

The Veil

The veil of the tabernacle separated the Holy Place of the temple from the Holy of Holies. Yet this curtain is more than a cloth barrier, it is a model of the suffering Messiah and that by His blood access is made into the very presence of the Most High.

THE ROOM DIVIDER

As you enter the tabernacle of God you immediately see three pieces of furniture; the table of shewbread; the lampstand; and the golden altar of incense. Behind the golden altar is a curtain, which worked as a room divider. The construction of this divider was given to Moses in specific detail.

...make a veil woven of blue, purple, and scarlet thread, and fine woven linen. It shall be woven with an artistic design of cherubim. Isaiah 53:10-11

Such a sight must have been beautiful to behold, but the making of this curtain (or veil) holds a prophetic mystery; a picture of the coming messiah and his tragic terrestrial destiny.

THE COLOR OF THE TRINITY

We are given a list of three colors to weave this veil; blue, purple and scarlet. Each of these colors has a symbolic meaning. Blue is the color of the heavens and the heavenly regions. Purple is the color of royalty and kingship. Scarlet is the color of blood, sacrifice and death. Within these three colors we see the three members of the Godhead portrayed; blue for the Holy Spirit that blows like the wind where it wishes;¹ purple for God the Father who sits upon the throne over creation² and scarlet for the Son whose blood was shed for our redemption.³ These three colors are then weaved in and out into one solid union. Just as it is implied in the Hebrew *shema*...

SHAMA	YISRAEL,	YHVH	ELOHIM,	YHVH	ECHAD
Hear	Oh Israel,	Jehovah	is G-d,	Jehovah	is one.

Now most of my Jewish friends will adamantly disagree with me on this, but if you carefully trace each word of the *shema* you will see that the title of God is not the singular *El* but the plural *Elohim*. God, through Moses, is identifying Himself as a plural. But He also states that He is one. But the word *one* is the Hebrew word *Echad*. We can find this same word in regard to the unity of a husband and his wife.

Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become *one* [echad] flesh. Genesis 2:24

¹Ref. John 3:8 & Acts 2:2-4

²Ref. Psalm 11:4 & Isaiah 66:1

³Ref. I John 1:7

The *two becoming one* is a compound unity. They do not morph together into some compromised humanoid. They are a single unit in two parts. The same is described of God in the *shema*. God confirms this through Isaiah where we learn that the Godhead is a single unit made up of three parts.

"Come near to Me [the coming Redeemer], hear this: I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, I was there. And now the Lord *GOD* and His *SPIRIT* have sent *ME*." Isaiah 48:16

So the anointed Messiah was to be part of the tri-unity of God. The blue of His Spirit with the purple of the Godhead and the scarlet of His redemption, are then woven into a compound unity called the veil.

THE GOSPEL MESSENGERS

The woven decoration was to be a design consisting of a mysterious being called a cherub. Most of what can be said about a cherub would be largely speculative. However, this we know; that a cherub is the honor guard of the throne of heaven. It guards the way to the tree of life,⁴ it guards the way to the throne of God⁵ and may have even guarded the way to the empty tomb of the Redeemer.⁶ So we see that the curtain is not used as a barrier at all, but to guard the way to the Holy of Holies. God does not wish to bar anyone from His presence. Instead, He protects the way so that when all has been accomplished for our redemption, access will then be available.

Another strange facet of a cherub is that it has four faces. The face represents the persona of an individual, and here we see four personalities in one being.

As for the likeness of their faces, each had the face of a *man*, each of the four had the face of a *lion* on the right side, each of the four had the face of an *ox* on the left side, and each of the four had the face of an *eagle*.⁷

God created these beings with such a strange facade to point to the coming messiah. Jesus, in the gospel of Matthew, was described as a Hebrew, or the *Lion* of the Tribe of Judah. In Mark, Jesus is seen as a suffering servant or an *ox* if you will. In Luke He is portrayed as a *man* among men. And in John Jesus is revealed as the heavenly Son of the living God, as depicted by the *eagle*.

So, in idiomatic language, we see the gospel message of Christ (the cherubim) keeping the way clear for our access to God. However, the curtain still legally bars passage to all but one, the high priest of the temple. Something is still necessary, even for the high priest; and that is sacrificial blood.

⁴Genesis 3:24

⁵Exodus 25:22

⁶ John 20:12

⁷ Ezekiel 1:10 – Ref. Ezekiel 1:3-10 & Ezekiel 10:15

BEATEN AND STRIPPED LINEN

Linen thread was used to make-up the body of the veil. We sometimes confuse the linen of the Bible with cotton. But cotton was not an available plant in North Africa or Sinai. The local available plant was called *byssus* or flax.⁸

Those who work in fine flax and those who weave fine fabric...
Isaiah 19:9

To manufacture linen, flax was pulled out of the ground by its roots then dried in the sun. The flax were beaten flat and the fibers were separated by stripping the stalks with a sharp comb. This is a picture of what was prophesied to happen to the coming messiah.

