



"A thankful heart is not only the greatest virtue, but also the parent of all other virtues."  
—Cicero

12-Apr-19

## *Lessons From a Worm*

The old Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course on [Passover](#) (Lesson 33) exhorts the reader to study Psalm 22, which prophesies of Jesus Christ's suffering. In particular, [Psalm 22:6](#) reads, "But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people." It makes one think, "If Christ considered Himself to be a worm, where does that put me?"

Most people, when reading this verse, think that Christ was comparing Himself to an earthworm to show the vast difference between the reality of Almighty [God](#) and the lowliness of humanity. However, that is not necessarily the case. The psalmist specifies this worm to be a tola worm.

Behind "worm" is the Hebrew *tôl ' t* (*Strong's Exhaustive Concordance* #8348), not *rimm h*, which denotes a maggot. The "worm" of [Psalm 22:6](#) refers to the female *Coccus ilicis*, an insect whose dried body is used to make an exclusive and expensive red dye. The same word is oftentimes also translated as "scarlet" or "crimson," so the tola worm (as we will call it hereafter) is also known as the "scarlet worm."

Henry Morris, one of the founders of the Institute for Creation Research, writes:

When the female of the scarlet worm species was ready to give birth to her young, she would attach her body to the trunk of a tree, fixing herself so

## CGG Weekly: Lessons From a Worm (12-Apr-19)

firmly and permanently that she would never leave again. The eggs deposited beneath her body were thus protected until the larvae were hatched and ready to enter their own life cycle. As the mother died, the crimson fluid stained her body and the surrounding wood. . . . What a picture this gives of Christ, dying on a tree, shedding His precious blood that he might "bring many sons unto glory!" He died for us, that we might live through Him!

We can draw a direct parallel from the tola worm to [Jesus Christ](#), who willingly went to the cross and remained there until His life's mission was finished. Jesus says in [John 10:18](#) that He Himself decided to offer His life. No one made Him do it. He could have called twelve legions of angels—some figure this to be as many as 82,000 very capable rescuers—to save Him ([Matthew 26:53](#)), but He did not. Instead, our Lord and Savior determined to remain on the tree to give His life so that we can be forgiven of our sins and live eternally.

The tola worm knows that climbing the tree will be the very last act of her life. This act is a process, and in this process, she provides both nourishment and protection to her offspring. As she lays her eggs, the tola worm's body, her eggs, and even a portion of the tree are covered with a crimson, gel-like fluid. The stain on the tree will never fade with age or harsh wind or even washing.

In the final act of a life consumed by sacrifice, Jesus gave His blood to pay for our sins. And now, when the Father looks upon Christians, He sees Christ's own righteousness, whose death covered us with His blood, justifying us before the Father. Paul writes in [Colossians 1:21-22](#) that, although we used to be aliens and enemies of God, "He has reconciled [us to God] in the body of His flesh through death, to present us holy, blameless, and above reproach in His sight."

[Isaiah 1:18](#) reads, "Come now, and let us reason together," says the LORD. 'Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool.'" Here, "crimson" is translated from the Hebrew *tôl* , again referring to the blood-red, dried body of the insect known as *Coccus ilicis*. In Exodus 26 and 28, God directed the use of the dye made from these worms in the construction of the Tabernacle, and even in the garments worn by the high priest and his sons.

Notice also [Matthew 27:27-28](#): "Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole garrison around Him. And they stripped Him and put

## CGG Weekly: Lessons From a Worm (12-Apr-19)

a scarlet robe on Him." The Greek word rendered "scarlet" is *kokkinos* (*Strong's #2847*), which also refers to the scarlet or crimson eggs of insects that were pulverized and used in making red dye. Sound familiar? The soldiers only thought that it was their idea to deck Jesus with a scarlet robe as they mocked Him. Instead, they helped to complete His metaphorical transformation.

When the newborn tola worms hatch, they not only stay under the mother's crimson, protective shell, they literally feed on her still-living body! This fact is reminiscent of Jesus' words in [John 6:53-55](#): "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For My flesh is food indeed and My blood is drink indeed." The *New International Version* translates the last verse, "For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink."<sup>[\*]</sup>

In a blog post, Susan M.B. Preston emphasizes the completeness of the sacrifice of Jesus: "[After three days](#), the dead mother Crimson worm's body loses its crimson color and turns into a white wax which falls to the ground like snow. This [wax] was collected and used as shellac to protect wood."<sup>[†]</sup> Does not Jesus Himself assure us in [Matthew 28:20](#) that He will always be with us, protecting us even to the end of the age?

The apostle John writes in [Revelation 12:11](#), "And they overcame [the dragon, [Satan](#)] by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death." True Christians will achieve victory and overcome the Devil by the shed blood of our Lamb. In less than a week, we will memorialize our Savior and what He has done for us in giving His life to pay for our sins and bring us into a relationship with God. As we approach the Passover, please reflect on this example from nature that our Father has purposely designed to help us to appreciate more fully the complete and total sacrifice of His Son.

We need to consider the cost that Jesus paid and remember the enormity of what has been done on our behalf to enable and virtually assure our salvation. This process of coming to a heartfelt appreciation of Christ's sacrifice is an awesome obligation. We are privileged to be in the position to be thankful for it, and it should spur in us a steadfast commitment to understand God's way and "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ ([II Peter 3:18](#)).

