

Title: **THE VEIL OF SEPARATION**

Text: Exodus 26:31-35

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Tape : Exodus #92

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Introduction:

In the tabernacle, and later in the temple, the Lord God commanded that a veil of separation be hung between the holy place of daily service and the holy of holies. It formed a wall of separation between God and men. None but the high priest could enter in within the veil; and he could do so only once a year, only on the day of atonement, and even then only with the blood of God's appointed sacrifice, the paschal lamb. Turn with me to Exodus 26. My subject is **THE VEIL OF SEPARATION**. Our text will be verses 31-35.

(Exodus 26:31-35) “And thou shalt make a veil *of* blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen of cunning work: with cherubims shall it be made: (32) And thou shalt hang it upon four pillars of shittim *wood* overlaid with gold: their hooks *shall be of* gold, upon the four sockets of silver. (33) And thou shalt hang up the veil under the taches, that thou mayest bring in thither within the veil the ark of the testimony: and the veil shall divide unto you between the holy *place* and the most holy. (34) And thou shalt put the mercy seat upon the ark of the testimony in the most holy *place*. (35) And thou shalt set the table without the veil, and the candlestick over against the table on the side of the tabernacle toward the south: and thou shalt put the table on the north side.”

We do not have to speculate about the spiritual significance of this veil. The Scriptures tell us plainly that it speaks of our Lord Jesus Christ (Hebrews 9:1-12).

(Hebrews 9:1-12) “Then verily the first *covenant* had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary. (2) For there was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein *was* the candlestick, and the table, and the showbread; which is called the sanctuary. (3) And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all; (4) Which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein *was* the golden pot that had

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manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; (5) And over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercyseat; of which we cannot now speak particularly. (6) Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service *of God*. (7) But into the second *went* the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and *for* the errors of the people: (8) The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: (9) Which *was* a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; (10) Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed *on them* until the time of reformation. (11) But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; (12) Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption *for us*."

Clearly the veil of separation points to our blessed Savior who has, with his own blood, enter into "*heaven itself, there to appear in the presence of God for us.*"

THAT WHICH CONCEALS

First, it should be noted that a veil is a covering. It is something that covers, hides, or conceals. There is something hidden behind it that cannot be seen. As the veil on Moses' face screened the glory beaming forth from that man who had been in the mount with God, so to this day there is a veil on the hearts of men that keeps them from seeing the glory of God in the face of Christ. Oh, how greatly blessed of God we are, when the veil is taken away and Christ is revealed! (See 2 Corinthians 3:8-18; 4:6; Hebrews 10:19-21).

(2 Corinthians 3:8-18) "How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious? (9) For if the ministration of condemnation *be* glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory. (10) For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth. (11) For if that which is done away *was* glorious, much more that which remaineth

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is glorious. (12) Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech: (13) And not as Moses, *which* put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished: (14) But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which *veil* is done away in Christ. (15) But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart. (16) Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away. (17) Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord *is*, there *is* liberty. (18) But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, *even* as by the Spirit of the Lord.”

(2 Corinthians 4:6) “For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to *give* the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”

(Hebrews 10:19-21) “Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, (20) By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; (21) And *having* an high priest over the house of God.”

The veil of the tabernacle hid — or came between — the people and the glory of the divine presence, which rested on the mercy-seat in the holy of holies. This veil, remember, is a type of the body of the Lord Jesus Christ. He took upon him “*the likeness of sinful flesh*” (Romans 8:3). His flesh, like a veil, concealed the glory of his divine character. On the Mount of transfiguration, when he was transfigured before Peter, James and John, the glory that dwelt within burst forth, as Moses and Elijah spoke to him about the death he must accomplish at Jerusalem. That glory, that divine majesty, was always there, but the body of flesh veiled it.

Indeed, there is a sense in which our own bodies are veils that hide from us the face of our glorified Lord. The death of this body will be but the rending of the veil, the opening of the way for our access into his immediate, glorious presence. — “*To be absent from the body, present with the Lord*” (2 Corinthians 5:8). How sweet the thought — only a veil between!

THE MATERIALS

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Second, the materials with which the veil of separation was made are highly symbolic. If you look back at the 1st verse of this chapter, you will see that this veil of separation was made of the same materials, and in the same way as the curtains of the tabernacle.

- It was made of “*fine linen*,” which represented the purity of Christ’s nature as the God-man, the holiness of his life as our Mediator, and the righteousness of God which he brought in by his obedience unto death as our Representative and Surety.
- The veil was made of “*twined linen*,” representing our Redeemer’s strength as our God-man Mediator. “*Fine twined*,” that is the texture of his being! God and man are finely twined in one in the person of our Lord Jesus.
- This veil was made “*of cunning work*.” Our Savior’s incarnation and birth was by the “*cunning work*” of God the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35; 1 Timothy 3:16).

