



Let us enter into contemplation of the fabric of the Bible with our lives and mission. I invite you to take a journey through the diverse threads and fabrics of the Bible.

AMBIENCE: (Fabrics, balls of wool of many colors, Bible, candles)



The colors and fabrics of biblical times

In biblical stories we find many details about the clothes people wore centuries ago: patterns, colors, fabrics... the Bible is not a work dedicated to fashion. But the descriptions provided help the reader to create a mental picture of the events that took place.

Yarns and dyes

The Bible provides many details about materials for making clothes and dyes that were used. There is also no lack of details on the processes of spinning, weaving and sewing. Thanks to all these details recorded in the Bible, we realize that the ancient Hebrews knew how to take advantage of the materials at hand. They were not a society that carried out a shadowy existence, with drab clothes and dull and ugly textiles. On the contrary, they wore clothes that were varied and colorful according to the occasion, the season and the financial capacity of each person.

A single fiber, which could be of linen, wool, goat hair or any other material, was too fragile and short to use. So one had to twist several fibers together to produce thread of the desired thickness and length. The Bible says "The truly capable woman -- who can find her? She is far beyond the price of pearls. ... She sets her hands to the distaff, her fingers grasp the spindle."(Proverbs 31:10, 19). These words describe the process of spinning, for which two simple poles are needed called the distaff and spindle. (*Spindle: instrument used in hand spinning, twisting and winding the thread which is formed in the spinning wheel. Distaff: consists of a cylindrical and elongated piece of wood or iron, tapered at the ends, which is driven with fingers*). The process is repeated until all the fiber on the spinning wheel had turned into a long thread, ready to dye and weave.



The textiles that were sewn into clothes and other items were produced by weaving thread on a loom. The threads placed along the loom are the warp (*yarn set and placed along the loom so the weft can pass through and form a textile*) and those that range across the width of the fabric are the weft. The weft threads are woven alternately over and under the warp.

In biblical times there were two types of looms: the horizontal, which was placed on the ground, and vertical, which stood up. On some vertical looms weights were hung on the bottom of the warp threads. These ancient weights have been found in many parts of Israel. Usually, each family wove their own clothes, but in some cases, entire towns engaged in the textile business. In 1 Chronicles 4:21 it speaks of "the clans of the linen weavers' guild," suggesting that it was a group of workers in that profession.

We reflect, asking:

1. Is it worth reading the Bible today? Why?
2. What lens do we use to read the texts? Are they ours or are they foreign? Are they imposed upon us or do we chose them ourselves according to our needs?
3. Under what conditions do we read the Bible? How would we like to do it?
4. Do we have the opportunity to choose the way, the time and the place to read the scriptures? Why?

AFTER STOPPING, READING, MEDITATING, RUMINATING... AT WHAT CONCLUSION DO WE ARRIVE?

A ball of yarn that frees: women and men weaving life.

Biblical work is one of the most beautiful labors we receive from the Christian tradition. It is a simple yet complex task, in which we need to sharpen our senses to feel, taste, smell, see and hear other women and men, and to perceive the actions of God in history.

Perhaps the poetry of Julia Esquivel can help us discover what is invisible to us, the justice, freedom, peace, harmony, equity, equality that the textiles of the Bible teach us in every stitch.

Typical weaving

*The colors of her threads are firm: blood, sweat,
perseverance, tears,
struggle and hope;
colors that do not fade
over time.*

