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J.W. Sperling-Tyler

Substance of Sermon preached by our Pastor

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Lesson. Romans 10.

But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart. Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away. Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. 2 Corinthians 3. vv. 15-17.

It may be clear to your understanding as to the first arresting term in my spirit; namely, the metaphor "veil". It will be my sacred privilege I hope, to give an exposition with clarity as to those who have the veil on their heart, and the meaning of it. Then, the beauty and wonder of it is, there are those who by the Spirit of God are turned to the Lord, and as they are turned to the Lord,- and this is the most powerful operation of the Holy Spirit in divine revelation,- the veil is taken away, permanently removed, and ever after they have an open face, and they go from the time the veil is taken away to the time of their departure with an open face. Obviously it will be in all the glory, the consummate glory of it, when you enter Paradise,- an open face. The dear friends will see there is a tremendous depth of doctrine and living experience touching in this wondrous truth.

A brief comment on veil, and there are three considerations. The first is, the women in the Orient wore a veil in modesty and showing they were in subjection to their husbands. One could mention without spiritualising under the heading of modesty and submission to the Lord's law in life, it is clear that we have seen an extreme swing from such a state; from modesty and submission to the Lord's law that governs our status and position in life as members of the human race.

The second spiritual application. Though we are not familiar with the veil, (some of you have been to the Orient and have witnessed it over some months.) The veil is a covering that largely obscures the face. It

is cast over the head, almost concealing the face, therefore the person wearing the veil is largely in obscurity and darkness. This is wonderfully used by our own apostle concerning the former legal dispensation. I will go into this by the help of God.

There are many facets. I will just say before I go further, we may also think of God's prescription concerning the tabernacle and the temple, that there should be a veil, and it should separate the holy place the priests entered, from the Holy of holies which only the high priest entered on the day of atonement. The whole concept of the ceremonial law was 'shadow'. The substance was Christ, and all pointed to Him. He is the end of the law. When He came there was no need for shadows, so the law was abrogated.

Think of the veil. What is the spiritual concept? There was an approach to God on the day of atonement. Only the high priest ^{entered} the Holy of holies; the veil separated them. As we read in the gospels, when Christ said; "It is finished." and voluntarily died, one thing that happened was, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom. It was a divine act: no man participated in it; it was resultant on His death. The apostle in the Hebrews expounds it; "A new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh." It means there is an open way to God through the Atonement of Christ. There is no longer a veil separating; it was rent in twain, and through His precious flesh, His rich Atonement, we have access with boldness to God. This is plenary; covering every needy, guilty, convinced sinner on earth. You are not looking at a veil that is separating; it was rent in twain. His precious substitutionary sufferings, His agony in the garden and on the cross, and as His precious Body suffered, and His soul, the veil was rent in twain, so we have access with boldness to God through Him, through the finished work of Atonement of our great High Priest and His priestly intercession, mediation, advocacy in heaven on the merit of all He accomplished and His obedience to the law. We can hardly (I use the term 'adequately') appreciate and value the glorious fact of the gospel day. Poor sinners may with boldness come, the veil is rent in twain. The atonement was made once and for all, and there is no more sacrifice for sin; it is accomplished. So the Holy Spirit takes the blessings that Christ possessed in His exaltation, resultant on His infinite merit. In

the exaltation of the Lord He took possession of all the blessings He merited for His people. It is the peace He merited by His pain.

I want to dwell on the second point; the veil over the face. You want to know what that means, the veil is on their heart. I will try to respond to your wish by naming it in two sections. We may refer to the nation of the Jews, also many others who still look to the moral law, the Decalogue, the ten commandments, as capable of administering life. The veil is on their heart. If you hear a Jew expound his faith it is always the moral law, and the veil of ignorance is still on his heart to this day, thinking the law can administer life. That is the first meaning. I need grace and wisdom to speak, because there is such wonder in the law.

What is the second category to name? It is a different category because the first can be labelled ignorance, unbelief, and so on. That veil is now removed. The Jews rejected Christ: they did not know He was the fulfilling end of the law to all believers, as we had in the Lesson. The second category have the veil on their ^{heart} in this manner. Every newly quickened sinner is brought under the law, because immediately life enters the soul there is an awareness that you are under the law. (You do not know it until you know the gospel.) The point is, when the Lord quickens into life, - and there are varying degrees of teaching and understanding, the basic fact is, there is a tremendous amount of ~~law~~ legality in the sinner's soul. Why? Because they only know the law of God; that is, God in His holiness and justice; His character. Legality is known in the activity of a person in an endeavour to obey the law, and if you translate from your experience, you will see in your endeavour you sought the favour of God and you miserably failed.

So souls under the law have the veil on their hearts. It is unbelief, condemnation, darkness, slavish fear and torment. The most distinct thing in religion in the first part of deliverance, is the time in life when Christ is first revealed, because the Spirit of God powerfully turns you to Christ and you see His glory. So these souls have the veil on their hearts. They are in darkness, in deep trouble, in bondage, held in chains. They have no liberty, and the veil is on their heart. Can you trace out your experience in this way?

Before I go further I will make a few observations on the law of God.

I name them because we need the holy doctrines as a foundation, and to know why poor, perishing sinners, loved of God, have deliverance. It is clearly stated in the Word of God that those who are brought to know the Lord Jesus Christ are not under the law; they are under grace. Why are people delivered from under the law? The foundation truth is Christ Himself coming as our Surety and as His Father's servant, made of a woman, made under the law. How long do you think He was under the law? in a federal and penal sense; how long? Until His exaltation He was under the law in a federal sense: He obeyed it perfectly; He was under its curse. He rose on the third day and passed from under the law in a federal and penal sense, and He assumed a relation with the law as having restored honour to it. That is why a child of God passes from under the law, because Christ did. If He had not, no sinner would. He possessed the blessing He merited and it is given to you, - His righteousness, peace, forgiveness, pardon; all the blessings of grace. That is the basic doctrine.

