

Mr Donald M Mackinnon- The Rent Veil

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[0 : 00] Can we turn again to the second passage of Scripture that we read together? The book of Hebrews, chapter 10. I'm reading again from verse 19.

The book of Hebrews, chapter 10. Reading again at verse 19. Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened up for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, and since we have a great high priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh.

This morning, I want to look with you at these words in particular, the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh.

And for the purposes of looking at this, I want to look at it using the verse as we have it translated in the authorized version of the scripture, because it retains the word veil, and it's upon the veil that I want us to be thinking today.

[1 : 56] So in the authorized version, it reads, having therefore, brethren, 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.

So I want us to be thinking today about the veil. And again, we're going to be looking at this text and also the one we read in Matthew. And again, I want to use the authorized version.

The only words changed is veil. And behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.

And so I want us today to be thinking about this word, veil. And I want to look at it under four headings. First of all, how there came to be a veil.

And then to think of the symbolic veil. And then the true veil. And then the rending and some application of that for ourselves.

[3 : 06] And so first of all, in order for us to understand the fullness of the teaching and something of the fullness of the teaching of what is brought before us here in Hebrews, it's helpful for us to go back down through the history of the unfolding of the revelation of God and understand this veil.

And we begin with the question, how did there come to be a veil? What does the veil speak of? Why is there a veil? Why is there a veil spoken of here in Hebrews?

Why is there a veil spoken of in Matthew? How did there come to be a veil? And for that, we go all the way back to the beginning of time. We go to the first book of the Bible.

And there in the very beginning, in the account we have of the Garden of Eden, we have one of the key texts of Scripture.

And it really, really is a key text of Scripture. It's a key text of our individual and collective history. It is a text that speaks about what came into our experience, each and every one of us.

[4 : 23] And there in chapter 2 we read, the Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden. Paradise.

The paradise of Eden. To work it and to keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat of it.

In the day that you eat of it, you shall surely die. In the day you eat thereof, you shall surely die.

We all know how that was disobeyed by your federal head, Adam.

Disobedience to that command. And in the very, very moment of disobedience, disobedience brought death.

[5 : 22] Because when sin came into the experience of man, it brought a separation. Because sin always separates.

Interesting for us to retain this in our understanding. One of the Greek words for the devil is diabolos. And diabolos means to divide.

And when we think on that, even to our present day, but all the way back to where that was first experienced, the division that was brought in, sin separates.

And so, as a result of disobedience, death came into my experience, death came into your experience, and everybody by ordinary generation from Adam is conceived in spiritual death.

death is subject to physical death and is liable to eternal death. And the first of these that Adam became aware of was that spiritual death because his sin separated him in the communion and the fellowship and the unbroken communion and fellowship that he had with God in the garden.

[6 : 43] Think of the Garden of Eden before the fall. If I just now had a large, large, large white sheet of paper, as large as I could hold, a pure white sheet of paper, and I was holding that as an illustration for you of the oneness that existed between God and man.

The unity of that, the purity of that, and the breach that was made by sin simply tore that in half. Breached that fellowship, tore that fellowship, tore that communion apart.

And that is a correspondence with ourselves because in physical death there is the tearing of the soul from the body. And it is the same in spiritual death.

When Adam experienced spiritual death, the first thing he experienced was that that spiritual death had separated him from God.

I know I've said this here before. Critics of the Bible say, well, God said to Adam, the day you eat thereof you shall surely die. He didn't die. Well, he did die.

[7 : 58] That's where they don't understand how the spiritual death that came in immediately into his experience had that effect on his conscience that he felt now he had to hide.

And when God said to Adam, where are you? It wasn't that God was unsure of his whereabouts. He knew exactly. But when God said to Adam, where are you?

It's addressing his spiritual death. Where are you now? Why are you hiding yourself? Why do you now need, why are you now so conscious of separation?

So the lesson to take from the first reflection on how there came to be a veil was there came to be a veil because sin separates. Sin separates us from God.

And sin separated there. And the separation brought about. The bringing down of a veil. Because sin not only separates, but sin has consequences.

