a man does, examining every path he takes. (Prv 5:18-21 NLT; see Sol 4:5, 7:3).

Hence, the greatest humiliation a captor can do for captive women is expose them to a mocking world: “‘I am against you,’ declares the LORD Almighty. ‘I will lift your skirts over your face. I will show the nations your nakedness and the kingdoms your shame’” (Nah 3:5 NIV). Even an uncovered buttocks is shameful: “For the king of Assyria will take away the Egyptians and Ethiopians as prisoners. He will make them walk naked and barefoot, both young and old, their buttocks uncovered, to the shame of Egypt” (Is 20:4; see 2 Sam 10:4; see also Is 47:2). Ezekiel speaks directly to this issue.

“You grew up, . . . ; your breasts were formed and your hair had grown. Yet you were naked and bare [hence in shame]. Then I passed by you and saw you, and behold, you were at the time for love; so I spread My skirt over you and covered your nakedness [shame]. I also . . . entered into a [marriage] covenant with you so that you became Mine,” declares the Lord GOD. . . . “I also clothed you Then your fame [honor] went forth among the nations on account of your beauty, for it was perfect because of My splendor which I bestowed on you,” declares the Lord GOD. (Eze 16:7-14)

Last, a prostitute is one who reveals her upper body outside of marriage, which is seen as extremely shameful in Scripture (see e.g., Eze 23:3, 21).

New Testament Perspectives

With this in view, the NT Scripture complements and summarizes the OT doctrine. Unfortunately, both the OT and NT’s clear teaching on modesty may sound judgmental to some. At this point, I believe, Jesus would say that the good work of modesty must flow out of the good that’s stored up in a person’s heart (Lk 6:45) in the presence of the Spirit and his fruit. Hence, modest behavior that’s pleasing to the Lord comes from a heart that’s yielded to God’s Spirit. Because genuine modesty flows from the heart, it’s possible for a person to wear what the world labels as extremely conservative clothing and still emit an immodest attitude and presence if they have not surrendered to Christ. Extra-biblical rules, Paul writes, “are of no value against fleshly indulgence” (Col 2:23).

The NT builds upon the OT’s doctrine, furthermore, by teaching that women are to dress modestly, discreetly and with proper clothing in two key passages. Paul instructs Timothy to teach believing women “to adorn themselves with proper clothing [covering improper nakedness], modestly and discreetly, . . . by means of good works, as is proper for women making a claim to godliness.” (1Tim 2:9-10). Peter also addresses this issue: “Your adornment must not be merely external . . . ; but let it be the hidden person of the heart. For in this way in former times the holy women also, who hoped in God, used to adorn themselves” (1 Pet 3:3-4a, 5). Notice how these two passages are packed with honor-shame terminology in continuity with the OT ethic, for example, “proper,” “modest,” “discreet,” and “godliness.”

Modesty in Scripture, then, is a sense of propriety, shame and honor in the context of nakedness both in and outside of marriage as Paul also demonstrates elsewhere (Rom 1:18-25, 2:14-16). Because of this added context in Romans 1, Peter and Paul claim that “modesty” is an internal and cross-culturally valid sensitivity, founded upon two things. First, Paul states that it is based upon a proper sense of shame flowing out of the heart created by God. This Paul terms “nature,” which in context clearly means “created nature” (see Rom 1:26; see 1 Cor 11:14). Second, it flows out of God’s in-created sense of justice, right and wrong found in the conscience

of all humans (Rom 1:32, 2:13-15). Certainly, idolatrous culture modifies these two inter-related sensitivities because it twists and perverts “conscience” and “shame” (1 Tim 4:2; Tit 1:15). Hence, this dual sense formed the foundation of Paul’s rejection of shameful sexuality outside of a covenanted marriage because it “dishonors . . . bodies” (Rom 1:24). It also serves as the foundation of Paul’s rejection of same-gender sexuality with “dishonorable passions” and “indecent/unseemly acts” (Rom 1:26-27). It is also the basis for Paul’s rejection of women wearing male hair (“whose head is shaved” [1 Cor 11:5-6]) and males wearing decorated female hair. Behind the shame-honor language was Paul’s proper creational ethic and the tôranic vision of the horror of gender mixing and bending (1 Cor 11:13-14; Lev 20:11-15; Dt 22:5). Paul appeals to creational propriety and honor/glory themes (see also 1 Cor 11:7-12) to answer the ethical dilemma. Hence, it seems, his concerns were not primarily founded on culture, as many claim, though, of course, there is that element included. Latin authors called this inner propriety-sense “natural law.” It seems best, rather, to call it a “creational sense of propriety” based on creational “design norms” to ground it securely within the Bible’s redemptive historical narrative of creation—fall—redemption—consummation (Rom 1:18-25; 2:14-16).

