

*The Veil Torn from Top to Bottom (Slide 1)*  
*Matthew 27*

**Matthew 27:50-51 (Slide 2)**

***<sup>50</sup> And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit.***

***<sup>51</sup> Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom***

*What happened upon Jesus' death had great significance for the Jews at the time and for us as Christians today. For the Jews, it destroyed tradition and security.*

I think it's important before we go on to first understand how the **veil** or **curtain** was made, its purpose, and then the significance of this remarkable occurrence upon Jesus' death.

First, the Temple was built by Solomon in Jerusalem which was the hub for the Jewish religion. The presence of God made the city Holy. Thus it is often referred to as the Holy City of God.

**2 Chronicles 3:1 (Slide 3)**

***Now Solomon began to build the house of the LORD at Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where the LORD had appeared***

***to his father David, at the place that David had prepared on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.***

***where the LORD had appeared to his father David***

*When you read that God appeared to David **2 Samuel 24** on this spot where the temple was to be built, we would assume that this was a good thing. Certainly God was with David in his lifetime but there were times when God was also displeased with David. His appearance here was one of those times.*

*God was displeased with the way David carried out the command to perform the census of the people. Instead of carrying out the census the way God wanted, David only numbered those that were of fighting age because of his own pride in the military.*

*The result was a pestilence that killed 70,000 people.*

God appeared to David through His prophet! God's presence could be seen through the result of David's sin!

David repented and built an altar to sacrifice to the Lord on the spot where Solomon would build the temple.

The temple **veil** symbolized the fact that men were separated from God because of their sin.

*Today, men are still separated from God because of sin!*

However, as far as the temple, the point is, God was there! The only way to approach God was behind that **veil**!

If we don't understand that point then we will not fully grasp what the torn **veil** meant to the Jews. They had to be astonished at what they witnessed because God presented Himself behind that massive **veil** for the purpose of accepting blood as a sin offering.

With that in mind, how much would this Holy Temple mean to Jews?

Men and women who relied on God's appearance and the High Priests sin offering on their behalf, desperately wanted their conscience cleared before God.

At that was the sentiment from those who really believed and trusted in God!

Brethren, that same concept applies today when we assemble before God in His church. God listens which indicates His appearance which makes it paramount that we worship in spirit and truth.

God evaluates the sincerity of our worship and we can stand clean before Him because the ultimate sin offering has been made on our behalf.

*Description of the **veil**: (Slide 4)*

The **veil** of the temple was no ordinary curtain. It was massive in size and in weight.

The book of **Exodus** describes the outfitting of the Temple including the **veil**. The takeaway from what is described is based upon how the **veil** was to be hung and the substantial strength of what was needed to hold it up.

Based on these facts we can conclude that the **veil** is significant in size.

*No one man could lift and no man of any strength could tear it like it was torn the instant Jesus died!*

The Bible does not give exact measurements of the **veil** but in **1 Kings 6** we learn an approximate size from the dimensions of the House of God built by Solomon.

From those measurements many scholars believe the original measurements were as follows:

*30 cubits in height - 20 cubits wide*

The historical writer Josephus believes that *Herod* increased the *height to 40 cubits*.

This would make the measurements approximately in feet as follows:

*60 feet high by 30 feet wide*

To put it in perspective that would make the height 5 to 6 stories high!

We do not have an exact thickness nor weight but most historians agree that the veil was approximately *4 inches* thick.

It was a spectacular thing to behold with its woven color of ***blue, purple, and scarlet*** and ***fine linen*** and an ***artistic***

**design of cherubim.** *I'm not absolutely sure what cherubim looked like but we know that they symbolize God's angelic messengers. Perhaps what Ezekiel was describing in a vision in Chapter 1.*

*The **veil** was a spectacular sight to behold! But it also represented mercy and grace!*

*What was its purpose?*

*The veil separated the holy place from the Most Holy place.*

**Hebrews 9:1-7** (Slide 5)

**<sup>1</sup> Then indeed, even the first covenant had ordinances of divine service and the earthly sanctuary. <sup>2</sup> For a tabernacle was prepared: the first part, in which was the lampstand, the table, and the showbread, which is called the sanctuary; <sup>3</sup> and behind the second veil, (Slide 6) the part of the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of All, <sup>4</sup> which had the golden censer and the ark of the covenant overlaid on all sides with gold, in which were the golden pot that had the manna, (Slide 7) Aaron's rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant; <sup>5</sup> and above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail.**

***<sup>6</sup> Now when these things had been thus prepared, the (Slide 8) priests always went into the first part of the tabernacle, performing the services. <sup>7</sup> But into the second part the high priest went alone once a year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the people's sins committed in ignorance***

Was God there when the High Priest went behind the veil to offer a sin offering?

Notice one of the items behind that massive **veil** was the **mercy seat**. It doesn't take a road scholar to understand what is implied.

We don't have time to read the entirety of **Leviticus 16** but I will offer the highlights.

**Aaron**, the brother of **Moses**, was the **high priest** for the people. **Aaron** was given instruction from **Moses** whom God spoke directly too.