[9 : 02] And if we take nothing else away today, then let me and let each one of us take that with us. Sin separates, and sin has consequences.

We never, ever, ever sin in a vacuum. If you're here today, as a believer in Christ, sin separates, and sin has consequences.

And sin separating will separate us from closeness, from nearness, from communion, from fellowship with God. I've quoted here before, again, the words of William Cooper.

How conscious he was of that himself in the famous words, having sinned and being conscious of the consequences of his sin, he wrote his famous words, Return, return, O holy dove, sweet messenger of rest.

I hate the sin that made thee mourn and drove thee from my breast. And so sin separates, and sin has consequences.

[10 : 07] And for Adam, the consequences of that was the establishing of the first veil. Because of his disobedience, he was driven out of paradise.

He was driven out, we read, at the end of chapter 3 in Genesis, and at the entrance to the Garden of Eden, where he had known such joy and unbroken communion and fellowship and oneness.

And as a result of the tearing that had come into that communion and fellowship, he was driven out. And there, there was a veil. The flaming sword that turned every way and barred his access to God.

That was the first veil. Moving from there to now think of the symbolic veil, we carry on through the Old Testament, and we come to that event in the Old Testament where Moses, Moses having led the children of Israel out of Egypt, and now in their wilderness wanderings, is summoned by God to Mount Sinai, separated by God to Mount Sinai on his own.

And there in the Sinai discourse, Moses receives over 40 days the Ten Commandments, the law, but also directions and instructions to erect a place of worship that God wanted to establish for his people.

[11 : 47] And so, the directions for the tabernacle were given. And in the tabernacle and in the instructions received by Moses, he was instructed to erect the tabernacle of worship.

And I'm sure many of you, if not all of us, have seen pictures that depict exactly how that place of worship was erected. You will see the large outer court with its curtains on every side.

And in it, essentially, there were three veils. The first veil was one of the veils that formed at the outer court of the temple, the tabernacle. And that was a veil that was open.

That was the way of access into the outer court. And that veil was never closed. That veil was always open. That veil never spoke of separation.

There was no prohibited entry. The children of Israel had free access through that veil. veil. But then, they would see, as they came to the holy place, a veil.

[13 : 01] And that veil did speak of separation. And that veil did speak of prohibited entry. because that veil separated them from the holy place.

The holy place where the sacrifice of Israel was conducted by the priests every day. But inside the holy place, there was another veil.

The symbolic veil. The symbolic veil that separated the holy place from the holy of holies. A place of great, great reverence.

Held in great, great reverence by the priests. because they were conscious as they went in there that behind that veil there was representation of the presence of God.

And so, for them, it would have been a place of great reverence. And that veil could only be accessed once. Lay emphasis on that and retain that in our thoughts.

[14 : 16] Once, by the high priest once a year and never without blood. This veil spoke of separation because of sin.

It spoke not of man hiding himself from God, but God hiding himself from man, concealing himself of man as his holiness required. There could be no communion because of this veil.

veil. And this veil was to the Holy of Holies what the sword, the flaming sword of the Garden of Eden was.

The veil was to the Holy of Holies what the sword of fire was to the Garden of the Lord, at the Garden of Eden. It now was the symbolic veil. The sword that turned every way.

The divine justice represented in that sword that turned every way spoke of separation. It was a veil. But when God erected his place of worship, he set up this veil, this symbolic veil.

[15 : 25] And both of these, both the sword and the veil kept watch at the gate of the divine presence of God.

central in the worship of the holy place, there was the daily sacrifices that were conducted.

There was the morning sacrifice and the evening sacrifice. And each and every day the priests would go into the holy place and they would conduct their morning sacrifice.

The morning sacrifice where they offered sacrifice seeking the help of the omnipotent power of God for themselves and for the people who were there.

They were offering the sacrifice to help them with their enemies both external and internal. And of course, that is not a sacrifice that is confined to the Old Testament.

[16 : 34] It is not confined to the New Testament. It is something that is to be found in exercising ourselves.

For we also are to have our own morning sacrifice. I think again, I've said this before, but we step out each day in one of two ways.

Tomorrow morning, as you get up in your own way, you will step out into tomorrow in one of two ways. You will have your morning sacrifice.

