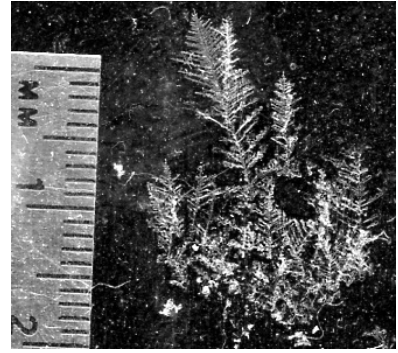


Clothed in White

Overnight in cold climates outdoor objects can sometimes be coated in large beautiful ice crystals of a form called “hoar frost”. The crystal design depends on the air temperature. I grew the dendritic crystal at the right in a freezer at about -15 degrees Celcius and preserved it in plastic fifty years ago. It is more than 2 cm long, much larger than snow crystals falling from the clouds.



The other hoar frost illustrations with this note came from two successive weekends in February 2012 and seem to indicate a temperature between -12 and -16 degrees Celcius. They also needed a good moisture supply, provided in this case by a snow pack warmed the previous day by the sun. Some of the individual blades of this hoar frost grew to sizes of about 2 cm, like these close to the ground.

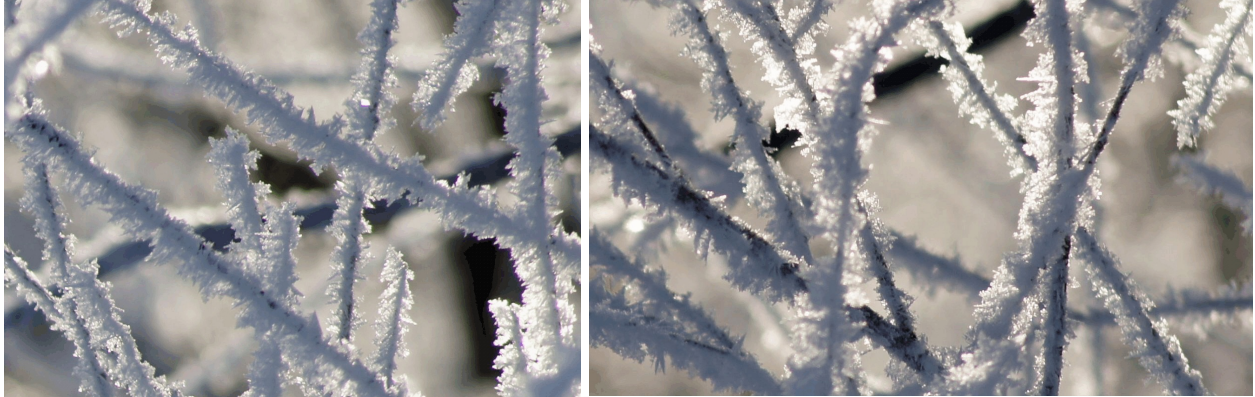


Some crystals grew on tall grass leaves and stems, totally obscuring the stems in some cases.



The landscape can be very beautiful after sunrise when all grass and trees are coated thickly with white hoar frost. These next photos show thin tree branches clothed in white.





Since the Beginning all of our lives have been darkened by our inability to totally be pleasing to our Creator. This state is like a genetic disease that we pass on to all generations. No one can be perfect. In our culture darkness and red are terms often used for this condition. In contrast, light and white are used for perfection and purity.

In his love for us, the Creator has provided a solution. Our special book has passages of hope.

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned. Is. 9:2

“Come now, let us reason together,” says the LORD. “Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.” Is. 1:18

Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow. Ps. 51:7

Passages also speak of this being accomplished by the sacrifice of a spotless, perfect Lamb in the form of a special person.

[redeemed]... with the blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. 1 Pt. 1:19

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!” Jn 1:29

...And he said, “These are they who have come out of the great suffering; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Rv. 7:14

We cannot earn such a cleansing of our lives, so it is offered to us as a gift of incredible worth.

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Rm 6:26

God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it. Ep. 2:8,9

Two more passages speak about clothing ourselves with the purity of that gift, covering our real nature. Then God sees us through the perfect gift by which we are clothed. We are then righteous and beautiful in his sight.

Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature. Rm. 13:14

You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have been clothed with Christ. Gl. 3:26-27



The grass and branches did nothing to receive the gift of being clothed in the beautiful white hoar frost. They just accepted it. Their darkness is covered by the purity of the ice crystals.

The ancient (oracle bone) and traditional Chinese characters have a similar illustration. Take a person character: 人 Extend the arms to make “big”:

“I” and “me”: 我 The sheep character is: 羊 There is another character for “big”: 大 New characters are formed by

placing the sheep character as a covering over the others. To show the components, the sheep character is made white and the others red.



The sheep covering the “big” “person” means “beautiful”. (The Lamb of God covering us makes us beautiful in God’s sight.)



The sheep covering “me” means “righteousness”. (The Lamb of God covering me makes me righteous - sinless - in God’s sight.) Unfortunately, the simplified character for this Chinese word has lost this important design:



When we accept the clothing of the Lamb of God, our growth includes additional benefits:

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Gl. 5:22-23

by Dr. Ed Holroyd

February 2012, finally writing thoughts of several decades ago