



The origin of scarlet red dye.

The scarlet red dye was obtained from the dead bodies of the little 'worm' with the scientific name 'coccus ilicis' (the Crimson worm).

What is important for this study is the fact that the little female of the coccus ilicis attaches herself to a tree when she is about to bare her young. She protects her little eggs in this way, until the larvae go their own way.

The little female attaches herself so strongly however, that she is unable to cut herself loose.

At the moment of her death, a scarlet red liquid colours her body and the surrounding wood. The larvae also remain scarlet coloured for the rest of their lives.

The detailed symbolism of the worm is explained in the study about Psalm 22 verse 6.¹

The scarlet colour in the tabernacle:

As God commanded, the scarlet colour was used a lot in the construction of the tabernacle, among other things in making the priestly garments, tent cloths and curtains:

- *Have them use gold, and blue, purple and **scarlet** yarn, and fine linen. (Exodus 28:5)*
- *Make the tabernacle with ten curtains of finely twisted linen and blue, purple and **scarlet** yarn, with cherubim² woven into them by a skilled worker. (Exodus 26:1)*

Symbolism:

- **Gold** (Hebrew: zahab) - symbol for purity.
- **Bluish purple** (Hebrew: tekeleth) - the colour of heaven and symbol of God's throne.
- **Reddish purple** (Hebrew: argaman) - the traditional royal colour, because this dye was extremely expensive.
- **Scarlet** (always the translation of two Hebrew words: 'shaniy', the colour of scarlet red and 'towla', the 'worm') - when the tabernacle was being built the only scarlet red colour that was allowed to be used was that obtained from the dried 'coccus ilicis' worms - a reference to the new life that was to come forth from the death of Jesus.
- **Fine linen** (Hebrew: shesh) – cloth woven from flaxen thread. Short fibres of flax were used for rope and rough yarn. The fine, long fibres produced the finest linen yarn. This fine yarn was used for the priestly garments.

Scarlet red, the colour of our sins.

Isaiah prophesied:

- *"Come now, let us settle the matter", says the LORD. "Though **your sins are like scarlet**, they shall be **as white as snow**; though they are **red as crimson**, they shall be **like wool**."*
(Isaiah 1:18)

1 Study: Psalm 22:7 – I am a worm.

2 Study: Angels.



With these words God compared the colour of human sin to the colours scarlet red and crimson (both refer to the same colour), the colour of the liquid that colours the dying 'worm' and the wood to which it has attached itself.

Scarlet red is also the colour of blood, and the blood of the sacrifice, which was sprinkled against the altar.

- *You are to lay your hand on the head of the burnt offering, and it will be accepted on your behalf to make atonement for you. You are to slaughter the young bull before the LORD, and then Aaron's sons the priests shall **bring the blood and splash (throw) it against the sides of the altar** at the entrance to the tent of meeting. (Leviticus 1:4-5)*

When someone brought a sacrifice for the atonement of sins, he first had to lay his hand on the animal's head. It is generally believed that the person confessed his sins while doing so. The sins were symbolically transferred to animal, which was then slaughtered, by means of the laying on of hands.

When it was slaughtered, its blood was collected and thereafter sprinkled around, against the altar.

The altar was therefore stained with the blood of the sacrificial animal, which, itself, was also covered in blood, for the priest had to skin it after sprinkling of its blood against the altar.

Symbolism:

Jesus' body and the cross to which He was nailed were covered with His scarlet red blood: in accordance with Isaiah's prophecy, the image of human sin, which Jesus carried to the cross on His body, as Peter wrote in his first letter:

- ***(Jesus) himself bore our sins" in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness. (1 Peter 2:21-24)***

Because man is imperfect and, as a result, makes wrong choices, he is incapable of living in God's presence. He is thus in the state that the Bible calls eternal death, as the apostle Paul wrote:

- *For the wages of sin is death, ... (Romans 6:23a)*

Just as sin was confessed and laid on the head of the sacrificial animal, so will the (scarlet red) sin, which is confessed to Jesus Christ through faith in Him, be taken away from the person, because Jesus carried it on His body to the cross.

This is why Paul completed the above-mentioned text as follows:

- *... but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 6:23b)*

This is how a person becomes 'as white as snow', 'as wool'.

For:

- *God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, **that whoever believes in him** (trusts in Jesus) shall not perish but have eternal life (spend eternity in heaven, near to God). (John 3:16)*