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Sermon preached by Mr. J.E Hazelton on Sunday morning 14th April 1907

"And thou shalt make a vail of blue and purple and scarlet, and fine twined linen of cunning work with cherubim shall it be made." Exodus 26:31.

In the course of our consideration of the tabernacle types we come this morning to that of the beautiful vail, which hung between the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies. Let us, as enabled, consider it from two points of view: First in relation to the Person of our blessed Lord and secondly, in relation to His dear people, for the vail is most intimately connected with Christ and with us.

First of all we will consider it as a type of the Person of our Lord. The more I think of these types, the more thankful I am that God in condescending pity has made Infinite and Eternal things known to us under these figures and pictures. In Old Testament times type after type, figure after figure was used to show to poor sinners what God is, and to show to them what He would become to them, and what they were to Him, and in our brighter Gospel day we have the embodiment of all the types in the Person of our blessed Lord and Saviour, but this vail gives to us a four-fold view of the Person of our Lord. You will observe that it hung supported upon four pillars of shittim wood overlaid with gold, and each pillar stood in a socket of silver; those four pillars overlaid with gold and standing in their silver sockets supported the glorious vail from golden loops and taches, and when we consider that vail we see that four colours brightly shine therein.

First there is the ground colour, the pure white of the fine twined linen; then there are three other colours, the blue, purple and scarlet, and in all these colours there are wrought figures of the cherubims like to those made of the same pure gold as the mercy seat; therefore the cardinal truth of the union of Christ with His dear people was set forth by the cherubims upon the mercy seat beaten out of the same piece of gold, and also by the cherubims interwoven into the very texture of that magnificent curtain called the vail. That vail parted the Holy of Holies from the Holy Place. Once a year, with the blood of others, the High Priest entered, uplifting reverently one corner of the vail and so passing with the blood and incense into the immediate presence of the Lord his God. In the New Testament we have a fourfold Gospel. It is wrong to say the four Gospels; there is only one Gospel, and the translators of the Bible caught at this truth, hence we have the Gospel according to Matthew, the Gospel according to Mark, and so to Luke and to John. One vail with four colours on it; one Gospel proceeding from the inspired pen of four writers, and so giving to us a fourfold view, like the vail itself, of the Person of our beloved Lord

There is the Gospel of Matthew. What is the title to that? 'Behold the King!' There is the scarlet of the kingship. Matthew is the Gospel which sets forth our Lord as the Son of David, as King. Then there is Mark, 'Behold My Servant.' The gospel of service; our blessed Lord is represented as the Servant in Mark. There is the fine twined linen of His perfection in all His glorious righteousness as the Servant of the Lord. There is Luke, - our Lord as the Son of Man, and 'Behold the Man' we might write over that book. There we have the purple representing Christ the Lord in His Person joining the Human and the Divine (the blue and the scarlet resulting in the purple). And then fourthly we have

the Gospel according to John, and that might be headed 'Behold the Lamb of God!' There we have the Gospel of the Son of God, representing the heavenly blue.

Thus the vail in its four colours represents the one Gospel describing our blessed Lord from four different points of view. When Aaron looked upon that vail he could say 'It is the chiefest and the altogether lovely.' When we look upon the Person of our Lord as described in the fourfold Gospel, happy are we if we can say 'He is the chiefest among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely' as my King, as the Servant of the Lord, as the Son of Man; "bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh", and lovely as the Son of God displaying the heavenly blue in His own nature and in His career on earth, all culminating in His sacrificial death on Calvary. "Very fanciful" perhaps someone might say, who is a subject of the modern teaching of the day! Is it? Let us hear what God the Holy Ghost says in the 10th chapter of Hebrews. He says 'Through the vail, that is to say, His flesh', His Person, the Body of God manifest in the flesh.

