

# Church of God

## Sunday School



### THE TABERNACLE #5 – THE FOUR COVERINGS

#### DAILY READINGS:

- ❑ **Monday:** The Tabernacle had four detailed coverings (Exodus 26:1-14; 36:8-19).
- ❑ **Tuesday:** Cherubims are described as living creatures (Ezekiel 10:15; Revelation 5:8-9 AMP).
- ❑ **Wednesday:** A spiritual "new creature" will follow Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17; Revelation 14:4).
- ❑ **Thursday:** God has an inward and outward standard (Genesis 3:21; 1 Samuel 16:7; 2 Corinthians 5:1).
- ❑ **Friday:** Worship services are necessary for learning (Colossians 3:16; Hebrews 10:25).
- ❑ **Saturday:** God needs people who will stand up for holiness (Exodus 26:15; 36:20; 1 Corinthians 16:13).

**MEMORY VERSE:** *"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."*  
—2 Corinthians 5:17

#### God's Blueprint

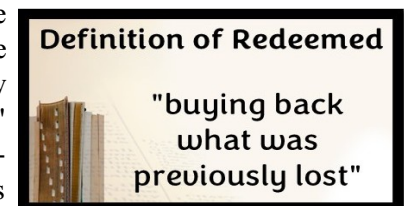
God told Moses to build the Tabernacle exactly the way He showed him on Mount Sinai. God included MANY details in this design to teach His plan of salvation. After the Altar of Sacrifice (which represents forgiveness of sins) and the Brazen Laver (which symbolizes the Holy Spirit cleansing what caused the sin), the next step towards God's presence was the Tabernacle Proper (representing God's church). The Tabernacle had four coverings, and each one teaches something important about Jesus. Exodus, Chapter 26, describes them by beginning with the innermost covering.

#### The First Covering—"Fine, Twined Linen"

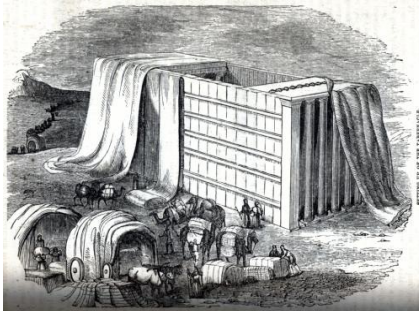
The first curtain was made of "fine twined linen," which represents "the righteousness of saints" (Revelation 19:8). This teaches that there is no sin in God's church. The colors—"blue, and purple, and scarlet" (Exodus 26:1)—are the same colors used in the outer Gate. After salvation, God's people are to believe and live out the truths these colors represent (see Lesson #2). God's people wear "garments of salvation," which are a "robe of righteousness" (Isaiah 61:10).

This covering also had "cherubims" skillfully embroidered on it (Exodus 26:1). "Cherubims" are first mentioned in Genesis 3:24, when Adam and Eve had to leave the Garden of Eden because of their sin. They could no longer be in God's presence, for God is holy. God placed Cherubims at the garden entrance. With the Cherubims was "a flaming [representing the Holy Spirit; Acts 2:3-4] sword [a symbol of God's Word; Hebrews 4:12], which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." Jesus said, "I am the way" (John 14:6). The ONLY way back into God's presence is through the Word ("Jesus"; John, Chapter 1).

Ezekiel and Revelation describe the Cherubims as living creatures. They represent people who have been *redeemed* (saved from sin). By paying salvation's price, Jesus is "buying back" we who were lost. When we are saved, we become "a new creature" (2 Corinthians 5:17). The Cherubims represent people who have been redeemed, new creatures who "follow the Lamb" (Revelation 14:4). Their song is, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty" (Revelation 4:8). The first covering teaches that a holy life (represented by the Cherubims) is important. It points the lost to the only way back to God (through Jesus Christ; the "flaming sword").



### The Second Covering—"Goats' Hair"



The second covering was made of "goats' hair" (Exodus 26:7). Goats were often used for sin offerings (Leviticus 16:5; Numbers 28:22). Jesus used goats to represent people who are separated from God (Matthew 25:31-33, 41). Palestinian goats were usually black, and their stubborn, independent nature symbolizes the actions of people who live a sinful life. Isaiah 53:6 says, "We have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him [Jesus] the iniquity of us all." The second covering teaches that Jesus took our punishment. He became "sin for us" (2 Corinthians 5:21).

### The Third Covering—"Rams' Skins Dyed Red"

The third covering was made of "rams' skins dyed red" (Exodus 26:14). This was placed on top of the black goats' hair curtain (representing sin), showing Jesus' shed blood fully covered (made "an atonement for"; Leviticus 17:11) all our sins. Just as the ram was an acceptable sacrifice for Isaac (Genesis 22:13), Jesus became the acceptable substitution for our sins.

### The Fourth Covering—"Badgers' Skins"

The outermost covering was made "of badgers' skins" (Exodus 26:14). This could have been a badger, sea-cow, porpoise, or another sea animal. It was the only visible layer to people outside of the Tabernacle. Its purpose was to protect the inside of the Tabernacle from wind, rain, and sun. There was nothing outwardly appealing about this fourth curtain, especially when compared with the innermost curtain. Spiritually, this teaches that a standard of holiness protects God's people from the world of sin. Though people living sinful lives may not find this attractive, it draws their attention and serves as a testimony of what God can do.

