

Colour in the Bible

The following chapter is an extract from *The Symbolic Meaning of Colours in the Bible* by Ruth Marrion (unpublished). It is used with Ruth's permission. I believe that Ruth has revelation that will revolutionise how colour is used in the church. This section contains just a taste of what Ruth has begun to document, as well as some of the meanings the Western world has assigned to colours. It is important to understand this when you begin to wield colour in the world's context. Scripture references in this chapter are from the New King James Version (NKJV) unless otherwise stated.

God, Humans and Colour

Unlike many of God's creatures, humans have colour vision and colour seems to us to be a property of what we see. We can describe things in terms of their colour as we perceive it to be and other humans will agree with us.

God uses colours to communicate something to us in Genesis 9:13. The rainbow is described as a reminder to Him as well as to us that He has promised not to cleanse the earth by a flood of water ever again. Why should colours be used to give this message? When He specified priestly garments in gold, blue, purple, scarlet and the white of fine linen in Exodus 28:5, did God have a reason for choosing those colours?

Colours seem to be a means of communication from God to mankind. I have explored the subject of colours in Scripture as a non-verbal communication system. I offer this information for not only your enlightenment and enjoyment but also to enhance your worship of the Most High God our Heavenly Father, as you use or design banners to depict and emphasize the various attributes which make up His Glory.

And There Was Light

“When Isaac Newton used a prism to break up white sunlight into its various wavelengths and saw the rainbow projected on the wall, he identified seven separate colours.”

its various wavelengths and saw the rainbow projected on the wall, he identified seven separate colours. These were red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet (purple).

After the flood, God covenanted with the earth to never again judge it by a deluge of water. Unstated but revealed in the rest of Scripture is the promise that He would deal with the

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. Then God said: ‘Let there be light.’ and there was light.” Genesis 1:1-3 (NKJV)

Sunlight contains all the colours in the spectrum, but it must be broken to reveal them. When Isaac Newton, a Christian and a famous scientist, used a prism to break up white sunlight into

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Colour Names in the Bible

Colour names are rare in the Bible; the colours to be used in the priestly garments are specified by God as the names of dyes obtained from animals. Sometimes the colours are inferred from named objects, such as through the names of precious stones. **Electronic Version**

Colour has been used symbolically throughout church history in garments for the priesthood, religious art and stained glass windows. Nowadays, Holy Spirit is ushering in a new dimension of worship which involves the use of colour in banners and garments worn by a worshipper. Like those especially anointed with skill to make the garments and articles of furniture in the Tabernacle (Exodus 36-39), many worshippers around the world are being led by Holy Spirit to express aspects of God's character as single colours or colour combinations in the design of these articles to be used for worship or warfare.

Colour is a universal language. Across the cultures of the earth the meaning of a particular colour is generally the same. The gospel can be presented effectively through the “Wordless Book” which has a green cover, symbolic of the grace of God. When it is opened, the first page is black for the absence of light and the sin nature of man in darkness. The next page is all red, communicating the love of God and the means of a solution to the problem of sin: a blood sacrifice. The next page is all white, as sanctification is received and new holy living takes over the life of the person who is in communion with God, who is light. The final page is a green page, for the loving provision of the Father and Shepherd that follows from a life in fellowship with God.

Through colour we can also communicate with God in our worship just as He communicates with us through the colour of the objects we see.

“For that which is known about God is evident to them and made plain in their inner consciousness, because God Himself has shown it to them. For ever since the creation of the world, His invisible nature and attributes, that is, His eternal power and divinity, have been made intelligible and clearly discernible in and through the things that have been made, His handiwork so men are without excuse, altogether without any defence or justification.” Romans 1:19-20 (AMP)

In the following summary, with selected Scripture references, I have included information

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the afterimage of a colour can express something about the original colour.

David J. Stanfield