For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness; and when we see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him. He is despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. Surely He has borne our grief and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed. Isaiah 53:2-5

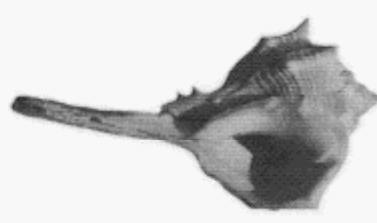
BLUE AND PURPLE FROM A BROKEN BODY

The flax thread is dyed to their designated color then twisted and spun into weaving thread. Two of these dyes were to be blue-violet (*tekhelet* in Hebrew) and purple (*argaman* in Hebrew). As I had mentioned earlier, blue is the color of the Holy Spirit as seen by dwelling invisibly throughout the air and sky; purple being the royal color of the Godhead who reigns in the heavens. Two common attributes to these locations (the sky and the heavens) is that they are areas where the human body cannot dwell. The source of these two colors also comes from areas where the body of man cannot dwell— and that is the sea.

The blue dye is made from the blood of the *Banded Dye Murex* sea snail. Purple is made from the blood of the *Spiny Dye Murex* sea snail.⁹ Both of these snails dwell in the cool waters of the Mediterranean sea.



The Banded Dye Murex



The Spiny Dye Murex

⁸ Some say the linen was spun from wool; reference the use of flax with Josephus *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book III .7:7

⁹ The use of the word *blood* is taken from descriptions given by Josephus *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book III .7:7. The actual method for obtaining the dye chemical is by the crushing of internal gland tissue.

In order to obtain the dye from these two mollusks, it is necessary to break their outer shell. In the same way the body of the coming messiah was to be broken so that fallen man could find salvation.

Yet it pleased Jehovah to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of Jehovah shall prosper in His hand. He shall see the travail of His soul, and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, for He shall bear their iniquities. Isaiah 53:10-11

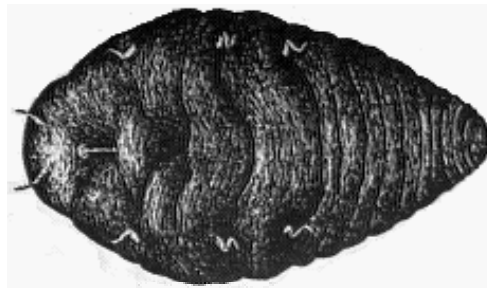
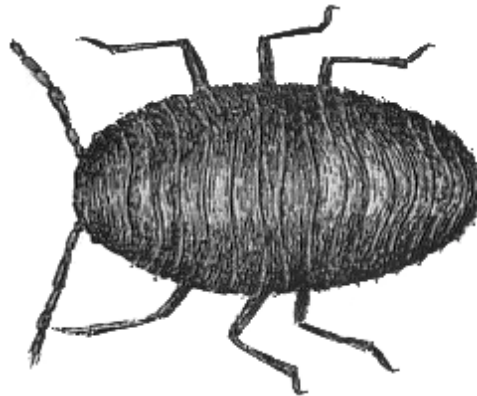
THE SCARLET SAVIOR

The third and final color to be dyed is scarlet. As I had mentioned earlier, the scarlet color represented blood, sacrifice and death. Yet no clearer message can be seen of the final atonement than that of the source of this rich crimson color; and we will find it within the fluid of a maggot.

The color of scarlet is more accurately translated crimson (Hebrew word *Shani*) and is found within the eggs of an insect identified in the Hebrew as *Tolaath Shani* or "worm of crimson" This insect is related to the similar *Coccus Ilicis*,¹⁰ which is found in the area of Mexico.

When the time comes for this *Tolaath* insect to give birth, it must first use it's remaining strength to crawl up the side of a tree.¹¹ It then attaches itself to the outer bark and prepares to bare its young.

As the young mature inside the mother, the body swells until it bursts—killing the mother in the birth process and leaving a dark-red stain upon the tree. The newborn young then feed upon the remaining body of the deceased mother.



¹⁰ Illustration is of the *Coccus Ilicis*.

¹¹ This is usually a kermes or Prickly Oak

The parallel is very clear; Jesus, as the *Tolaath*, suffered his way up the side of Moriah and was attached to the surface of a tree. His blood stained the tree with a precious, dark crimson. From this sacrificial death, His offspring were given life.

...knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things... but with the *precious blood* of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.
I Peter 1:18-19

On the cross, Jesus quoted the first verse of Psalm 22, thus directing the reader to an interesting discovery...

My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? Why are You so far from helping Me, And from the words of My groaning?
O My God, I cry in the daytime, but You do not hear; And in the night season, and am not silent...
But *I am a worm*, and no man; A reproach of men, and despised of the people.

The word "worm" in this text is the word *Tolaath*. This word was specifically used to illustrate what was actually happening in this mournful cry. Yes there is death; yes, there is sorrow; yes, blood is shed; but through it all, new life in abundance is born.

Jesus said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is *born again*, he cannot see the kingdom of God... That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is *born of the Spirit*." John 3:3-8

After the emergence of the young, they then feed upon the body of the mother so that they may gain initial sustenance. This picture now brings clarity to the words of Jesus as he institutes the partaking of the communion.