You know and understand fully everything that was meant by Christ in the words he left with the church and the disciples in the upper room discourse when he said to them, without me, you can do nothing.

And that profound sense of your own nothingness and the profound sense of your own indwelling remaining corruption will itself make you draw near and have your own morning sacrifice, pleading for the omnipotent power of God to keep you from yourself.

[17 : 59] And how much we learn of that as we go on in our earthly pilgrimage. The terrifying journey, as somebody said, of self-discovery and how that creates in us the need for our morning sacrifice.

We step out into the day. We said it today in the Lord's Prayer. What did we say? Lead us not into temptation. The priests, the morning sacrifice, but I especially want to think of the evening sacrifice, because as we'll see, it has a very, very profound connection on our deliberations and thoughts upon the veil.

The evening sacrifice was offered by the priests so that the sin committed by the people through that day and on that day could be forgiven. Something that was impressed upon myself in the ministry I was under when I began following was keep a short account with God.

In other words, as difficult and as painful as it may be for you to come and to confess the sin that you have committed, whether it be sin of commission or sin of omission, keep your account short.

Do it. Don't leave it. Come to God. Plead the promise. Say to Him, if we confess our sins, Lord, faithful and just to forgive our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness, do as thou hast said.

[19 : 42] Keep a short account. The importance of the evening sacrifice. And in these sacrifices, there's just one more thing I want to say in our thoughts about the symbolic veil and it's this.

In these sacrifices, the blood of the lamb that was slain was sprinkled seven times towards the veil.

veil. And there's great, great teaching in that for us. Because the veil of separation was a veil that many Bible expositors and commentators believe that in that sprinkling of blood, itself became saturated with blood.

And so we've looked at how there came to be a veil and then the representation of the symbolic veil as we have it in the temple.

The veil that separated the holy place from the most holy place. And moving forward and coming now to how the tabernacle evolved into the temple, the worship of the temple, and thinking of that in Christ's day, in the day that we're looking at here, the account that we have here, the worship of the temple in Christ's day.

[21 : 06] The priests were there and they carried with them the teaching, observing everything that had been revealed to Moses, and they also were carrying out the morning sacrifice and the evening sacrifice.

for them in that day, they carried forward the reverence that the priests would have had in the Old Testament as they served in the most holy place, always with a sense of awe of the veil and everything that it spoke and everything that it communicated to their understanding, so in the time of Christ and in the temple.

people. And I believe that the priests there particularly would have served there with at least a physical fear. I'm not sure that they had a spiritual fear.

I know that's a strange thing to say at this stage, but I'll explain that further on. But I do believe they served there with a physical fear because of events that had happened not only in history, and remember these were people that carried their history with them.

everything profound that had happened in the generations gone before them. And these priests would have been conscious that going into the holy place, it was a place where God had manifested his judgment in times past.

[22 : 33] In the book of Leviticus, we read of two of the sons of Aaron who had been appointed to the priesthood, Nadab and Abihu, and they overstepped the mark.

And Leviticus tells us how they went into the presence of God and they offered what Leviticus calls strange fire.

It was not their law to do that. They took it upon themselves to do it and immediately they were consumed. And many Bible commentators believe that they may have done that under the influence of alcohol because in the rebuke given following that God said to Moses and let not the priests come into my nearer presence under the influence of strong drink.

But even in more recent times these priests in the temple in their daily worship I believe would have had physical fear of the judgment that was related to being in the holy place because of what had happened in their own lifetime in just a few years before this where we are reminded of how Zechariah the father of John the Baptist he was in the holy place it was his lot to offer up us we have in the Luke the account we have in the gospel of Luke but it was his place to be in the temple offering the morning and the evening sacrifice and whilst he was there one day an angel appeared to him and the angel informed him that in his old age his wife Elizabeth was to bear a son and immediately in his heart the omnipotent omniscient power of God discerned unbelief and for his unbelief he was struck dumb and so the priests serving would have that sense of reverence imagine ourselves going into a place where such judgment had taken place even in recent times and how it clothed them with reverence there are other examples you may recall Uzziah who also breached the holy place he went in there and he was struck with leprosy but leaving your thoughts on the symbolic veil

