

The Covering

This subject is Huge! I mean, Immense! There is no way anyone could exhaust it! All I am going to endeavor to do is to wake up your curiosity and get your imagination burrowing deep into this fertile ground to find the powerful minerals and nutrients that will give you a happy productive life enabling you to be an incredible blessing to others and in turn bring a blessing upon yourself.

You have probably already noticed that everything that God has created has a covering but probably, like me, have never given it much thought. I would like to begin to give it some serious thought. When we look at the things in nature that God has created we see that He has given every one of them a covering. Animals have skin with fur growing on it for a covering. Fish have skin and scales for a covering, Birds have skin and feathers for a covering. Insects have their covering as well. Trees have bark and leaves for a covering. Bacteria have a covering The earth has atmosphere and a magnetic field to protect it from the harmful radiation of the sun. God gave everything a covering.

So, why did God give everything that He made on this earth a covering? You are probably saying, "That's obvious, to protect them." You're correct in your observation. But there is so much more than what first meets the eye when we begin to look at this covering and what happens when we remove it, because of the deep symbolism we find here.

What happens if we strip the bark off a tree? The first thing that begins to happen is it begins to "bleed" to death. It is also no longer protected from insects and disease and in a short time it will be dead. What happens to an animal if we remove its skin? It will very quickly dehydrate due to the loss of body fluids. Disease and insects will attack it and in a short time it will die. Nothing survives for any length of time when its covering is removed.

This is also true in the spiritual realm. When God created Adam and Eve He gave them a covering of light (righteousness). When they sinned they lost this covering of light and immediately realized they were in trouble. So they tried to cover themselves with leaves to cover their unrighteousness which was totally ineffective. God gave them the skins of an animal (lamb) to cover them which represented the righteousness of Christ who, like the lamb, would sacrifice His life so He could cover them/us with His righteousness. Every living organism will become vulnerable and die without the covering that God has given it. We are also vulnerable and will die without the righteousness of Christ covering us.

When sin came into the world, man began to remove the coverings from everything. He removed the skins from animals to use as a covering for his body as well as coverings for places to live. He removed the bark from trees and used it for many things. One of the things that man began to do after he sinned was to till the ground. Tilling the ground has been done for so long that it has become a totally acceptable practice. In fact, most would say that there is no other way to garden. Yet when we look at its results we can see that it has totally devastated the planet everywhere it has been practiced. What are we doing when we till the soil? We are removing its covering and burying it in the ground. In so doing we begin a process that ends up killing the soil that we want to use.

The first thing that happens when we till the soil is we bury the living organic matter (covering) in the dirt. In order for it to decompose it needs oxygen and nitrogen. The oxygen in the ground is taken out to decompose the plant matter while binding the nitrogen so the plants that we plant can't utilize it. The naked soil also dries out very quickly without its natural covering, which then requires watering, causing the existing nutrients to leach further down into the soil, making them inaccessible to the plant. The water also causes erosion, washing away essential nutrients and soil. When the sun shines and the wind blows and it dries the exposed soil very quickly. The wind then blows it away.

When weed seeds blow onto the exposed soil they sprout very quickly since the soil is getting regular watering so as to keep it from drying out. The soil also quickly becomes compacted due to all the direct watering and lack of organisms such as worms that keep the soil cultivated. The organisms have left or died because there is no longer any dead organic covering on which to feed as well as diminished oxygen in the soil. So in order to make the soil looser, most would dig in mulch which locks up even more nutrients. The cycle is endless and devastating. Nothing we do seems to improve it, even fertilizing ends up depleting the soil further.

One individual became so concerned with what he saw happening in his garden that he began to seriously ask God if there wasn't a better way. God led him to go into the woods where man hadn't disturbed the earth by tilling and observe what he saw going on there. He began to dig down into the "covering" and discovered that even though there hadn't been any rain for quite some time that it was very moist and there was an abundance of life and deep rich soil there. He said, "OK God, I get it. You created the earth so it would be self-sustaining, so you wouldn't have to show up to work it! I need to replace the covering on the soil and let your creation take care of itself." See Matthew 11:28-30. "If what we are doing is hard work we are probably not doing the right thing." See Matthew 6:24-34.

That is exactly what he did. He spread a covering of mulch - wood chips, (ground up branches, twigs and leaves) all over his garden. The ground that had been hard and dry became moist and soft. The mulch protects the soil from compacting when walked on. It will not get muddy when wet or blow away. He found that he only needed to water it under the driest of conditions, and even then very little. Wood chips absorb and hold an astonishing amount of water. Even in a heavy rain the mulch acts as a buffer absorbing the rain preventing erosion. It also protects the soil from the sun and wind. The mulch slowly decompose feeding the soil a constant variety of nutrients for the plants. The organisms in the covering help decompose the mulch and work the nutrients into the soil removing the need to cultivate at all. He discovered that all he needed to do in the spring was dig through the mulch, place the seeds on top of the soil, and then cover them with mulch. Done! (When it was a little dry he would water a bit until the seedlings came up.) All he found that was left for him to do was to pull the odd weed and wait for the abundant harvest. Nature did the rest.

What about weeds? Well, if you are not watering, then the surface of the mulch is dry. When weed seeds blow onto your garden there isn't sufficient moisture for them to sprout. If a few fall down to the damp soil and sprout they are easy to pull up since the soil is so moist and soft.

Benefits:

Never have to till the soil again. Nature will do it for you.

Never have to fertilize the soil again. Nature will do it for you in a perfectly balanced way.

Never have to worry about soil pH. Nature will do it for you in a perfectly balanced way.

Only have to water under extreme dry conditions. Nature will store the water and deliver it as needed.

Never have to worry about weeding again. The few that do come up will not be hard to deal with.

Always have lush, healthy, flavorful, food, filled with vitamins and minerals. Nature will give the plants everything they need when they need it.

Never worry about pests. Pests tend not to bother healthy plants. The mulch encourages beneficial insects which drive away or kill the harmful ones.

Spiritual parallels:

God's blessings (rain) simply run off of us if we don't have His covering. They won't benefit and may become a curse.

If we're not covered (righteousness of Christ) when Jesus returns, the Son (Sun) will burn us and we will die.

If we have His covering (righteousness of Christ), sin (weed seeds) will find nowhere to grow. Being strong in Him with a soft heart (soft, moist soil), the sin that tries to take root will be easy to root out.

If we don't have His covering we become hardened and it becomes impossible for anything good to come out of us.

If we have His covering the fruits of the Spirit in our lives will be lush, sweet, beautiful and plentiful.

If producing good fruits is hard or seems impossible, it is because we are doing something wrong.

If we have His covering, His burden is light, His yoke is easy. His good works naturally thrive in us.

As with the gospel, our work is to plant the seed and then wait for the harvest. God will take care of the rest.

There are so many spiritual parallels between the coverings that God has made for the things He's created and the covering of Christ's robe of righteousness that He wants to give us. It protects us against Satan and his temptations, and it infuses us with power and strength to live. This is where you can begin to use your fertile imagination to come up with even more parallels!

Visit <http://backtoedenfilm.com/> for more information on this kind of gardening and <http://www.thoughtsonchristianliving.org/> to learn more about how to have Christ's righteousness covering you.