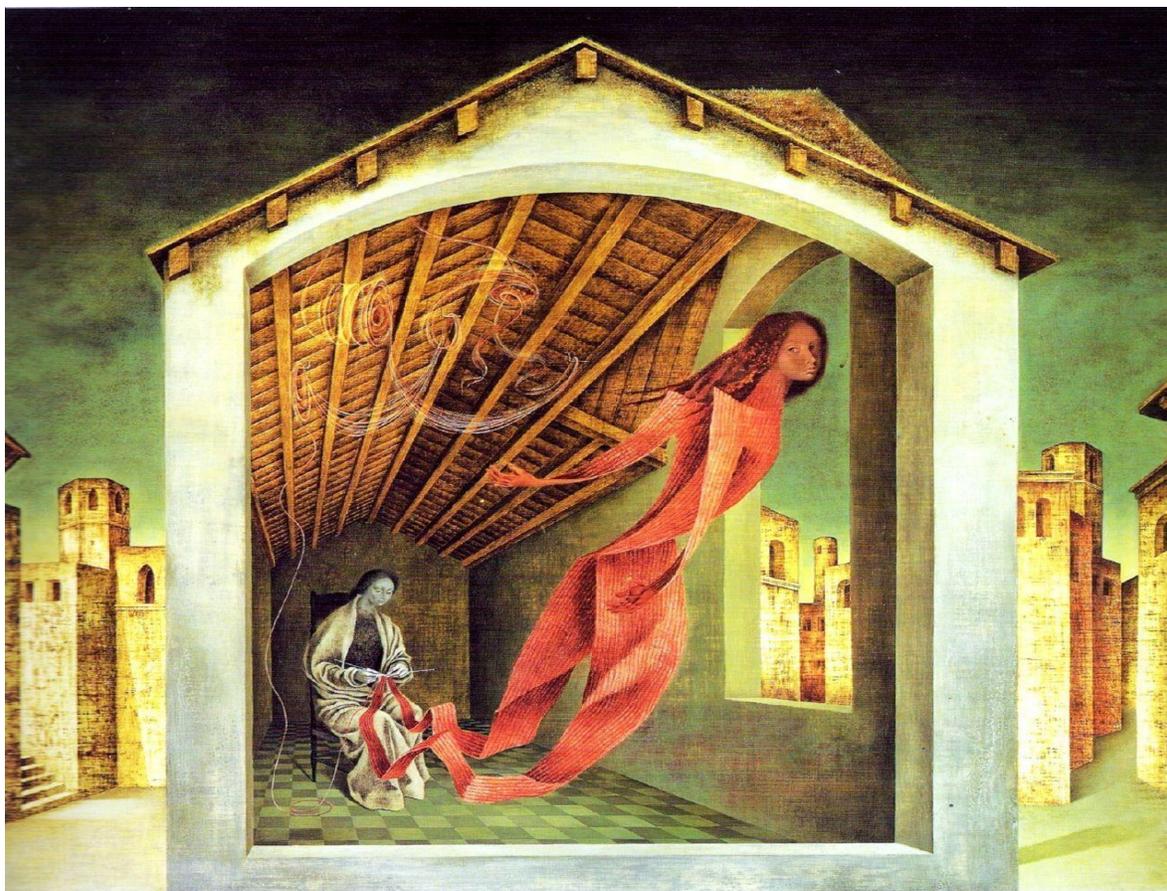
*I've seen every morning how her nimble fingers
choose the threads one by one.
Her loom makes no noise and men
do not pay attention, yet
the design arising from Her Mind hour after hour,
will appear in the threads of many colors*

*The children of the children
of our children, will recognize the seal of
the Old Weaver; maybe then
receives a name,
but as a model, will never again be repeated.*

*I've seen every morning how her nimble fingers
choose the threads one by one.
Her loom makes no noise and men
do not pay attention, yet
the design arising from Her Mind hour after hour,
will appear in the threads of many colors
in figures and symbols that nobody, will ever
be able to remove or undo.*

People rescue, construct, articulate, suspect, interpret, recreate, release, grow, participate, promote, support, rediscover, understand the Scriptures, as they bring them to their lives, to their *own shore*. However, all this is impossible without interacting with those who are on *other shores* with the desire to communicate. A metaphor that helps us to understand the work of biblical rereading is the textile. A fabric of harmony, a fabric that leads you to live the justice of God which is righteousness, mercy, equality, is to walk humbly before God as we learn from the prophet Micah.

Let us pause for a few minutes and carefully observe and examine the work *The Weaver Verona* (1956) from the Spanish artist Remedios Varo Uranga, a refugee in Mexico during the Spanish Civil War. Recommendation: (If done in community, it is good to project the image or have it printed out for each person).



LET US ASK OURSELVES:

1. What characterizes the Weaver of Verona?
2. What makes the Weaver weave with such precisión and creativity?
3. What determines her world? Love, peace, liberty?
4. What is she weaving?
5. How do we interpret her weaving? Why?
6. What might have inspired her to do this weaving? Why?
7. What evocations does this piece provoke in us?
8. As a weaver in the mission, how can I weave with the threads of the Bible, my live and the lives of others?

Men and women weave life, faith and hope in many ways. The ball of yarn of life is multicolored, with different lengths, textures, natures, and with it or with them a textile is being continually produced, to which we always return to continue weaving. There will be times in the life of human beings in which you might want to undo part of the fabric that has been created, perhaps the entire thing. Moments will come when we do not want to link one strand to another, and the work of weaving itself may seem useless to us. However, we can never renounce our vocation as weavers, our essence is in relationships.

PRAYER:

As women and men that weave the threads of our future, we pray:

Jesus, touches our lives with your love that generates life like the light,

To alleviate our concerns

To ease our discomfort

To soften our fears

To smooth away the knots of our anger

To dry the tears from our eyes

To ease the pain of our bodies and our spirits

To reconcile with ourselves, and with all those around us

So that we only seek your way, your truth and your life.

Jesus widens our hearts

By your power, which generates life as the sea

To accept and use our power

To do something that we believe

To be more than what we can be and we are called to be

To inspire us to dream and to advance

To link our passion with daring

Our hope with discipline, perseverance with our love

So we can learn from the difficulties,

Grow in adversity, receive wisdom from defeats,

And know the true freedom of mind and heart.

Jesus, fill us

With your presence, life that sustains like the air,

Open our hearts to praise you

Open our minds to follow you

Open our spirits to give you thanks

Open us to live our lives with authenticity and audacity,

as you lived yours.

CLOSING BLESSING

- **May the Lord bless us and keep us.**

* All: Amen.

- **May the Lord show us His Face, and have mercy on us.**

* All: Amen.

- **May the Lord look kindly upon us, and grant us His Peace and his Favor.**

* All: Amen.

- **May the Lord bless us sisters and brothers, He who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit.**

* All: Amen.

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