Look for a moment at those two words in the text, - thou shalt make a vail of *cunning work*, - that means of skilled work. Hear what the Holy Ghost says again in the 10th Hebrews, quoting from a version of the 40th Psalm, 'A Body hast Thou prepared Me' - marginal rendering 'fitted.' Then again in the 139th Psalm our blessed Lord speaks of His human nature, His flesh, His Body as having "been curiously wrought;" there is the cunning work. There is the flesh; the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ called 'the Holy Thing' formed by the Holy Spirit, of cunning work. The great truth bursts upon our minds here that from all eternity the Divine thought was fixed upon the humanity of God's Eternal Son, and so the human nature of our blessed Lord was formed of the Holy Ghost; His flesh, and therefore His Person is *absolutely pure*; it was *absolutely untainted by sin*; it was absolutely free from the very possibility of disease, and was absolutely exempt from mortality; no seeds of death were in the human body of our blessed Lord!. But He died. Yes, He did, but 'I have power to lay down My life, and I have power to take it again.' Now dear friends all this is of vital and growing importance, especially in the day in which we live. I am more and more convinced that we who speak in the Lord's Name have lamentably failed in setting forth His Truth concerning the great fundamentals of our holy religion, and therefore there are so many weak and unstable ones.

Look at the blasphemies of today against the Person of our blessed Lord. If His resurrection life is in us by divine grace, we are distressed; we are wounded to the very soul by the fearful blasphemies sounded out from many pulpits. If I may so speak, God has been at infinite pains to teach us throughout His Word concerning the glorious Person of Him who has saved us with an everlasting salvation, on whom our hopes of heaven are built, and with whom we hope forever to dwell.

Aaron stands before that vail; it is a vail of extraordinary beauty and strength, because we must remember the vail, both of the Tabernacle and of the Temple, was of exceeding thickness. Is there anything stronger than an exceedingly thick piece of woven work? This intensifies the character of the miracle which rent it in twain from the top to the bottom. How could he do so? There Aaron stood and admired the beauty of that vail from the light of the golden candlestick in the Holy Place. "God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness bath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the Face of Jesus Christ." Do you admire the Lord? Do you look upon and consider His Person with adoring favour and wonder? It is from the light of the golden candlestick. But it was reverence on Aaron's part and godly fear. It was not a rent vail, and the very

presence of our Lord on earth declared the impossibility of anyone approaching God but He Himself. It declared the impossibility of anyone approaching to God unless having His perfection. Look at Peter. 'Depart from me for I am a sinful man, O Lord.' He looked at the un-rent vail, and he beheld the perfection and glory of the Lord Jesus Christ and he shrank. And so, the Incarnation of the Son of God *only*, presents NO Gospel to the sinner. People tell us it does, but it DOES NOT - It is an un-rent vail - no way of access. There hung the vail with its four colours, but that vail hid the ark, the Mercy Seat, the Shekinah Cloud and the golden cherubim. The vail must be rent; that it is the Gospel for sinners, the GOSPEL OF THE RENT VAIL. The Incarnation is the road to Calvary; Bethlehem too and Nazareth are roads to Golgotha, and it is at Golgotha in the blood-shedding and infinite Love that we find our salvation. .

Let us pass on and speak of this vail in relation to God's people, in relation to trusting sinners, in relation to guilty, seeking, penitent sinners. We see how gloriously it represents the Person of the Lord, and then we see that the Lord's people are joined to Him, even as the cherubim were wrought into the vail. Look at the vail in relation to His people. The vail speaks to us, first of all of separation. There are two things that absolutely separate the natural man from God. And what are they? The first is the guilt, the demerit of sin, - the guilt which rests upon us - the separating wall. And the second is the distaste of every natural man and woman for the things of God. Those two things, guilt upon him and ruin within him, cut man off from communion with God. The heart of man is bad to the very core.

