

# The Tabernacle

## The Badger Skins - Part 2

### Does the Hebrew word signify a shade of colour?

What was the colour of its hide? Some say it was brilliant for the Targum (which was basically a translation) in Exodus 25:5 translates "tachash" by "brilliant". This is the only indication in Exodus of the feature of the "tachash". The Septuagint translates it, "hyacinth-coloured purple or blue" and the ancients nearly all agreed that it denotes either black or sky-blue, but no one knows.

In early days, i.e. the first century, the Hebrew word was translated as coloured skins, and the obscurity of the word led to such suggestion as it being hyacinth, blue, azure, black, violet, purple skins. To confuse even more, the translations do not all agree on the colour. Exodus 26:14 is translated in the following ways:

- a) KJV: "Thou shalt make a covering for the tent of rams' skins dyed RED, and a covering above of BADGERS' skins".
- b) ESV: "And you shall make for the tent a covering of TANNED rams' skins, and a covering of GOATSKINS on top."
- c) NIV 1978 & 1982: "Make for the tent a covering of ram skins dyed RED, and over that a covering of hides of SEA COWS."
- d) NIV 2011 edition: "Make for the tent a covering of ram skins dyed RED, and over that a covering of OTHER DURABLE LEATHER."
- e) International Standard Version: "You shall make a cover for the tabernacle of ram skins dyed red and a covering of DOLPHIN SKINS above that."
- f) ASV: "And thou shalt make a covering for the tent of rams' skins dyed red, and a covering of SEALSKINS above."
- g) NASB: "You shall make a covering for the tent of rams' skins dyed RED and a covering of PORPOISE SKINS above."
- h) Holman Standard: "Make a covering for the tent from rams skins dyed RED, and a covering of MANATEE SKINS on top of that."
- i) The Jewish Family Bible 1864: "a covering of TACHASH skins"
- j) The Ancient Roots Bible 2010: "a covering above THE MOHAIR SKINS"
- k) So called Greek Septuagint: "and BLUE SKINS as coverings above."
- l) Modern Greek bible: a covering on top of JACKAL skins.
- m) Skins of antelopes or of goats, giraffe and rhinoceros have also been proposed.

Since we do not know what sort of an animal this was, or the colour of its hide, how can we possibly apply any scripture to it? Furthermore, on what Biblical foundation can we determine what spiritual significances are to be learnt from its appearance? I submit, in so doing, is it possible to miss the big truth the Lord is trying to teach us?

### What do the Scriptures teach about badger skins?

We do know four things about badger skins:

- a) It had to be a clean animal. This would indicate the moral cleanliness of the Lord.
- b) It was something beautiful to God. This indicates the loveliness of the Lord to God.
- c) Its significance is a mystery, something hidden to the natural man. This indicates the unknown Christ.
- d) It had to be one that was either with them or could be had in abundance.
  - i) The badger skin indicates to me, the "Unknowable Christ".
    1. There are wonders in the Lord, and indeed every aspect of every avenue of thought, that no mind human or angelic can enter into. The Lord Himself said, "No man knoweth who the son is, but the Father", and the hymn writer put it so beautifully, "*But the high mysteries of His name, an angels grasp transcend, the Father only glorious claim the Son can comprehend*".

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- ii) As man looked at the Lord he saw a Jew (Jn. 4:9); a Samaritan (Jn. 8:48); the Carpenter's son (Matt. 13:55); the Carpenter (Mk. 6:3); the son of Mary (Mk. 6:3); Jesus of Nazareth (Jn. 19:19); One untaught (Matt. 13:54); a deceiver (Matt. 27:63); a madman (Mk. 3:21); a "man" (Matt. 11:19); this "fellow" (Matt. 26:61), "This man" (Lk. 15:2).
1. There were a few who saw a little deeper and to them He was: "Thy salvation" (Lk. 2:30); "The Christ the Son of the Living God" (Matt. 16:16; Jn. 6:69); "The Christ" (Jn. 4:29). Here in the village of Nazareth was: "The Desire of all nations" (Hag. 2:7); their promised "Messiah" (Dan. 9:25); "Emmanuel" (Matt. 1:23); "The Governor among the nations" (Psa. 22:28); "a prophet" (Acts 3:22).
  2. Because He was not what they expected Messiah to be, and they certainly did not expect Him to come from Nazareth, they could not see the glory of the Man of Galilee. They saw the man but not the glory which was veiled.
- iii) How could they comprehend the wonder that:
1. The baby so helpless lying in the manger was none other than the mighty God.
  2. The little child who travelled to Egypt was the one who ordered the stars in their courses.
  3. The boy who sat in the class learning His lessons was the One in whom were all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.
  4. The man who made the yoke for the ploughing ox was the Creator of the earth He stood upon.
  5. That wearied man, who asked for a drink of water, was the One who supplied water from the rock for the many thousands of Israelites.
  6. The man who was crucified in weakness was the Mighty One who defeated the Egyptians and Assyrians who removed Nebuchadnezzar.
  7. The man who stood with them in the synagogue was the very God they worshipped.
  8. This man who prayed on the mountain top was none other than Jehovah manifest in flesh.
    - a. Man did not see this. Instead, as He lived among men, made of a woman, made under the law and made in the likeness of sinful man, lived in a despised place, had a regular job as a carpenter, lived at home with His family, He was "just one of us". Herod saw Him as a threat to his position. The religious leaders saw Him as a young man who did not know His proper place in the religious realm. To them, Messiah was to be a mighty leader like Moses or Joshua, delivering them from the Romans, but not a man of lowly means. Because their concept was wrong and distorted, they could not see beyond it and see the Lord as the fulfiller of the Old Testament prophecies. They failed to see that the Nazarene was: "The Desire of all nations" (Hag. 2:7); their promised "Messiah" (Dan 9:25); "Emmanuel" (Matt. 1:23); and "The Governor among nations" (Psa. 22:28).

He emptied Himself of the rights and independent exercise of His personal "Position, Prerogatives and Privileges"

- a) And yet to each of these we must add:
- i) Jesus had a human birth, yet never ceased to be the Eternal God (Matt. 2:1; Deut. 33:27).
  - ii) Jesus was localized, yet never ceased to be the omnipresent God (Psa. 139:7-10).
  - iii) Jesus was a Servant, yet never ceased to be the Sovereign of the universe (Phil. 2:7; Gen. 14:19-22; Dan. 5:21).
  - iv) Jesus died, yet was the Prince? Source of all life who cannot die (Rom. 5:6; Acts 3:15).
  - v) Jesus was weary, yet was the God who never wearies (Isa. 40:28; Jn. 4:6).
  - vi) Jesus slept, yet was the God who never sleeps (Mk. 4:38; Psa. 121:3-4).
  - vii) Jesus was tempted, yet was the God who can never be tempted (Matt. 4:2-10; Jam. 1:13).

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**May God grant us good understanding as He, by His Holy Spirit, deigns to guide us into all truth.**  
**John 16:13**

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