Last, according to the NT, conscience’s sense of propriety and guilt must be “blood washed” (read Heb 9-10 in NIV and NASB) and then indwelt with the Spirit (Rom 9:1-2) so that there is no guilt motivation in it, condemnation and false shame. Only when the blood and washing ministry of Christ and his Spirit existentially come to a person, can he or she have a proper sensitivity to modesty and immodesty (1 Cor 6:11). It is the Holy Spirit, who applies the authority and power of the redeeming blood of Christ. He heals defiled consciences, cleansing them from a twisted shame-and-morality-reflex (Rom 9:1; Heb 9:9, 14; 10:22 NAU; Heb 10:1-2 NIV). The “flesh” and Satan’s accusers twist and corrupt this reflex because both constantly accuse the brothers (Rev 12:7-11; Rom 2:14-15,).

Summary

In summary, transculturally valid modesty principles on nakedness cannot be imposed by evangelical churches, missionaries, or even indigenous leaders. Such principles can only be developed through a careful study of Scripture as the Spirit works through the studied decision of the people of God in a local culture. Anthropologist, Paul Hiebert’s article on “Critical Contextualization” is an excellent resource here. Scripture and not extra-biblical modesty rules, I believe, should become the new norm in missiological strategy. Hence missionaries should not impose rules flowing out of their home cultures as a measure of true modesty. These are actually legalistic and sometimes cruel (Mt 23:25). Only a believing indigenous group that has gone through the critical contextualization process is qualified to draw the line as to what is appropriate or inappropriate dress. Scripture not only establishes its teaching on modesty directly and explicitly through direct prophetic statements of OT and NT prophets and apostles, but also finds its modesty teaching on the creational design norms that are inscribed in human hearts and consciences by the Designer. This is the basis for Paul using shame-honor language in his discussion of cultural decline into hetero- and homosexual shame (Rom 1:18-25).

Scripture also gives no standards except the substantial prohibition on the shame of exposing one’s nakedness” in any form of sexual immorality (Gen 9:22-23) outside of a covenanted, male-female marriage. Nakedness, as a bare minimum, it seems, means exposing the pudenda, breasts, and buttocks, as we have seen. Last, I believe it is much easier to place blame on something tangible that we can see, such as a woman’s clothing or lack of it, rather than on

the lust and sexual impurity that might be lurking in a man's heart, but is completely invisible to the human eye. Jesus was always more concerned with what was in a person's heart than what was on the outside. Certainly, Scripture teaches women to dress modestly and discreetly as we have seen above. It also teaches all to acknowledge that a person's body is (or could become) the temple of the Holy Spirit and does not belong to the person but to God (1 Cor 6:19-20 NKJV), contrary to Western culture. Actually, it doubly belongs to God by creation and re-creation (or redemption). Scripture also unequivocally reminds men that they are to keep their hearts pure by taking thoughts captive to the obedience of Christ (2 Cor 10:5; Mt 5:26-30).

Nakedness of Abuse

A second very relevant application involves sexual abuse. People – especially females but not limited to females – who have been shamed and sexually violated feel excruciating humiliation and rejection. The Scripture is filled with examples such as David's daughter, Tamar, the woman at the well or the woman caught in adultery, Their naked shame had been either been violently or even willingly yet illicitly exposed. The world, the flesh and the enemy heap further shame, guilt and condemnation, declaring the abused to be “defiled,” contaminated and never worthy of anything pure and good. This evil triad tries to make the shamed feel like the lepers in the Bible – untouchable, outcast, despised, and rejected (see 1 Cor 4:8-14). But Christ has come to set all his children free (those whom the Son sets free are truly free – Jn 8:36) and to give us beauty for ashes (Is 61:3). Just as he healed the lepers and made them clean in the eyes of society, forgave the sins of the immoral, and told them to go and sin no more, he heals each from sin's power to condemn and shame.

Each person who is now clothed with Christ was, at one time, naked and ashamed before him and before people. It is important to remember that these truths apply to all people, not just the abused. Everyone was once without Christ – the King of the Peoples, without honor or hope. This includes even those with great worldly honor, power and wealth (Eph 2:11-13). The Lord is open in his rebuke to such as these: “You say, ‘I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.’ But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked” (Rev 3:17).

Every person makes the choice of faith to walk in the reality of the new identity of people clothed with Christ (Rom 13:14). Because one puts on Christ, he or she is precious and honored in his sight (Is 43:4), not because of any clothes one makes (Tit 3:5-6). Therefore, all of us can boldly approach his throne and receive mercy along with the other promises – in Christ (Heb 10:19-23). Every Christ follower can –

- Reject the shame of culture and individuals.
- Reject the shame of the accuser.
- Renounce the shame of a once condemning conscience that is now blood-cleansed and freed of all shame and accusation (Heb 9-10)
- Rejoice in the purity, holiness, and the healing glory-covering of Christ.
- Walk in freedom, power, and peace of Christ over fear.
- Share one's story to help others find freedom and honor in Christ.

Just like the redeemed women we have discussed, and many others in the Gospel accounts such as the Gadarene demoniac, each person has the Spirit's ability to make the Gospel the core of one's story to proclaim to the whole world of shame-honor reversal in Christ.

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. (1 Pet 2:9-10)

Christ took His people's shame and has now given them his glory. This process will be complete at the resurrection when he grants his children glorious bodies like unto his resurrection body. They shall shine like the stars of heaven. To him alone be praise and glory and honor and power and dominion.