

Come to Understanding

**They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding,
and they that murmured shall learn doctrine. — Isaiah 29:24**

March 14, 2008

Volume 7 Number 6

The Torn Veil

As Jews from all over the Roman Empire gathered in Jerusalem for the Passover, the focus of everyone was upon the temple. Inside the temple, special attention would be given to the altar where the sacrifices were offered by the priests. The altar was located in front of the veil:*

26 And he put the golden altar in the tent of the congregation before the veil: -Exodus 40

*The veil, hung as a curtain, originally separated the ark of the testimony (also called the ark of the covenant of Yahweh) from the rest of the congregation. The “most holy” place behind the veil represented the presence of Yahweh:

33 And you shall hang up the veil under the clasps, that you may bring in there within the veil the ark of the testimony: and the veil shall divide unto you between the holy *place* and the most holy. -Exodus 26

Under the law, only the priests, which were Aaron and his descendants, had the authority to perform the temple services:

7 Therefore you and your sons with you shall keep your priest's office for every thing of the altar, and within the veil; and you shall serve: I have given your priest's office *to you* as a service of gift: and the stranger that comes near shall be put to death. -Numbers 18

This was called the “Levitical priesthood” after the order of Aaron (see Hebrews 7:11).

During the reign of Solomon as the King of Israel, the temple replaced the tabernacle as the home of the ark of the covenant (see 1 Kings 8:1-9). Solomon soon disobeyed Yahweh by worshipping other gods and goddesses, bringing about the destruction of the united kingdom of Israel (see 1 Kings 11). The ark of the covenant was apparently displaced from its place in the temple, since King Josiah of Judah later ordered it to be returned to its rightful place:

3 And said to the Levites that taught all Israel, which were holy unto Yahweh, Put the holy ark in the house which Solomon the son of David king of Israel did build; *it shall not be a burden upon your shoulders: serve now Yahweh your God, and his people Israel*, -2 Chronicles 35

However, from the time of Josiah forward, references to the ark of the covenant in the temple are conspicuously absent!

The temple was eventually destroyed and then rebuilt. Efforts were made to restore the Levitical priesthood, the sacrificial system, and the keeping of feast days (see Ezra and Nehemiah). However, the ark of the covenant had apparently disappeared. Nevertheless, the mysterious veil, along with its guardian priests that separated the people from the most holy place, remained.

As this Passover approached, however, there was a great commotion in the temple. Yahshua (also called Jesus) was disrupting the planned events. After riding into town on a donkey, He entered into the temple and acted as though He owned it. He overthrew tables and threw out the merchants who were selling sacrificial animals. While He was there, He even healed the blind and the lame (see Matthew 21:7-14).

Adding to the disturbance, the children inside the temple were repeating what they had heard the crowds shouting in the city. They cried out to Yahshua, “Hosanna,” meaning “Save Now!” To the dismay of the religious authorities, they even called Him the “son of David:”

15 And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the Son of David; they were very displeased, -Matthew 21

By His disruptive behavior, He was threatening the authority of the religious leaders. Their solution to the problem was to kill Him:

3 Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people, to the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas,
4 And consulted that they might take Yahshua by subtlety, and kill *him*. -Matthew 26

Seeking a sensitive cause to inflame the people, these leaders finally found two false witnesses to claim that Yahshua had threatened to destroy the temple:

61 And said, This *fellow* said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days. -Matthew 26

As He hung on the cross, being mocked by those who watched, it appeared that they were about to achieve their goal. Little did they know that they were fulfilling the Scriptures which would eliminate the need for a man-made temple. As Yahshua's earthly body died and yielded up His Spirit, He said, “It is finished:”

30 When Yahshua therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost. -John 19

Jarring the foundations of the Levitical priesthood, the veil was torn apart. He had opened the way for the people to access God on their own, without a priest:

51 And, behold, the veil of the temple was divided in two from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks divided; -Matthew 27

**So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense,
and caused them to understand the reading. — Nehemiah 8:8**

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He had conquered death. After His resurrection, others who had been dead were also raised back to life:

52 And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose,

53 And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared to many. -Matthew 27

These miraculous resurrections showed that the prophecies of Ezekiel were being fulfilled:

13 And you shall know that I *am* Yahweh, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves,

14 And shall put my spirit in you, and you shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall you know that I Yahweh have spoken *it*, and performed *it*, says Yahweh. -Ezekiel 37

Through His death, He had released the “Spirit of life.” Those who receive it are freed from the “law of sin and death:”

2 For the law of the Spirit of life in the Messiah Yahshua has made me free from the law of sin and death. -Romans 8

Paul explains that if His Spirit dwells in us, it gives life to our mortal bodies:

9 But you are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if any man has not the Spirit of the Messiah, he is none of his.

10 And if the Messiah *is* in you, the body *is* dead because of sin; but the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness.

11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Yahshua from the dead dwells in you, he that raised up the Messiah from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwells in you. -Romans 8

The ordinances and rituals of the tabernacle had been imposed upon Israel to serve as earthly examples to be kept by faith until the “time of reformation:”

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;

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10 *Which stood* only in foods and drinks, and diverse washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed *on them* until the time of reformation. -Hebrews 9

Yahshua the Messiah did that which earthly priests could not do. He offered Himself as the perfect sacrifice for sins:

11 But the Messiah coming as a 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*. -Hebrews 9

He replaced the mortal priesthood of Aaron, which was according to the law, with an eternal priesthood. The priesthood of Yahshua the Messiah was after the order of Melchizedek. As the true High Priest, He led us through the opened veil directly into the presence of God:

19 *Which hope* we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters into that within the veil;

20 Where the forerunner is for us entered, *even* Yahshua, made a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. -Hebrews 6

He is the Priest, as well as the King of righteousness and peace, who continues forever:

1 For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him;

2 To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace; -Hebrews 7

The earthly priests were no longer the gate keepers, who controlled access to that which was behind the veil. Through the blood of Yahshua, we can boldly enter into the most holy place, which is into the presence of God:

19 Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Yahshua,

20 By a new and living way, which he has consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; -Hebrews 10

The prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled. Those who believe are now named the “Priests of Yahweh” and are called “Ministers of God:”

6 But you shall be named the Priests of Yahweh: *men* shall call you the Ministers of our God: you shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall you boast yourselves. -Isaiah 61

We no longer stand in darkness, with a veil separating us from the glory of God. We are now part of a “royal priesthood,” called “into His marvelous light:”

9 But you *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that you should show forth the praises of him who has called you out of darkness into his marvelous light: -1 Peter 2