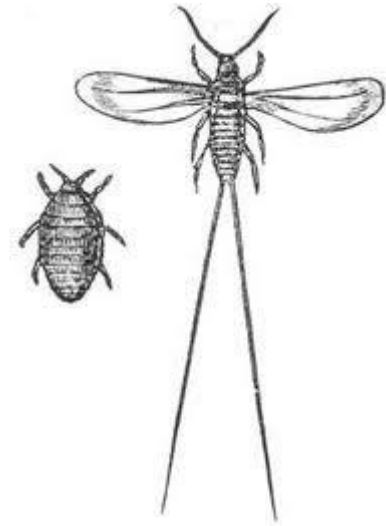




**The text:**

- *But I am **a worm** and not a man, scorned by everyone, despised by the people. (Psalm 22:6)*



**The worm** ('towla' or 'tola'ath' in Hebrew) of this Psalm bears the scientific name '**coccus ilicis**'.

A worm reminds us of an earthworm that is easily crushed under foot, but the 'coccus ilicis' (the Crimson worm) is actually more of an insect than a worm.

The male has wings and flies around. The female looks more like a maggot and cannot fly.

**The female coccus ilicis.**



Several 'worms', attached to the leaves of a branch, can be seen in this illustration.

Notice that these 'worms' are not alone in being coloured red; the branch and the leaves are too.

The OLB translates as follows:

- worm, scarlet dye, crimson
- worm – the female 'coccus ilicis'
- the dye made from the dried body of the female 'coccus ilicis'

This coccus ilicis 'worm' is a very special 'worm'.

When the time has arrived for the female coccus ilicis to bare her young:

- she attaches herself to a **tree** or **branch**.
- she attaches herself so strongly, that she is **unable to detach herself**.
- while doing so she makes a **hard shield** to **protect** the little eggs she lays under herself.
- when the larvae hatch, they live protected under her body and **feed themselves with their living mother**.
- when the little young worms are able to look after themselves after a few days, the mother dies.



A **scarlet red liquid** leaks out at that moment, which colours not only the wood to which they are attached, but **the little young worms as well**, for the rest of their lives.

- a few days after the death of the mother, her body loses its scarlet red colour and changes into a kind of white wax, which falls to the ground like snow.

### Awesome symbolism:

God has put splendid illustration in nature, from creation onwards, with this 'worm' - of the sacrifice that Jesus would for mankind.

King David described the reason why Jesus died, and the manner in which He was to die, in Psalm 22, 1,000 years before the birth of Christ.<sup>1</sup>

#### The worm attaches itself to the wood in order to die there.

Jesus died on a wooden cross, to which He had voluntarily allowed Himself to be nailed.

- *When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him there. (Luke 23:33)*
- *... Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit. (John 19:30)*

#### The worm attaches itself to the wood in order to bring forth new life.

Jesus allowed Himself to be crucified because that was the only way to bring eternal redemption for sin. Jesus died on the cross:

- *... thus obtaining **eternal redemption**. (Hebrews 9:12)*
- *All the prophets testify about him (Jesus) that everyone who believes in him receives **forgiveness of sins** through his name. (Acts 10:43)*
- *Very truly I (Jesus) tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has **eternal life** and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life. (John 5:24)*
- *and, once made perfect, he (Jesus) became the source of **eternal salvation** for all who obey him. (Hebrews 5:9)*

#### The worm protects her offspring.

Jesus said in the high priestly prayer:

- *While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name you gave me. **None has been lost** except the one doomed to destruction (Judas Iscariot) so that Scripture would be fulfilled. (John 17:12)*

And concerning the children:

- *See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that **their angels in heaven** always **see the face of my Father** in heaven. (Matthew 18:10)*

#### The larvae grow by eating their living mother.

Jesus said:

- ***I am the living bread** that came down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. (John 6:51)*

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<sup>1</sup> See also: Some prophecies, fulfilled in the life of Jesus.