God expected **Aaron** to carry out the commands of worship precisely. As you may recall, **Aaron's** sons, **Nadab** and **Abihu**, were struck dead because they offered strange (profane) fire that God did not approve.

I believe what God says through **Moses** after they were consumed by fire is significant for our worship today.

**Leviticus 10:3** (Slide 9)

***'By those who come near Me  
I must be regarded as holy;  
And before all the people  
I must be glorified.'***

*God has not changed in His expectation of worship. It should follow the pattern outlined by His Holy Apostles in the New Testament. Any alteration is like offering strange fire!*

(Slide 10) **Aaron** would go in once a year in the **Holiest of Holies**. To offer the sin offering. Blood from a selected animal to be sacrificed. If He came in behind the **veil** at a time NOT designated by God, He would die.

**Aaron** was instructed on how to dress and prepare himself to enter before the presence of God. His garments were considered Holy. His hands had to be clean. A burnt offering had to be offered before he could enter the **Holiest of Holies**. The sin offering a well was also prepared before he could enter.



Two goats were selected in which one would be slain for the sin offering that he would offer on behalf of the people before the **mercy seat**. The other goat would be spared as a **scapegoat**.

Symbolically, the high priest would lay his hands on the head of the goat and transfer the sins of the people onto that goat and it would be released symbolizing carrying the sins of the people away.

When the Aaron enters the most holy place, the **Leviticus 16:2**, God tells Moses:

***for I will appear in the cloud above the mercy seat***

Brethren, the people relied on the fact that God's presence was there once a year behind that massive **veil** to have their sin dealt with and now the **veil**, which has tremendous significance for their spiritual life has been ripped in two!

*Though they had little time to contemplate what happened, they had to be stunned, devastated and confused.*

In an instant their way of worship, their tradition and their way of communicating to God and their hopes of atonement appeared to be gone and they were frightened!

In an instant the *OLD* had been replaced with the *NEW* because what they had experienced was simply a ***shadow of the good things to come.***

The way of standing before the Holy Presence of God still requires a blood sacrifice and that is the blood of Christ. One can only stand before God who is Holy cleansed only by the blood of Christ.

The massive ***veil*** is no longer there and God is no longer behind it appearing above the mercy seat.

**Acts 17:24** (Slide 11)

***God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands.***

*That old system of coming to God was over. In fact, the temple would be destroyed in A.D. 70 as Jesus predicted it would be at the fall of Jerusalem.*

**Hebrews 10** tells us if the sacrifices for sin could take away sin we would still offer them. The sacrifices were set as a reminder of sin every year.

Now through Christ and His shed blood, Mercy is offered to all!

**1 John 2:1-2** (Slide 12)

***<sup>1</sup> My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. <sup>2</sup> And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.***

**Romans 3:23-25** (Slide 13)

***<sup>23</sup> for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, <sup>24</sup> being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, <sup>25</sup> whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, (Slide 14) through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed***

The Bible is crystal clear that the blood of Christ was shed as the atonement for sin. In fact, the tearing of the **veil** signified that His blood is the only atonement for sin.

Jesus in essence is the veil!

**Hebrews 10:19-23** (Slide 15)

***<sup>19</sup> Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, <sup>20</sup> by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, <sup>21</sup> and having a High Priest over the house of God, (Slide 16) <sup>22</sup> let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. <sup>23</sup> Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.***

Brother E.M. Zerr's commentary states that Jesus' death and the tearing of the **veil** occurred at the exact moment that an animal sacrifice was to be offered.

When Jesus instituted what we call the Lord's supper, which He established so that we would remember Him, He made this statement;

**Luke 22:20** (Slide 17)

***Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you."***

## *Invitation*

*What I consider amazing is that many witnessed all these miraculous events the instant that Jesus died on the cross. Yet, His death and the destruction of the veil created a divided loyalty among those witnesses.*

*Lord willing we will examine more closely this divided loyalty next.*

*Even yet today, a division exists. What that means is that just as there were a small remnant of loyal, faithful followers of God, so too is there today.*

*Are you counted among that number? If not, become a child of God by submitting your will to His and be baptized for the remission of your sin.*

*If you are a child of God but need prayer for any reason, please let us know and we will pray for you!!*

*Let us know how we may serve you.....*

## **Reading**

### **Hebrews 10:1-10**

***<sup>1</sup> For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year,***

***make those who approach perfect. <sup>2</sup> For then would they not have ceased to be offered? For the worshipers, once purified, would have had no more consciousness of sins. <sup>3</sup> But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. <sup>4</sup> For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins.***

***<sup>5</sup> Therefore, when He came into the world, He said:***

***“Sacrifice and offering You did not desire,  
But a body You have prepared for Me.***

***<sup>6</sup> In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin  
You had no pleasure.***

***<sup>7</sup> Then I said, ‘Behold, I have come—  
In the volume of the book it is written of Me—  
To do Your will, O God.’ ”***

***<sup>8</sup> Previously saying, “Sacrifice and offering, burnt offerings, and offerings for sin You did not desire, nor had pleasure in them” (which are offered according to the law), <sup>9</sup> then He said, “Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God.” He takes away the first that He may establish the second. <sup>10</sup> By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.***

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