(Luke 1:35) “And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.”

(1 Timothy 3:16) “And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.”

- And it was made of “*of blue, purple, and scarlet*.” These same colors appeared in the “*hanging for the door*” (v. 36). The colors are the same because both the veil of separation and the door of access speak of Christ. It is Christ, the one and only God-man, our one and only Mediator, who brings us to God. — **The blue** speaks of him who came from heaven. — **The scarlet** speaks of him who is man, born of woman. — **The purple** is formed by combining scarlet and blue, by combining God and man. — Purple is the color of royalty, representing Christ our Royal Priest and King! Let us sing with Mary, “*My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit bath rejoiced in GOD my Saviour*” (Luke 1:46).

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- These colors, blue, and purple, and scarlet, may have reference to **the graces of the Spirit**, with which our Redeemer's humanity was adorned, — his flaming zeal for his Father's glory and the good of his people, — his bloody wounds, sufferings, and death, the preciousness of his blood, the dignity of his person, — and his glorious exaltation, purple and scarlet being the colors worn by kings.
- This veil of separation was made "**with cherubims**" embroidered in it. There is something wonderful and magnificent in this. The cherubims were made as one piece of beaten work of gold with the mercy-seat (Exodus 25:17-20). They were embroidered into the curtain over the tabernacle. And they were embroidered in this veil of separation. — Why? — It is because Christ and his people are one.

ITS' POSITION

Third, the position of the veil is highly significant and instructive. In verse 32 we read, "*And thou shalt hang it upon four pillars of shittim wood overlaid with gold: their hooks shall be of gold, upon the four sockets of silver.*" The veil was so large, so thick and heavy that it took four pillars to hold it. Dr. Gill suggests that...

- These pillars represent the divinity of our Savior, which upheld and sustained his humanity in all his undertakings and accomplishments as our Substitute, giving merit, virtue and efficacy to all.
- The shittim wood overlaid with gold spoke of the eternity of our Redeemer and the eternity of all his accomplishments for us.
- The veil was hung upon hooks of gold and set upon sockets of silver, linking God and man through the atonement.

This thick, heavy veil of separation was hung directly in front of the mercy-seat. It separated the holy of holies from the holy place. Symbolically, it separated God from man. This, too, is simply magnificent. The veil of separation, the very thing that separated God from man, represented him by whom God and man are reconciled!

- There was no access to God but through this veil. It is through Christ Jesus alone that poor, fallen sinners have access to God. — "*I am the Way*" (John 14. 6).
- The priest could enter in behind the veil only once a year, and then only with the blood of the paschal lamb.

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What a solemn time that must have been for God's priest! As he pushed the heavy veil aside, he knew he was pushing his way into the presence of God, before whom no man can stand, without the blood he symbolically carried in his hand! As he pushed the veil of separation aside, the priest was saying symbolically, "The incarnate God must be removed, taken away by death, before man can come to God. Christ must be removed. The holy One must put to death before man can, through his sin-atonement blood, enter into fellowship with God."

THE RENDING OF THE VEIL

Fourth, let's look at the rending of the veil. The fullest and most delightful explanation of the veil of separation was given in the moment of our Lord's death on the cross. When the Lord Jesus bowed his sacred head, and gave up the ghost, immediately, we are told, "*the veil of the temple was rent in twain, from the top to the bottom*" (Matthew 27:51). By the invisible hand of the invisible God, the veil was ripped from the top to the bottom.

The meaning of this is obvious: — From the highest heaven to the lowest earth, Christ Jesus has opened a new and living way by his blood. Not only has he entered himself within the veil, but he has entered in as our Forerunner, and we shall, most assuredly, follow him, that where he is there we shall be also.

As the Lord Jesus has, by his death, opened a new and living way for his people, so he has broken down all the veils of separation between himself and his redeemed. The Jew and the Gentile were now brought into one fold. The veil of mysteries hidden from men in ages past, of ordinances and shadows of the law, has been taken away in his holy mountain the church (Isaiah 25:6-9).

(Isaiah 25:6-9) "And in this mountain shall the LORD of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. (7) And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. (8) He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the LORD hath spoken *it*. (9) And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this *is* our God; we have waited for

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him, and he will save us: this *is* the LORD; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.”