Next, do you believe you have passed from under the law? you are not under the law, you are under grace? If so, the veil is taken away. What is the holy law of God? You might say; "The ten commandments." That is true. How may it be expounded? The law of God is the perfect expression of the holy, righteous, just Nature and character of God in relation to His creatures. It is a view of God's holy, righteous character as it relates to us. Some people think the law was long ago. Of course, that is untrue. In regard to dispensations, yes: it relates to the legal dispensation. This is the gospel dispensation: the two are in contrast. I remember in my early days I never understood about the law. The wonder is, a child of God is justified and has a righteous relationship with the law. The perfect obedience to the law by Christ your Surety is your wedding garment. Is it not wonderful?

So how wonderful obedience to the law is, because you have the ~~rights~~ righteousness Christ wrought for His Church.

There is another point I hope I shall be given grace and wisdom to expound to the glory of God. Is the law not then abrogated? Only in the sense named. The point is, the veil is on their heart because they thought it would minister life to them, and what they did not understand but we do, is the spirituality of the law. What is the spirituality of

the law? "When the commandment came, sin revived, and I died....I had not known sin, but by the law." There is brought to your spirit by the Holy Ghost a reflection of ~~the~~ His perfect holiness and majesty: by this you have the knowledge of sin. I remember Mr J.H.Gosden speaking concerning the law, and I think he was speaking from; "For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh..."-There was no intrinsic weakness. But he said there are three things ^{the law} can do. What are they? The law shows us what we should be; what we are; and it condemns us for what we are. So it is called a school master to bring us to Christ. It is by a law work you are brought to know your lost, ruined, undone state. This is the application of the ^{law} spiritually, and you will be thankful for it.

So the veil is not on your heart if you realise the law is your school master because you have been brought to Christ. Thank God for a law work, showing you what you should be; what God requires in the perfection of obedience; and showing you what you are. How do you know? By knowing God. Only as we know God do we know ourselves, and know what guilty, filthy wretches we are. (I do not use the terms lightly.) You will know the law does not minister life, but death. It does not minister righteousness to you, but condemnation. It sounds almost contradictory, to speak of being born again, quickened by the Spirit, and of the law killing a sinner. They are killed to the goodness they think they have. They not only fear they are lost; they feel they are lost. This is a law work, and the veil is on the heart, because concerning the spirituality of the law you never realise you are under it. The veil is on your heart. You know nothing savingly, vitally, effectually of the Lord Jesus Christ; nothing at all.

I suppose it is one of the greatest mysteries under heaven that a poor soul may hear thousands and thousands of times the Name of Jesus, and be completely ignorant of Him: they have no understanding. The veil is taken away by the powerful, effectual operations of the Spirit. I remember at Crowborough Anniversary services Mr Delves was speaking of his own experience. He said it was a straight issue between the justice of God and himself. The words were brought to him; "When I see the blood, I will pass over you." It was the first opening of the rich atonement of Christ to his spirit, and so the veil was taken away.

What a wonder it is that there is One a poor perishing sinner can turn to! and they shall be turned by the Holy Ghost, and the veil taken away,

because they have a saving knowledge by living faith of the Person and work of Christ. There is one point here I would make. In the revelation of Christ to the soul, and synchronising with it is faith to believe in Him, every blessing that is treasured in Christ of the New Covenant, is as a tiny seed at first in the soul. It is so small, yet in that tiny seed are all the properties. The seed is the beginning of eternal life and glory. So I want to impress on you, in the first revelation of Christ and faith to believe it, was every blessing you will ever enjoy in life and in glory because you have Christ. There are several things concerning this. It can never be removed from you. You may live seventy years after; nothing can ever remove it; not sin, Satan, nor man. Nothing can remove the blessing. Another is, the principle of life and holiness can never die: it can never become extinct in you. Take it home! it is so wonderful. God has given you a pure seed that can never become extinct. It is given when the Spirit turns you to the Lord and the veil is taken away. In that moment you have heaven: there is a foretaste conveyed to your soul. You are in vital union with Him. He is yours because you are His. So the veil is taken away: there is no veil on your heart; you have an open face. You will never be without faith, however small. You will never come to the place where you lack saving faith: you have an open face. God does not take the veil away and put it back on.

So you see it is the vital work of the Spirit through the journey to turn us to the Lord. You are sinking in trouble; sorely tempted. You need the Spirit to turn you to the Lord. You are looking at the storm, the floods, your fears, creatures, circumstances. It is wonderful that in boundless love the Lord turned to us. In His mighty love and ^{divine} compassion He turned to look on us. We might have seen His back for ever. No: He turns and looks on us, and when we are turned to the Lord the veil is taken away. Glorious light, divine love flows into your spirit. The Holy Ghost has turned you. "Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." There is no liberty under the law; it is bondage. Liberty flows from Mount Zion, from Christ.

What is one of the characteristics of the only salvation by grace? One is liberty. If the veil is taken away and Christ has fulfilled the law for you, and magnified it and made it honourable, and suffered the

curse due to you, how can you ever be held in bondage? You never will. You will know what it is to feel bound by sin. The Lord will liberate you. Immediately the sweet sound of the gospel penetrates your soul you are free. He breathes His breath divine: you are free. It is heavenly. Blessed be God. Amen.