False religion offers more attractive "coverings" to supposedly become a Christian—good works, church membership, weekly confession, or baptism alone—without the standard of holiness. Only God's covering keeps our relationship with Him from being destroyed by the enemy.

### God's Standard of Holiness

When Adam and Eve made coverings for themselves ("aprons"; Genesis 3:7), God saw they were inadequate. So He made them "coats of skins" (Genesis 3:21). God was particular about Adam's and Eve's physical coverings and also about the coverings of the Tabernacle. He also cares about how we are covered—both spiritually and physically. God has a standard of holiness for our "earthly ... tabernacle" (2 Corinthians 5:1), which is our body. This standard applies inwardly and outwardly. God sees the heart (inward), but the world can only see our dress, words, and actions (outward). Both are important!

Only after salvation (when you are placed in God's church) can you truly see the beauty of the four coverings: (1) a holy life means we are right with God; (2) Christ became sin (blackness) so we could become holy (white); (3) Jesus' shed blood fully covered our sins; and (4) the standard of holiness is for our protection. As we gather with God's people in worship services, we will gain greater understanding of these important truths. Many beautiful lessons can only be seen from within the Church of God.

Just as the boards of the Tabernacle were "standing up" (Exodus 26:15), people in God's church stand up for His holiness standard. They do not merely claim to be a Christian or Church of God, but through holy lives, they (like the Cherubims at the garden gate) point to Jesus—the only way back to God's presence.



# Bible Quiz



1. The "fine twined linen" of the innermost curtain represents the \_\_\_\_\_ of the saints.

2. What two things does the "flaming sword" at the Garden of Eden's entrance represent? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Ezekiel 1:5 describes the Cherubim as "four \_\_\_\_\_ creatures."

4. The Cherubims represent people who have been \_\_\_\_\_

5. What does the black goats' hair covering teach? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Which covering was the only one that could be seen from the outside? \_\_\_\_\_

7. What was the fourth covering made of? \_\_\_\_\_

8. What protects God's people today from the outside elements (sin)? \_\_\_\_\_

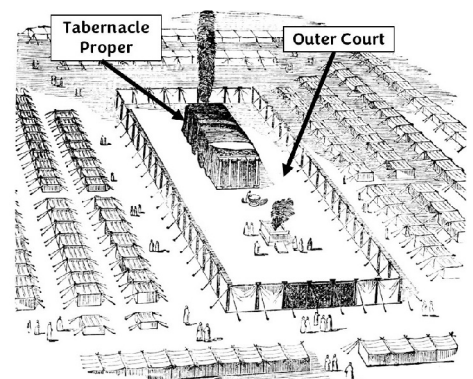
9. Why is following Jesus not attractive to the world? \_\_\_\_\_

10. Adam's and Eve's " \_\_\_\_\_ " were inadequate. So God made them " \_\_\_\_\_ of skin."

11. The standard of holiness applies \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

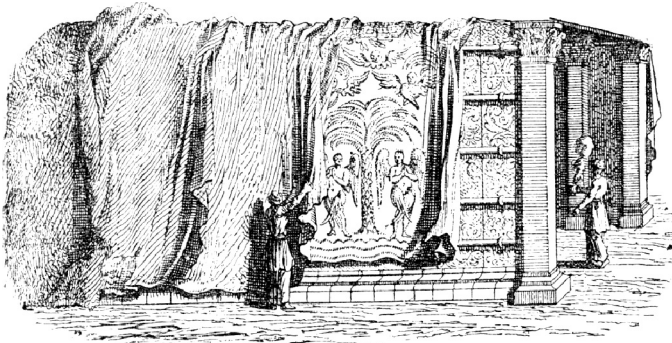
12. What does Hebrews 10:25 tell us to do to have greater understanding of these important lessons? \_\_\_\_\_

13. God needs people who will \_\_\_\_\_ up for His holiness standard and point the lost to the only way back to God's presence.



# ISAIAH, CHAPTER 53

Fill in the Blanks With the Tabernacle Coverings Described in Isaiah, Chapter 53



\_\_\_ Verse 2: no "comeliness"  
(plain looking)

\_\_\_ Verse 3: "despised and  
rejected of men"  
(not attractive)

\_\_\_ Verse 7:  
"lamb to the  
slaughter"  
(sacrifice)

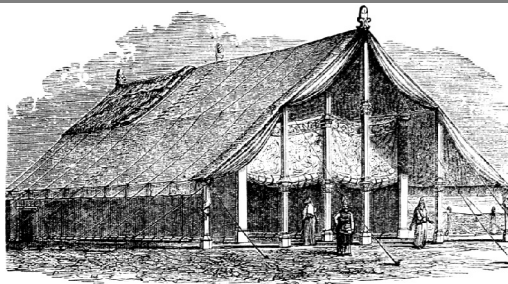
\_\_\_ Verse 5:  
"he was wounded  
for our  
transgressions"  
(blood shed)

\_\_\_ Verse 2: "there  
is no beauty that  
we should desire  
him"  
(not attractive)

\_\_\_ Verse 6:  
"we have turned  
every one to his  
own way"  
(sinful ways)

\_\_\_ Verse 5: "with his stripes  
we are healed"  
(Christ's sacrifice)

\_\_\_ Verse 8: "cut off out  
of the land of the living"  
(separation)



1. FINE LINEN
2. GOATS' HAIR
3. RAMS' SKINS
4. BADGERS' SKINS

"In the Old Testament, the New is hidden; in the New Testament, the Old lies open."