1. **The veil was divinely rent.** — It was rent from the top. Rent from above, rent by God. Had it been the work of man it would have been torn from the bottom. Though it is true that “*with wicked hands*” men crucified and slew the Lord of Glory, yet, our Savior died by the will of God, by the hand of God, and for the glory of God. It was God who made our sins to meet on him. The veil was rent from the top, the hands of God were stretched forth, they took hold of it and opened it up, indicating that the death of his beloved Son has met every claim of righteous and justice, setting before us open access to the mercy-seat!
2. **The veil was rent in the midst.** — Not down the side. It was no side entrance Christ made for us by his sin-atonement blood! The ark, with its mercy-seat and Shekinah glory, stood in the centre of the holy of holies and close to the veil. The veil, being rent in the midst, was rent right in front of the mercy-seat. **The veil was rent in twain.** — It did not fall to pieces, and was not torn to shreds. The rent was clean and straight, made by the invisible hand of the invisible God. Perhaps this exact division into two parts symbolized the separation of Christ’s soul from his body in death. Perhaps it symbolized the throwing open of the great door between earth and heaven, as John saw in his vision, indicating the complete reconciliation of the fellowship between God and his people by the blood of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17-21; Revelation 4:1-2).

(2 Corinthians 5:17-21) “Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. (18) And all things *are* of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; (19) To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. (20) Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech *you* by us: we pray *you* in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God. (21) For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”

(Revelation 4:1-2) “After this I looked, and, behold, a door *was* opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard *was* as it were of

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a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will show thee things which must be hereafter. (2) And immediately I was in the spirit; and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and *one* sat on the throne.”

3. **The veil was completely rent.** — Not a thread was left in the way. Grace began it and grace completed it. “*It is finished!*” Christ has indeed perfected that which concerns us. Every difficulty in God’s way of saving men is now removed, and removed by God himself. — Sin has been put away. — Justice has been satisfied! — Righteousness is brought in! — The law has been fulfilled, completely and forever fulfilled for us by our Substitute.

The veil was rent from the top to the bottom. — It was not rent from side to side, nor from the bottom to the top: which might have suggested that it was simply worn out from usage. It was rent from the top to the bottom, showing that the power which rent it was from above, not from beneath; that the rending was not of man but of God. It was man that crucified the Lord of Glory, but, “*it pleased the Lord to bruise him; He hath put him to grief.*” Beginning with the roof and ending with the floor, the rent was complete; for God in heaven had done it.

- From the roof to floor there remained not one fragment of the old veil.
- So from heaven to earth, from the throne of God, down to the dwelling of man, there exists not one remnant nor particle of a barrier between sinners and God.
- He who openeth and no man shutteth has, with His own hand, and in his own boundless mercy, love and grace, thrown open to the chief of sinners the throne of grace, and bids us come in and draw near (Hebrews 4:16).

The rent veil declares that Christ is the end of the law. He finished and fulfilled it. He satisfied and completed it. Now, we have free and open access the throne of God. — The rending of the veil was done, as if the temple itself mourned for and testified abhorrence at the crucifixion of Christ. The temple rent, as it were, its garments at the death of its Lord. — The veil was rent to show that the Lord, who had taken up his residence in the most holy place between the cherubim, over the mercy-seat, in thick darkness, had now moved out and left the house desolate. — The rending of

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the veil signified the rending of Christ's flesh, the breaking of his body for us, which was typified by the veil (Hebrews 10:20).

The veil was rent to signify the clear, full revelation of God and his saving grace proclaimed in the Gospel, proclaiming the way into the holiest of all, into heaven itself, where Christ is, who entered by his own blood, as our Forerunner (Hebrews 10:9-22).

(Hebrews 10:9-22) “Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. (10) By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*. (11) And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: (12) But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; (13) From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. (14) For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. (15) *Whereof* the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before, (16) *This is* the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; (17) And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. (18) Now where remission of these *is, there is* no more offering for sin. (19) Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, (20) By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; (21) And *having* an high priest over the house of God; (22) 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.”

4. **The veil was rent in the presence of the Jewish priests**. — They were in the holy place, outside the veil, of course, officiating, lighting the lamps, or placing incense on the golden altar, or arranging the showbread on the golden table. When they saw the solemn rending of the veil, they must have been shocked and terrified. I can picture them covering their eyes lest they should see the hidden glories of that holy chamber they were forbidden to enter. Perhaps Isaiah's words rang in their ears, — “*Woe is me, for I am undone; I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell among a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts*” (Isa 6:5).

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5. **But the veil was rent before their eyes to disclose the true mercy-seat, Christ Jesus, our Savior and the glory of God!** — It is no longer profanity to handle the holy things of the sanctuary, or to gaze upon the golden floor and walls all stained with sacrificial blood, or to go up to the mercy-seat and sit down beneath the very shadow of the glory of God. Indeed, the safest and the most blessed place for our needy souls is the Mercy-Seat, Christ Jesus. Come into the holy place and handle him (1 John 1:1-3; 2:1-2).

(1 John 1:1-3) “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (2) (For the life was manifested, and we have seen *it*, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) (3) That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship *is* with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.”