Then He took a loaf of bread; and when He had thanked God for it, He broke it in pieces and gave it to the disciples, saying, "This is My body, given for you. Do this in remembrance of Me." Luke 22:19

So, by His death the Church is born. His body and blood sustain us in our newborn state.

"This wine is the token of God's new covenant to save you--an agreement sealed with the blood I will pour out for you."
Luke 22:20

SCARLET CONSUMPTION

But what if the Tolaath worm was *not* to die. Like all maggot larva, it slowly consumes all that is in its path. Not only is there a slow consumption, there is also no new life given.

"And if your hand makes you sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed, than having two hands, to go to hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched;

"...where *'their worm does not die* and the fire is not quenched.'

"And if your foot makes you sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame, than having two feet, to be cast into hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched;

"...where *'their worm does not die* and the fire is not quenched.'

"And if your eye makes you sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire;

"...where *'their worm does not die* and the fire is not quenched.'"

Mark 9:43-48

Three times Jesus refers to a worm that never dies, but lives on to consume its captive for eternity. Jesus is actually quoting a description of hell described in the final verse of Isaiah.

"They shall go forth and look upon the corpses of the men who have transgressed against [the Lord]. *For their worm does not die*, and their fire is not quenched, they shall be an abhorrence to all flesh."

The word *worm* used in this quoted passage is once again the *Tolaath*. This *Tolaath*, however, is different in that it has never died. Instead of giving birth through its death, it remains alive as an eternal tormentor.

Every living human being who has ever heard of Jesus dying on the cross as a payment for our sins has a *Tolaath*. This "*Tolaath*", you might say, is knowing that salvation is available and that new life can be yours by receiving this free gift offered. You now have a choice.

1. *Reject Jesus as your personal savior, thus allowing the Tolaath to live forever.* This would be the knowledge in your conscious memory that you rejected the good news in order to live life according to your own desires and your own worldview.

Or...

2. *Receive Jesus as your personal savior, thus being part of a new birth that results from His sacrificial death.* As you emerge from this *Tolaath*, you will be covered and stained with the very blood that brought you forth.

ACCESS ALLOWED VIA BLOOD

Why would a “God of love” put a barrier between Himself and his own creation? If man were to approach God in his present fallen condition, he would die.

Then [God] said [to Moses], "I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of [Jehovah] before you. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion."

But He said, "*You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live.*"

Exodus 33:19 & 20

So, it is fair to say that it is “loving” to protect your creation. However, when atonement is made through blood, then access through the veil *is* possible.

[Jehovah] said to Moses: "Tell Aaron your brother not to come at simply any time into the Holy Place inside the veil, before the mercy seat which is on the ark, lest he die; for I will appear in the cloud above the mercy seat. Thus Aaron shall come into the Holy Place: with the blood of a young bull as a sin offering, and of a ram as a burnt offering." Leviticus 16:2-3

MAKING THE CONNECTION

Jesus of Nazareth came as the Lamb of God to take away the sins of the world, just as the prophet John the Baptist had proclaimed.

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "*Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!*" John 1:29

Like the flax of the linen thread, this lamb was beaten and stripped;

[The soldiers] *stripped Him* and put a scarlet (Tolaath-shani) robe on Him. When they had twisted a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand ...and mocked Him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" Then they spat on Him, *and took the reed and struck Him on the head.*

Matthew 27:27-30

...like the sea Murex, the body was broken;

... the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; *this is My body which is broken* for you; do this in remembrance of Me." 1Cor. 11:23-24

...and like the Tolaath, His blood brought new life.

He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. For *this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.*" Matthew 26:27-28

... how much more shall *the blood of Christ*, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? Hebrews 9:14

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be *born again* to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. I Peter 1:3

Through the fulfillment of the foreshadowed suffering savior, God then enters the temple and eliminates the barrier and provides access into His holy presence.

And Jesus cried out with a loud voice, and breathed His last.
Then the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.
Now when the centurion, who stood opposite Him, saw that He cried out like this and breathed His last, he said, "Truly this Man was the Son of God!"
Mark 15:37-39

CONCLUSION

The suffering of the coming Messiah guarded the way to the presence of God. When this event occurred and the blood atonement was made, the way was opened. This event brings with it an awesome responsibility; that is, to access the free gift of salvation.

Therefore, brethren, having boldness to *enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus*, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, *through the veil, that is, His flesh* and having a High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.
Hebrews 10:19-22

The writer of the above passage realized that there was a connection between the veil and the body of Jesus Christ. Through His scarred body we can gain access into the very presence of God. As we enter, may we offer to Him the sweet incense of our praise and thanks for providing us access through the veil.

Bibliography: *Biblical Archaeologist*, June 1990 I. Irving Ziderman; *Science News*, Sept. 8, 1984 D. Franklin; *Chemistry in Britain*, May 1986 I. Irving Ziderman; *Jewish Affairs*, March/April 1988 and *Natural History*, March 1949 - *The Bug with the Crimson Past* Jerry Laudermilk

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