

What The Biblical Worm Was Referring To

'I am a worm and no man; a reproach of mankind and despised by the people' (Psalm 22:6).

'How can man be just with God? How can he who is born of a woman be clean? ... How much less man, who is a grub, the Son of Man, Who is a worm' (Job 25:4 & 6).

It is possible these Messianic prophecies were likening a natural event relating to a worm, to the spiritual event of the cross of Jesus. There is a small crimson-coloured worm found in Israel, where they speak Hebrew, the language of the Bible. The Hebrew word for the worm is 'tola'. In English it is called the Scarlet Worm. Just before laying a clutch of fertilised eggs, the female Scarlet Worm seals herself to a tree trunk and lays the eggs, depositing them underneath her body to protect them until the larvae hatch and leave. The female worm dies then the crimson/scarlet body fluid seeps out and stains the tree trunk. From ancient times, the bodies of the female Scarlet Worm were collected and used as fabric dye, but the worms had to be gathered up quickly because after three days, the red stain dries out and turns pure white.

Just as the female worm sheds her blood for the good of her offspring, so also Jesus, by the grace of God, shed His blood for the good of His spiritual children (Hebrews 2:9). Just as the worm's blood dries out and turns white, so our sins are covered with the blood of Jesus and turn pure white. 'Though your sins be as scarlet, they will be as white as snow. Though they be red like crimson, they will be as wool' (Isaiah 1:18). The Hebrew word 'tola' also means to hang on a tree, just like our Messiah hung on the cross. Tola comes from the root word for rope used to suspend something, like a caterpillar suspends itself from a branch in the cocoon, as Jesus was suspended on the cross.

If the Scarlet Worm did not die, she would suffer terribly. When she seals herself to the tree trunk, she cannot free herself. She can never escape from the 'prison' she made for herself. A similar analogy is spoken of in the Bible regarding the 'prison' people put themselves in when they reject the provision of salvation given to us by the Lord. They can never escape and their 'worm' never dies. God the Father said, "As the new heavens and the new earth which I will make, will remain before Me," says the Lord, "So Your 'seed' and Your name will remain ... All flesh will come to worship before Me. They will go forth and look on those who have transgressed against Me, for their worm will never die, neither will their fire be quenched and they will be abhorrent to all" (Isaiah 66:22 to 24). Jesus said, "It is better not to be cast into the lake of fire, where their worm does not die and the fire will never be quenched ... where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched ... where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched" (Mark 9:44 to 48). Saying this phrase three times in a row tells us Jesus was very serious about what He was saying! The tola would have been well known to the Jews to whom Jesus was speaking, so He did not have to explain what the 'worm' was, that would never die. The disciples fully understood. If they had not understood Jesus, they would have asked like they did on other occasions when He told them something they could not comprehend.

The 'seed' mentioned in Isaiah in the above verse, is referring to the 'seed' sown by Jesus on the cross and the millions of born-again spiritual children He has borne via His travail during His torture just prior to, and on the cross. The Hebrew word 'tola' is mentioned forty-two times in the Bible, and there were forty-two generations from Abraham to Jesus. Fourteen generations lived between Abraham and King David; fourteen generations lived between King David and the exile of the Jews to Babylon. From Babylon to Jesus there are fourteen generations (Matthew 1:1 to 17). The next generation was the generation of the 'seed' or the spiritual children of Jesus, both then and now; those who willingly serve Him. 'A seed will serve Him. Future generations will be told about the Lord. They will come and declare His righteousness to a people yet to be born, for He has done it' (Psalm 22:30 & 31). He has done it! He has accomplished it; achieved it; succeeded. We are one of the generations that were 'yet to be born'. We are the spiritual seed of Abraham.

The Lord God said Jesus would see His seed or the 'fruit' of His travail and be fully satisfied with the result. 'When You make His soul an offering for sin, He will see His seed ... After the suffering of His soul, He will see the Light and be satisfied. My Righteous Servant will justify many by the knowledge of Himself and He will bear their iniquities. I will divide Him a portion with the great and He will share the spoil with the strong, because He poured out His soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors. He bore the sin of many and made intercession for the transgressors' (Isaiah 53:10 to 12). 'Behold, I and the children whom God has given Me are for signs and for wonders in Israel' (Isaiah 8:18). 'Behold, here I am with the children whom God has given Me ... He gives help to the seed of Abraham' (Hebrews 2:13 & 16).

Amen and God bless you.

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