Now, though there is this separating wall between God and men, an open way has been made. The guilty become clean before God through the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, and those who are unwilling, have a new will given to them to lead them into God's presence. Both are from Jesus, for the Spirit that gives the new will, and that bestows the new capacity is the Spirit that cometh from the Father and the Son. - the Spirit which cometh to poor lost and ruined sinners by virtue of the Saviour's death, by virtue of the purple stream that ran for us on Calvary. The blood of Jesus gives boldness. It is sprinkled before the mercy seat, and the blood of Jesus sprinkled is sprinkled because His sacred Body was rent - 'through the vail that is to say His flesh.' and whilst the blood of Jesus gives boldness, the Spirit of Christ gives willingness. No approach to God without the blood, and never has been! The first man who ever had communion with God had it through the blood, and that was Abel. He had it through the blood, through that which the blood of his sacrifices set forth. With regard to Old Testament saints, the way into the Holiest was not closed. Oh they had access! Does it not make you feel small when you compare your spiritual life, your longings and desires with those of the Old Testament saints? How much deeper and stronger theirs were in many respects than ours. The way into the Holiest was not closed to them, but it was not manifested in its fullness. There was the type, but now the only begotten Son of God which dwelt in His bosom, He hath declared Him, manifested Himself, manifested the Father's love, and by stooping to the death of Calvary's cross, and there giving up His own life, the vail is rent, the blood is shed, and the way is made. The great barrier then between man and God is SIN. Now remembering this, does it not cast a flood of light upon what is said in Holy Writ, 'He hath made Him to be SIN for us, who knew no sin'? The curse was laid upon Him to whom sin was imputed, and when He said 'It is finished' the vail was rent, the barrier was gone; sin was made an end of; the vail was rent in twain from the top to the bottom, and the way of access was made. Here then in the vail we have these two cardinal truths of our most holy religion: - substitution, 'made sin for us,' and then because the 'vail' is rent sin is gone.

Also there is union, for Christ and His people are one in life, death, and resurrection. In the heavenly places now, and shall be in the glory yet to come.

The vail was rent, rent from the top - not from the bottom to the top, but from the top to the bottom. That signifies that it was by God's own Hand, and it is wonderful and solemn subject of contemplation to view the sufferings of our Lord, because of His Father's judgment upon Him as the Substitute of poor, lost and ruined sinners. 'Awake O sword against My Shepherd, and smite the Man that is My Fellow, saith the Lord.' Says our blessed Lord, 'All Thy waves and Thy billows are gone over Me.' (Psalm 42:7) The Lord laid on Him (on the Vail) the iniquity of us all. Wicked men with wicked hands and hellish hearts crucified and slew the Lord of Glory; the sin was theirs, but God was pleased to overrule this, and our blessed Lord, His own dear Son, having entered into covenant with His Father to put away sin, the Father punished it upon His Head. The vail was rent by God's own Hand.

It was rent in twain, - that is, absolutely in the centre, so that the way was made to the absolute centre of the ark, to the absolute centre of the mercy seat where the Shekinah cloud dwelt between the cherubim. In the Gospel according to Luke we have the record of the rending of the vail, and we find that it took place during the three hours of darkness, (or we draw that inference): and I take it that the meaning is this, that during those three hours of darkness, when the Hand of God lay in unmitigated judgment upon His dear son, on the soul of the Lamb of God, sin was being expiated; the rending went on until at last He said 'IT IS FINISHED'; 'The vail was rent in twain' to appear no more for ever. Is it not a wonderful salvation? They sing in Heaven today the Song of Moses and the Lamb, and the anthem of the redeemed runs like this: 'Great and marvellous are Thy works Thou Lord God Almighty: Just and true are Thy ways Thou King of Saints.' O beloved, we want more wonder in our religion. We want more solemnity in our religion! We want less clatter of tongues, and more of the spirit that prompts us to fall in adoring wonder before the Redeemer and a redemption so magnificent, which stoops to pick up the feeblest, to welcome the blackest, and to enfold in arms of love the most trembling. 'Thy people SHALL be willing in the day of Thy power.' The rent vail is the way to Heaven, the way to the mercy seat, to Jesus and to God working for the willing people. Remember that at the same moment that the Vail was rent the graves opened. What is that? A full and glorious salvation. The way into the Holiest opened, and the graves of poor sinners also opened. I am NOT questioning the actual fact, but the spiritual teaching is that a willing people were brought out.

