

::R0153 : page 2::

BEYOND THE VAIL

In his letter to the Hebrews, the Apostle frequently refers to *a vail*. He is writing to those who were familiar with the earthly tabernacle, its arrangements and services. The Apostle endeavors to show that it was only a type or figure designed to illustrate spiritual truths.

There were three curtains, two of which were called vails. Let us see: If we had visited the Tabernacle in the wilderness, the first object to meet our attention as we approached would have been the white linen curtains which completely surrounded everything (both Tabernacle and its court) so high that we could not see over it, and reaching to the ground so that we could see nothing under it. All the work within is hidden from our eyes. This is "*the curtain*" or vail of ignorance and unbelief. This vail now prevents *the world* from understanding the work of sacrifice for sin, etc., now going on inside (in the church). This curtain now covers the hearts and minds of the heathen and the Jews. "The *vail* is upon their heart," "the same *vail* untaken away." This vail of ignorance and unbelief obstructs their view during this gospel age, while God is taking out a people as *the body* of the High

::R0154 : page 2::

Priest, etc., and receiving through this High Priest the "sin offering." But soon their full ransom will be complete and accepted, and then "the *vail* shall be taken away." (2 Cor. 3:14-16.) This is the same thought given us by the Prophet when he declares, God "will destroy in this mountain [kingdom, the glorified church] the face of the covering [death] cast over *all people*, and the vail [ignorance and unbelief, etc.] spread over all nations." (Isa. 25:7.)

But now, for the purpose of developing a peculiar people, this great temporary barrier is allowed to remain, and there is only one way through it called "*the gate*." This gate represents belief in Jesus as the way of approach to God. Once seeing *the gate* we may look in and see the altar and laver, indicating to us that His sacrifice paid the price of our ransom. We are still *of the world*, but seeing the love of our Creator and of Jesus as manifested in our purchase, we are impressed with the thought of the "exceeding sinfulness of sin," and realizing for the first time, the "great love wherewith he loved us," we say, Lord we can never repay your goodness and love, but let us do something which will show our appreciation. The Father says to us: Have you heard the call of my word? It is that any of you, may, if you will, enter by *this road* which my only begotten Son trod, into full sonship, partake of the Divine nature and *have spiritual bodies, etc.*

We could not understand all that was meant. Our ears were dull of hearing, but we felt grateful and desired to show it, and went forward. We entered in through faith. We are no longer without, among unbelievers, but within, among “the household of faith”—the Levites. We look at the altar, and are told that it represents sacrifice, and that God expects *self*-sacrifice. We look at the “laver” full of water, and are told that it represents the word of God, and that we are to use it and put away sins—be “clean through the word.” We make some trifling sacrifices upon the altar, and splash a little in the water, and feel perfectly contented. We act and play and dally very much as those do (the world) who are yet beyond this “*curtain*”—in unbelief. But God has sent to us heralds, who, coming in among the company, proclaim, “We beseech *you, brethren*, by the mercies of God”—if you feel gratitude for the manifest love of God, and desire to please Him and enter into the blessings to which you are called—“your high calling”—that you do more than you have yet done. If you would follow the example of our Lord, as you have agreed to do, you must not only lay these *toys* upon the altar, but your all. I beseech you that “you present *your bodies a living sacrifice*, holy, acceptable to God, *your reasonable service*.”

Some heed not the voice, they are so much engaged with the earthly toys. But some are aroused. They leave those earthly trinkets, and give their attention to following the example of Jesus and the apostles, presenting themselves to God as living sacrifices, and “reckoning themselves dead indeed to sin” and to the “world.” They have now undergone a complete change. They have now entered from the “court” into the “tabernacle” itself, passing through “*the first vail*.” (This word translated *vail* is from a different Greek word from that translated vail in 2 Cor. 3:14-16, referred to above, as representing the “*curtain*.”) Those who pass through this *first “vail”* into the “holy place” are the ones who *fulfill* their “covenant by sacrifice,” called saints. All believers coming through the “*curtain*” are “*called to be saints*,” but only those who obey the call and yield themselves sacrifices “make their calling and election sure.”

