

# ***The Combination Lock of Salvation (3)***

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## **Fragrance**

*"David put on lotions."* The Hebrew word that is used is the same as "anoint", a key word for today. Anointing means not only efficiency and authority, but also beauty. In David's world no man was fit for company until he had poured oils on his head and massaged unguents into the skin, making his face shine. Cosmetics were not just for women; in fact, they were an important feature of life. Jesus reminded his host that he had failed to provide oils for his head (Luke 7:46). David's original anointing was as king. Without oil he was unkindly, but now, forgiven and restored, he put lotion on his face to shine in renewed majesty.

I proclaim full salvation to include anointing. It is not an optional extra, a luxury, but the mark of reality as opposed to religious theory. John told believers that they bore the royal anointing: "*You have an anointing from the Holy One,*" and "*the anointing you have received from him remains in you*" (1 John 2:20,27). Different kinds of anointing oil contained various ingredients. Oils used in temple anointing had sacred ingredients that were not intended for common use so that a king, priest, or high priest would be recognized by his fragrance.

Our ideal is the unmistakable presence of the Holy Spirit. No ugliness, no dowdiness can be attributed to God. Color not chaos is identified with God - his glory is not mud even though he makes man from mud. The skies are a canvas across which God paints all his dawns and sunsets with no palette other than the dust swept into the cloud by the wind - beauty replacing ashes. He fills emptiness and gives shape to the formless. He himself is the fountain of all color, glory and loveliness. "*May the beauty of the Lord our God rest upon us*" (Psalm 90:17).

Holy purity, the grace of the Spirit's anointing, is spiritual "perfume" making the good lovely and the godly attractive. Jesus was delightful to know: "*All were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips*" (Luke 4:22). Are we?

## Fashion

"David changed his clothes." Down **the ages** fashion has always decreed the livery of poverty for the poor and penalties if they dressed as the rich. In Israel the High Priest's garments were more than distinguished, they were for God alone to see. Jacob's son Joseph was given a coat of many colors as a sign of his father's favor. God had chosen David to be king with the privilege of royal attire. Falling into a cheap and common sin, he was humiliated, on the ground in unwashed clothing, like any beggar. To regain his anointed and kingly status he changed his clothes, putting on regal attire.

That takes us straight to Colossians. The children of God should be recognizable, putting off "*anger, rage, malice, slander and filthy language.*" Instead, we are told, "*Clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Over all these virtues put on love*" (Colossians 3:8,12,14). Like the Colossians, the Ephesians were also told to "*put on the new self*" (Ephesians 4:24).

A converted man "*clothes himself with Christ*" (Galatians 3:27) and does the world a great favor. Even the world has a secret wish for Christ to come back. He is the one person most people would be glad to meet, but they never will unless they meet him in his people. We follow only one fashion - Christ. We do not invent our own morality and goodness. He is the perfection; the

opportunity to put on his habits, his love, his integrity, and his kindness is the offer made to us when we are invited to "clothe ourselves with Christ."

There are changes that we can make. We talk of people "putting on" airs and graces when they speak in a false, supposedly elegant way. That is not what we are talking about: Christ is our role model. We cannot put on Christ and do it falsely. It is a betrayal of an unsuspecting world to put on a cloak of godliness and remain proud and selfish in heart.

Jesus was not a showman; he did not exercise authority and power in an arrogant display of self-love. A mark of all his miracles was his quiet, unpretentious manner. He was astonishing. He could say, "*I am gentle and humble in heart*"

(Matthew 11:29) without boasting because he really was like that. He adopted no authoritative stance to cast out demons or heal the sick; "*he drove out the spirits with a word*" (Matthew 8:16). To do his works we need his manner; we need to "put on" the gentleness and humility of our Savior and Lord. This is not just about fashion. What kind of clothing people find attractive can vary from one generation to the next. The Lord has something far better to offer: "*Your beauty should be that of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight*" (1 Peter 3:4).

## Direction

David *"went into the house of the Lord and worshipped."* David knew where to go. Without God, life staggers around in a pathless wilderness. We may try to make our own way, laying down a path, but without a goal. The effect of godlessness is expressed in the poetry of Psalm 107:4-7: *"Some wandered in desert wastelands, finding no way to a city where they could settle. They were hungry and thirsty and their lives ebbed away. Then they cried out to the Lord in their trouble and he delivered them from their distress. He led them by a straight way to a city where they could settle."* David was a genius but without the saving grace of God, life collapses for lack of purpose. It gets nowhere because the godless have nowhere they can think of going.

The lowliest worshipper has permanent significance. Who else has? Worship is the greatest act of the human spirit, the unique instinct unlike any other form of life. With worship we operate at the full human level and become more than human, truly the children of God.

David getting up from the ground is a picture of our entire evangelistic purpose. We are not recruiting church members, not signing up adherents. We are saving souls, lifting the multitudes who are weighed down by their past, living in fear and self-condemnation. We bring them in for the anointing of God, and invite them to sit at Jesus' feet *"dressed and in their right mind."* All the gold

in the Rand and the rubies in Burma are nothing compared to the value of one soul. We are going out side by side with the great Shepherd, seeking that which was lost.