*Come, ye humble sinner train
Souls for whom the Lamb was slain.*

This is our Gospel. Blood to reconcile: blood to cleanse: blood that avails for ever: blood that possesses eternal vitality, and is of infinite value. "Into the Holiest of all" - nothing less will satisfy a living soul. If we are going to Heaven, nothing less will satisfy but communion with the thrice holy God; that we may know, taste and feel the compassion, the love, the salvation of our glorious Lord. Let us have boldness, let us come with full assurance of faith, says the Holy Ghost through the Apostle, for the vail is rent, and now there is a 'new and living way.' Do you see how gloriously the rending of the vail typified the Person of our Lord the death of our Lord, and the way by which poor sinners draw near to God the Father and by which His people approach unto Him? 'A new and living way which He hath consecrated for us through the vail, that is to say His flesh.'(Hebrews 10:20)

marginal reading of "consecrated" is 'new-made' - for every sinner in the sinner's own experience. Why? you may have heard the truth for many years and never been 'touched,' but when you realise that you are a sinner, you know it is a 'new way' and is new-made. 'It is the way of the new covenant. 'I will take away the stony heart from you and will give you a heart of flesh.' It is the way of the new creature, for if you are coming to God by the death of Christ, you are a new creature. 'If any man be in Christ he is a new creature.' To the new creature, 'old things are passed away and all things have become new.' At one time you did not go to God by Christ. Your prayers were a hardship. Now I have no great experience to tell you of. No specific mark to tell you - but have old things passed away? Is Jesus new? His life? His Blood?

The new creature walks in the new way, new by the blood and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. I have sometimes thought that Christ Jesus the Lord is made unto us righteousness, wisdom, sanctification and redemption through the rending of the vail which hung upon these four pillars, and that they rested upon the silver sockets of redeeming love - the basis of all that our blessed Lord is to His people. The pillars were inside, but when the vail was rent they were exposed, and thus Christ Jesus the Lord drawing near to the sinner is made righteousness, wisdom, sanctification and redemption - a new, and living way to a living Saviour as the Mercy Seat, and a new and living Way to Him as the High Priest over the House of God. Of old, the only way into the Holiest of All was by the blood of the sacrificial victims, and there is today only this one way into the Holiest, dear friends. It is not a little rent, but rent in twain, so that the chief of sinners may find ample passage. God has set before us an open door and no man can shut it; legal ordinances have vanished forever; and the atonement of our Divine Redeemer abides. Christ for me! Christ to me!

*Hark! the voice of Love and Mercy
Sounds aloud from Calvary,
See it rends the rocks asunder,
Shakes the earth and veils the sky,
It is FINISHED: IT IS FINISHED!
Hear the dying Saviour cry.*

Boldness we may well have then; sin has gone, the separating barrier is taken away and now the Man Christ Jesus, our living Intercessor abideth forever at God's right hand, our sins and our iniquities will be remembered no more. Let us draw near in trust, in thought, in prayer, and by the Word of the Living God, simply depending upon the unction and power of His Divine Spirit. Look not at yourself. Let us draw near with boldness. Look not at your own evils and corruption, and your lack of righteousness, but look at the mercy seat, look at the blood. 'I will go in unto the King, and if I perish, I perish.' The true heart, that means an earnest intent heart; if you have this you are upright before God. 'Having the conscience sprinkled' with the precious blood. This is the secret of all boldness; the power of the blood, the power of the Spirit, the warmth and glow which come from Him. Let us draw near, and may the Lord give to us a deep, personal love to our Divine and glorious Saviour. It is into the stillness of the sanctuary, it is far from the strife of tongues, it is to be with Jesus, in communion with Him, shut out from the noise of this mortal life.

Thus may we be helped to draw near and know 'the secret of the Lord,' for it is with them that fear Him.