

LESSON EIGHT

THE COVERINGS OF THE TABERNACLE

TEXT: EXODUS 26:1-14

A. GENERAL INFORMATION:

Several curtains or coverings were used to cover the Tabernacle. They were hung or draped over the entire framework. As to specific arrangement of these coverings we are not informed, but God did give the order in which the coverings were to be placed and the materials from which they were to be made.

Here is the order they were to be laid:

1. The Curtains Of Fine Linen. These comprised the actual ceiling or roof of the building.
2. The Curtain Of Goats' Hair. It was placed on top of the fine linen covering.
3. The Rams' Skin Dyed Red. It is referred to as a covering.
4. The Badgers' Skins. This was the only thing which one saw outside of the Tabernacle.

B. THE CURTAINS OF FINE LINEN: (Exodus 26:1)

The linen curtain was made in a specific way: these were two sections, each of which was made of five pieces. The pieces were sewn together to form the two sections. The two sections were then joined together at the selvedge (the "strong" edge of the material) by making fifty loops on each selvedge. These loops were joined by fifty metal taches, each of which hooked into a loop on one edge of each of the two sections. In Exodus 36:13, we are told in regard to these ten Curtains, "*so it became ONE Tabernacle.*"

1. "*...of fine twined linen* " (Exodus 26:1).

It was clean, fine and white. Fine linen is always a symbol of righteousness in the Scripture. First, it speaks of the righteous of Christ and then that of the righteousness of the saints who are in Christ. This

righteousness is the opposite of self-righteousness. Fine linen is the clothing and garment of the priests (Exodus 28: 39-43).

2. *“And Blue, and Purple, and Scarlet...”*

BLUE is the color of heaven. It reminded the ministering priests that their work was heaven-inspired.

PURPLE is the color of royalty and kingship. Jesus is King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Blending blue and scarlet will produce purple.

SCARLET is the color of blood and speaks to us of sacrifice and humanity. All the Old Testament sacrifices pointed to the coming Lamb of God. This is the one and only sacrifice for sin.

C. THE CURTAIN OF GOATS’ HAIR: (Exodus 26:7-13)

Over the ten Curtains of fine linen were placed eleven Curtains of Goats’ Hair. These Curtains are referred to many times in Scripture as the “tent” (Exodus 35: 11; 36:14; 40:19; 26:7, 11, 13 and Numbers 3:25), as well as a Covering. It is the second covering over the framework of the Tabernacle. The Goat Hair used here was most likely black in color as is characteristic of most goats in that region (Song of Solomon 1:5).

The eleven pieces of material in this covering (each piece being four cubits wide and thirty cubits long) made it one cubit longer on each side than the first curtain. This covering, then, would reach the ground and completely cover the fine twined linen curtain.

The Goat is used in connection with the Sin Offering (Leviticus 4:34) on the Day of Atonement. On that day a scapegoat bore away the sins of the people. That act of confession of sins of the people by the priests on the Day of Atonement pictured the transference of our sins onto Christ. Christ has once been made a sin offering (Hebrews 9:28; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 8:3).

The eleven Curtains were to be in two sets, a set of five and a set of six. These two sets were joined by fifty loops and fifty taches of Brass. Fifty is the number of Pentecost, liberty, and freedom.

D. THE COVERING OF RAMS’ SKINS DYED RED: (Exodus 26:14)

The third piece of material, or the second covering of the Tabernacle was made of rams' skins dyed red. There are no details as to size and shape; only the words "covering for the tent" do portray some view of its make-up.

The Ram was used in the Trespass Offering (Leviticus 5:15), Burnt Offerings (Leviticus 8:18) and Peace Offerings (Leviticus 9:4). The Ram was used in the consecration of the Priests to minister (Leviticus 8:22). A Ram suggests fullness of strength.

These Rams' Skins were to be dyed red. Red is the color of sacrificial blood and is identified in the cleansing from sin. The first place in the Bible that we see the ram is on Mt. Moriah when it is used as a substitute and offered instead of Isaac (Genesis 22:8-13).

E. THE COVERING OF BADGERS' SKINS: (Exodus 26:14)

The outer and final Covering, over all and above all, was the Covering of Badgers' Skins. As with the previous covering, there are no measurements given. Bible commentators also do not agree as what animal is referred to here (a wolf, a weasel, a porpoise, a seal, and many others). However, all generally agree that these skins were an ash grey or a bluish-gray color. Whatever the case, these skins acted as a final protection from the storms, weather and heat of the desert and wilderness life. Badgers' Skins were also used as a covering for all of the vessels of the Tabernacle while they were in transit.

These skins shadowed Christ in the following manner:

- a. As authorities cannot agree as to what animal is referred to here, men of the world who were so-called authorities disagreed as to who Christ really was. (Matthew 16:14; John 1:10; 1 John 3:11)
- b. As there was no beauty in the Badgers' Skins, so there was no beauty that men should desire Christ (Isaiah 53:2).
- c. As the Badgers' Skins were a protective cover, so is Christ the Church's Protector and Guardian.

F. CONCLUSIONS:

The Four Coverings of the Tabernacle can be seen in Isaiah 53.

Vs. 2-3 Badgers' Skins — "*No form nor comeliness;*" "*No beauty that we should desire Him;*" "*despised and rejected of men.*"

Vs. 4-7 Rams' Skins Dyed Red — *“But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities.”*

Vs. 9-10 Goats' Hair — *“Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin.”* Our sins were laid on Him. He became sin for us.

Vs. 11-12 Fine Twined Linen — *“He made intercession for the transgressors.”*

All these coverings represent Christ. Christ is our:

1. LINEN CURTAIN — RIGHTEOUSNESS
2. GOATS' HAIR CURTAIN — SIN OFFERING
3. RAMS' SKIN DYED RED — SUBSTITUTION
4. BADGERS' SKIN — PROTECTION AND COVERING

Isaiah 61:10 “ He hath covered me with the Robe of Righteousness.”

LESSON EIGHT

SELF HELP TEST

A. State the order which the coverings were to be placed on the Tabernacle, inside to outside.

1.

2.

3.

4.

B. Blue color represents _____.

Purple color represents _____.

Scarlet color represents _____.

C. The _____ was used in connection with the Sin Offering.

D. The _____ was used in connection with the Trespass Offering.

E. The _____ skins were used as the outer covering because of its protective qualities.

F. Give a spiritual application for each of the four coverings:

1.

2.

3.

4.