Thus this first vail represents clearly our *death to the world*. The flesh is left outside, voluntarily given over to death and destruction, while *we* as new creatures in Christ, go beyond this vail, and enjoy a newness of life. Thus we fill two pictures: our earthly nature has been given up, deprived of life, and is being taken without the camp to be *destroyed*, while our new nature is at the same instant within the first vail, not as men, but as members of the High Priest’s body. We are not only dead with Him, but also alive with Him. “We are buried with Him by baptism into death” (Rom. 6:4), “wherein also ye are risen with Him.” (Col. 2:12.) The natural body is no longer we, for “we are not in the flesh, but in the spirit.” (Rom. 8:9).

We claim then that our going through this first vail represents the death of the natural fleshly will or mind, and that our entering the inside of the Tabernacle represents our entrance to the condition of the spiritual or new nature. “For ye are dead,” (as men.) “If ye then be risen with

Christ, seek those things which are above; set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth, for ye are dead." (Col. 3:1-3.) For God "hath raised us up, (in the spirit of our minds,) and made us sit together in heavenly places (spiritual conditions) in Christ Jesus. [Eph. 2:6.]

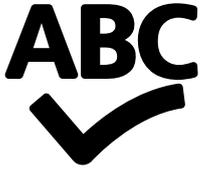
Progressing in our new nature we come to the second vail, but we cannot go through this vail until the flesh has been entirely destroyed—represented by the burning of the body of the sin-offering without the camp. But remember that the flesh of "the goat of sin-offering" represents the fleshly bodies of all the members of Christ, and its destruction ("burning") requires all of this gospel age. Though Paul's body was yielded up and destroyed long ago, he must wait; he cannot enter through the second vail until all we who are fellow members of the same body, likewise have the body of flesh *destroyed*, for "They without us shall not be made perfect." [Heb. 11:40.] Consider for a moment what it will be for us to be made perfect. Would it be the perfecting of the fleshly nature? Oh, no! We gave it up to destruction as a sacrifice, before we passed the first vail, and the life that we now live and seek to have perfected is the spiritual, Divine life. Having begun in the spirit and progressed thus far, could we be perfected through the flesh? Certainly not. We now have the "mind of Christ," "the spirit of Christ," "the spirit of adoption," "our *new nature*," and enjoy it much. What we lack of being perfect is a spiritual body in harmony with our "spiritual mind," new nature. And this is what we are waiting for, this condition of perfection. "When that which is perfect is come that which is in part shall be done away." Now we are in part *natural*, but the natural part will soon give place to the body which God has promised us—a spiritual—like unto Christ's glorious body. "I shall be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness."

We have seen that there are two stages to the second birth; first, the *begetting of the spirit* when we get our new life in the old body, where it develops at the expense of the body; second, our birth by the resurrection, when we shall be "*born from the dead*." So now, we see the same general lesson taught by the two veils of the Tabernacle. To enter the presence of God—the plane of spiritual or Divine life—both of these veils representing the flesh must be passed. Beloved brethren, you have all come in through the outside "*gate*," through the curtain, you are believers in Jesus, know of his having ransomed us. You among many have been called to be saints and heirs of God. Are you making that calling sure? Have you made the covenant to die with Jesus—"The covenant of sacrifice?" Are you doing according to your covenant, walking in newness of life, obeying the law of your new nature—Love? If you are, I need not ask, I know that the result is the crucifying of the "*old man*."

If you are within the first vail, thank God and take courage, remembering that to "keep your body under," you must have all the spiritual strength and light to be derived from the unleavened bread and the golden candlestick. Let us press on close up to the second vail, and there at the golden incense altar offer an offering acceptable and of sweet savor to God through Jesus Christ.

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— November, 1880 —



Jeżeli zauważysz błąd w pisowni, powiadom nas poprzez zaznaczenie tego fragmentu tekstu i przyciśnięcie *Ctrl+Enter*.