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CGG Weekly: Lessons From a Worm (12-Apr-19)

[t] Many thanks to Susan M.B. Preston for inspiring this line of inquiry (<https://www.susanprestonauthor.com/but-i-am-a-worm/>).

- John Reiss

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## *World News Highlights*

### [Amazon Workers Are Listening to What You Tell Alexa](#)

CBS News 11-Apr-19

### [Pete Buttigieg's Very Public Faith Is Challenging Assumptions](#)

The Atlantic 10-Apr-19

### [Economic Shockwaves: Saudi Arabia Is Threatening to Drop the Petrodollar](#)

Prophecy News Watch/Activist Post (Tyler Durden) 09-Apr-19

### ['Flight Shame' Has Swedes Rethinking Air Travel](#)

Yahoo/AFP 09-Apr-19

### ['They're in Our Heads': TV Series Tackles Big-Tech Nightmare](#)

Yahoo/AFP 12-Apr-19

### [Poll: Americans Give Social Media a Clear Thumbs-Down](#)

NBC News 05-Apr-19

### [Brexhaustion: Long, Grinding Brexit Is Stressing People Out](#)

Associated Press 12-Apr-19

### [Americans With 'No Religion' Increases by 266% Over Last 3 Decades](#)

Prophecy News Watch/Economic Collapse Blog (Michael Snyder) 08-Apr-19

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## *New Transcripts*

### [1481c: Good Fences](#)

Given by Richard T. Ritenbaugh on 06-Apr-19

### [989c: An Environmental Irony](#)

## CGG Weekly: Lessons From a Worm (12-Apr-19)

Given by Richard T. Ritenbaugh on 24-Apr-10

### [993c: Things We Won't Get Rid Of](#)

Given by John W. Ritenbaugh on 22-May-10

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## *Prayer Requests*

New prayer request updates have been posted for the following people:

[Cornie Banman](#)

[Peggy Berger](#)

[Jane Clinton](#)

[Shelly Fenwick](#)

[Arthur and Naomi King](#)

[Mary Moffett](#)

[Henry Reiss](#)

[Musonda Sakala](#)

[Margi Saxton](#)

[Margi Saxton](#)

[Bill Swanson](#)

[Mary Tisher](#)

[Jim Tisher](#)

[Lavada Williams](#)

[Paulette Williams](#)

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## *From the Archives: Featured Sermon*

### [Scripture Fulfilled in Christ's Death](#)

by Martin G. Collins

Martin Collins, asking whether suffering and sorrow come upon those whom God the Father or Jesus Christ loves, identifies four distinct Old Testament Messianic prophecies fulfilled by Christ's death and all cited by the Apostle John. They include (1) the dividing of His clothing (including his seamless tunic), prophesied in Psalm 22:18 and fulfilled in John 19:28-20, (2) the giving of sour wine, prophesied in Psalm 69:18 and fulfilled in John 19:28-29, (3) the breaking of the legs of the two criminals, but not

## CGG Weekly: Lessons From a Worm (12-Apr-19)

Jesus' legs, prophesied in Psalm 34:20 and fulfilled in John 19:31-36, and (4) the piercing of His side, prophesied in Zechariah and fulfilled in John 19:34 -37. All of these prophecies depict suffering and sorrow. Additionally, there are three pictures of Christ as forsaken, crushed, and executed, including that of the tola worm crushed for its blood-like crimson dye used to make royal clothing. The seven last words or sayings of Christ recorded in the New Testament Gospels are as follows: (1) "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do," (2) "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise,"(3) "Jesus said to his mother: 'Woman, this is your son.' Then he said to the disciple: 'This is your mother.'" (4) "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (5) "I thirst.' They took a sponge soaked in wine on a sprig of hyssop and put it up to His mouth. When Jesus had received the wine , He said (7) 'It is finished ;'and He bowed His head and handed over the spirit," (7) Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Father , into your hands I commend my spirit." All these quotations derive from Old Testament Messianic prophecies, many from Psalm 22. It would be good, in preparation for Passover, for all of us to meditate deeply on these fulfilled Messianic prophecies.

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### *From the Archives: Featured Article*

#### [Death of a Lamb](#)

by Staff

Since the church no longer keeps the Passover with the slaughter of a lamb, we miss important and poignant details that could enhance our observance. A personal experience with two ewes serves as a springboard to explain greater, spiritual lessons.

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### *Featured Audio Schedule*

#### **Friday Night Bible Study**

The next Bible Study will be **Is There a True Church?**, given by **John W. Ritenbaugh** on **Friday 12-Apr-19**. The Bible Study will be continuously available from **6:00 pm Friday** until **12:00 pm Saturday (EST)**.

#### **Daily Audio Programs**

Hear previous sermons, sermonettes, and Feast of Tabernacles messages, **Sunday through Friday**. [Available from the homepage.](#)

CGG Weekly: Lessons From a Worm (12-Apr-19)

Sunday 14-Apr-19	Themes of I Corinthians (Part 5)
Monday 15-Apr-19	Our Divine Fellowship
Tuesday 16-Apr-19	Famine (Part 1): The Beginning of Sorrows
Wednesday 17-Apr-19	The Good Work
Thursday 18-Apr-19	The Father-Son Relationship (Part 2)
Friday 19-Apr-19	Psalms: Book Three (Part Five)

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