(1 John 2:1-2) “My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: (2) And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of the whole world.*”

6. **The veil was rent at the time of the evening sacrifice.** — About three o’clock, when the sun began to set, the lamb was slain, and laid upon the brazen altar. Just at the moment when its blood was shed, and the smoke arose from the fire that was consuming it, the veil was rent in twain. There was an unseen link between the altar and the veil, between the sacrifice and the rending, between the blood-shedding and the removal of the barrier. It was blood that had done the work. It was blood that had rent the veil and thrown open the mercy-seat: the blood of “*the Lamb, without blemish, and without spot.*”
7. **The veil was rent precisely at the moment when the Son of God died on the cross.** — His death did it! His death opened God’s heaven for our souls. His death opened for us the way of life and brought us into life. It was from the cross that the power emanated which rent the veil. From that place of weakness and shame and agony, came forth the omnipotent command, — “*Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye*

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lifted up, ye everlasting doors.” The “*It is finished*” upon Golgotha was the appointed signal, and the instantaneous response was the rending of the veil. The pierced hands of our accepted Sacrifice rent the veil separating God and man. It was the cross of Christ that rent the veil and opened the new and living way into the holiest of all.

8. **When the veil was rent, the cherubim which were embroidered on it were rent with it.** — Those cherubim symbolized the Church of God’s elect. Being embroidered into the veil, we see a picture of our identification with Christ in his death. We were nailed with him to the cross. We were crucified with him. With him we died, and were buried, and rose again. In that rent veil we have the symbol of the apostle’s doctrine, concerning our union and oneness with Christ in life and death. — “*I am crucified with Christ.*” — “*Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.*”
9. **The rent veil declares that all the law is fulfilled, satisfied and ended.** — “*Christ is the of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth.*” — “*There is therefore, now, no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.*”

The broken body and shed blood of our Lord opened the sinner’s way into the holiest. These were the tokens of grace and of righteousness. The rending of the veil was not merely an act of God’s power. And it was not merely an act of his grace. Righteousness did it. Righteousness rolled away the stone. Righteousness burst the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron. The barrier of separation has been righteously removed. We have a righteous, as well as a gracious entrance into the holy place. God gives sinners a righteous as well as gracious welcome at his throne!

That which the blood of bulls and goats could never do, Christ has done with his own precious blood! Thank God forever, his is better blood! It knocks but once, and the gate flies open. It but once touches the sword of fire, and it is quenched. Not a moment is lost. The fulness of the time has come. **God has unbarred the door!** He has thrown open his Mercy-Seat to poor, needy sinners, and rushes to receive his banished ones!

The veil, then, has been rent in twain from the top to the bottom by the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. The way is open. The blood is sprinkled. The Mercy-Seat is accessible. And the voice of our Great High Priest,

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seated on that Mercy-Seat, bids us enter in, and to enter in boldly, without fear. — *“Having, therefore, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh, and having an High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart, in the full assurance of faith.”*

Let us therefore enter in and find the mercy and grace we need in him! **Entering in is our only security and our only joy.** The only way we can enter in by Christ the Way is in the confident boldness of *“the full assurance of faith,”* trusting him alone as our all-sufficient, gloriously effectual Savior. Not to come with such boldness is unbelief. Not to come in the full assurance of faith is the presumption. **To draw near with an “evil conscience” is to declare our belief that the blood of the Lamb is not of itself enough to give the sinner a good conscience and a fearless access to the throne of grace.**

“May I then draw near, just as I am, by the virtue and the efficacy of the sprinkled blood?” Yes, you may! How else could you come? — “May I be bold at once?” Indeed you may! If ever you see the blood upon mercy-seat, that will give you the boldness and full assurance of faith by which you may enter it. Do you see it? Has God the Holy Spirit given you eyes to see? Then come boldly! Come boldly now! Come in the full assurance of faith, not supposing it possible that that God who has provided such a mercy-seat can do anything but welcome you. Such a mercy-seat can be anything but the place of pardon.

The rent veil is liberty of access. The sprinkled blood is boldness, — boldness for the needy sinner. **The rent veil has a voice.** The blood is the voice. It speaks pardon, peace, salvation and eternal life to sinners. *“Today, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart!”* Make haste and enter in!

Lord Jesus, come now in the hearts of your redeemed, and take away the veil of unbelief. Open to the comfort of our souls sweet, soul-ravishing views of his your grace and glory. Just imagine, my brother, my sister, what a glorious object will that day, that wonderful day, open to our souls, when Christ Jesus removes the last veil in the resurrection, when our dear Lord appears in all his beauty to take his redeemed home to himself. Then, when we awake in his likeness, we shall be fully and eternally satisfied with his presence forever — **WITHIN THE VEIL!**

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Amen.