

Elder Vernon Johnson Colors

Black - Christ's Atonement for Sin

There are several verses of scripture where the color black or dark and Christ's atonement for sin are correlated. Some Old Testament prophecies of Christ's atonement are couched in the use of darkness:

1. Gen. 15:12 "And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him."
2. Gen. 15:17 "And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces."
3. Ex. 10:21 "And the LORD said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, even darkness which may be felt. 22 And Moses stretched forth his hand toward heaven; and there was a thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days:"
4. Jer. 8:21 "For the hurt of the daughter of my people am I hurt; I am black; astonishment hath taken hold on me."
5. Joel 2:31 "The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come."

The first two references above come from a passage where God revealed to Abraham in a dream a portion of the covenant of redemption. It was said that a horror of great darkness fell upon Abram. In this dream, there were five animals sacrificed including three livestock and two birds. A total of eight pieces was laid out and during this horror of great darkness a burning lamp and a smoking furnace passed between the pieces. Passing between the pieces signifies the ratification of a covenant: Jer. 34:18, 19 "And I will give the men that have transgressed my covenant, which have not performed the words of the covenant which they had made before me, when they cut the calf in twain, and passed between the parts thereof. The princes of Judah, and the princes of Jerusalem, the eunuchs, and the priests, and all the people of the land, which passed between the parts of the calf;" The parties to the covenant passed between the parts.

In Abraham's dream, the smoking furnace symbolizes the judgment of God the Father; the burning lamp symbolizes the work of the Holy Spirit in applying the blood of Christ in regeneration. The animals sacrificed are a symbol of the atoning work of Christ. Eight is associated with "new beginnings" in the scriptures. Through the atoning blood of Christ a new beginning in judgment and righteousness is made for every elect child of God. The horror of great darkness symbolized the suffering of

Christ on the cross to atone for our sins.

Reference 3 above was one of the ten judgments that God poured out on the land of Egypt during the days just before God delivered the children of Israel from Egyptian bondage. A darkness that might be felt was over the land of Egypt for three days. This is the same time period in which Christ laid in the grave during his delivering us from our sins. The body of Jesus lay in the darkness of the grave for three days, then he arose victorious over sin, death, hell, Satan, and the grave. What a great redeemer we have!

Reference four above prophecies of the substitutionary work of Jesus Christ as he suffered in the room and stead of his elect people. It was for their hurt, he was hurt. He suffered in their room and stead.

Reference 5 is quoted in the book of Acts: Acts 2:20 "The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come:" Once explanation I have heard concerning the sun and the moon is that the sun represents the law given at Mt. Sinai and the moon represents the ordinances given to Israel. With this explanation, the law and the ordinances would come to an end with the sacrificial atonement of Christ.

Personally, I believe the sun represents "the Sun of Righteousness" who is Christ and the moon represents the Lord's covenant people. This would agree with 2 Cor. 5:21: "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." The sun being turned into darkness would be equivalent to Christ being made sin for us and the moon being turned to blood would be equivalent to Christ's atoning sacrifice on behalf of his covenant people.

Next, we notice a few verses of scripture in the New Testament where the atoning work of Christ is directly associated with darkness:

1. Matt. 27:45 "Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour."
2. Mark 15:33 "And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour."
3. Luke 22:53 "When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me: but this is your hour, and the power of darkness."
4. Luke 23:44 "And it was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour."

While Christ atoned for our sins, God turned out the lights. So terrible was the sight when Christ suffered for our sins that only God could look upon it. What Christ suffered is what we deserved to suffer because of our sins.