**The larvae are permanently coloured scarlet red by the death of the mother.**

The scarlet red colour is the colour of blood, blood with which God confirms a covenant, as in the time of Moses.

- *Then he (Moses) took the Book of the Covenant and read it to the people. They responded, "We will do everything the LORD has said; we will obey."  
Moses then took the blood, sprinkled it on the people and said, "**This is the blood of the covenant that the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words.**"  
(Exodus 24:7-8)*

In the present time too, God makes a covenant, as Jesus indicated with the cup of wine, during the Passover meal with His disciples, when He said:

- *This is my **blood of the covenant**, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.  
(Matthew 26:28)*

Those who accede to the covenant by faith in Jesus Christ receive the purifying work of His blood:

- *... through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to be obedient to Jesus Christ and **sprinkled with his blood.** (1 Peter 1:2)*

**The dead worm undergoes a metamorphosis.**



Literature about the coccus ilicis states that, on the morning of the fourth day after her death, the dead body of the worm turns into a **snow-white jelly**, with the view of a **fluff of white wool**, that falls to the ground.

The death of the worm mirrors beforehand the death of Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary.

The metamorphosis, a few days later, points to the work of redemption, according to Isaiah's prophecy:

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

In the Hebrew text the word for **scarlet** is not the word for the colour scarlet, but for the **worm**, as in Psalm 22:6.

Translated literally therefore:

- *Though your sins are like **scarlet**, they shall be as **white as snow**; though they are **red as the worm**, they shall be like **wool.** (Isaiah 1:18)*

The fact that Jesus rose from the dead was the evidence that God had accepted His sacrifice, so that, since then, forgiveness of sins has become possible through faith in His blood.

The metamorphosis of the worm on the morning of the **fourth** day, appears to be in contradiction



of the Biblical testimony concerning the resurrection:

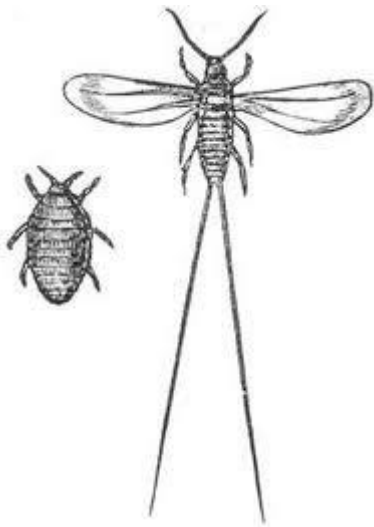
- *Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in **three** days." (John 2:19)*
- *(And:) For as Jonah was **three** days and **three** nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be **three** days and **three** nights in the heart of the earth. (Matthew 12:40)*
- *(Paul writes:) ... that he was buried, that he was raised on the **third** day according to the Scriptures, ... (1 Corinthians 15:4)*

According to Luke, Jesus died around the ninth hour (3 p.m. in our time) on 'Good Friday'. John writes about this:

- *Now it was the day of **Preparation**, and the next day was to be a **special Sabbath**. Because the Jewish leaders did not want the bodies left on the crosses during the **Sabbath**, they asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken down. (John 19:31)*

In view of the fact that the preparation was apparently a special Sabbath and the fact of the difference between the Jewish and Roman manner of dividing up the day, historicists differ in their opinions as to the precise day upon which Jesus died, according to our calendar. This is beyond the scope of this study, however.

### The male coccus ilicis.



It is remarkable that the female and male coccus ilicis are totally different and that only the male form of this 'worm' is able to fly.

It is possible that God has given an image of the Holy Spirit, who creates new life, in the male coccus ilicis.

As the angel Gabriel said to Mary:

- ***The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. (Luke 1:35)***

And the Holy Spirit, who raises a person to new life in Jesus Christ, for:

- *When he comes, **he will prove the world** to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment ... (John 16:8-11)*
- *... no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," **except by the Holy Spirit.** (1 Corinthians 12:3)*

See also the study Mark 15:34 - My God, my God.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Study: Mark 15:34 - My God, my God.