I want now to come to think upon the true veil and for that finally we arrive at the passage that we've read here in Hebrews 10 because here we read these words therefore brothers since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus by the new and living way that he has opened for us through the curtain that is through his flesh boldness to enter into the holiness by the blood of Jesus by the new and living way that he has consecrated for us through the veil that is to say his flesh and so we're learning here that the true veil is the body of Jesus his humanity was the veil which covered the glory of his person and in his earthly ministry there were times when that glory shone through the divine glory shining through the mount of transfiguration where John records we beheld his glory the glory as of the only begotten and this veil now the true veil brings to our minds the marvel of the covenant of redemption this true veil that had been established when salvation itself was appointed was appointed by the father in the councils of eternity before the world ever was before the fall had ever taken place there the father appointed our redemption and in and in it having appointed it it was approved by the true veil so that we can say this in the councils of eternity in the covenant of redemption it was appointed by the father it was approved by the son it was agreed by the spirit in the fullness of time what was appointed by the father was accomplished by the son and is applied to each one of us by the spirit but that is where the true veil was established in the covenant of redemption the true veil and it was this veil the true veil that had to be rent before we could come into the presence of God because we are saved by a dying

[28 : 01] Christ and I want now finally and I ask you to forgive me for taking so long to come to this now to think with all that backdrop now to think of the rending of the veil or perhaps more accurately the rending of the veils because we read two passages of scripture we read Matthew 28 and here Hebrews chapter 10 and they both bring before us the rending of a veil but Matthew is talking about the rending of the symbolic veil but Hebrews is talking about the rending of the true veil and so on this day that both these passages speak about because Matthew 27 and Hebrews 10 are not just speaking about the same day they're speaking about the same hour and they're speaking about what took place at that same hour the rending of the veils so that inside the temple in Matthew 28 we read that at the time of the evening sacrifice the priests were there completely unaware of what was taking place outside the wall of the city where there was the true veil so Matthew 28 speaking about what was taking place inside the temple and the priests

I'm not saying they weren't unaware of the arrest and the trial and the crucifixion of Christ but they were unaware of the fine details they were there at the time of the evening sacrifice and we now know from scripture that this evening sacrifice was offered at the ninth hour at the ninth hour the symbolic veil inside the temple was rent but it was not rent first because outside the true veil there at the ninth hour had been veiled in darkness for three hours we know from the gospel accounts that Christ was crucified on the cross at nine o'clock in the morning and from nine o'clock in the morning from the third hour until the sixth hour it was as if

God allowed man unrestrained to do all that he could in his fallen nature and assault and allow the full hatred of man to be unleashed against Christ but not only that there was the allowing of the powers of darkness who we know were gathered to that cross in a way that they were never ever found we believe in one place at one time Ephesians reminds us of these powers Paul says to us we wrestle not against flesh and blood and then he separates them out into four he says we wrestle against principalities were they at the cross they were at the cross against powers were the powers at the cross they were at the cross against the rulers of the darkness of this world they were at the cross and finally against spiritual wickedness in high places they were at the cross and so all of that was focused there from the third hour to the sixth hour then the gospel accounts tell us how from the sixth hour to the ninth hour it was as if

God intervened and said to man and to all the powers of darkness you've had your time with him and now I am going to deal with him but I am going to veil it all in darkness just like the little girl with the black earth he veiled it all in darkness the veil veiled in darkness and as that darkness consumed we read the words spoken by Christ it is finished he dismissed his spirit and immediately as death became his experience and as his soul was separated from his body immediately death having rent the true veil the symbolic veil was rent and everything that that has to teach each and every one of us today his death satisfied divine justice that sword that had been placed at the garden of Eden the representation of divine justice and how we read in

Zechariah 13 the prophetic words awake oh sword and smite the shepherd the man of mine own right hand and the sword of that justice having smitten the lamb of God it now having been satisfied divine justice having been satisfied it demanded the removal of every veil and when the true veil was rent the symbolic veil was rent and what that meant for the priests we can only gaze into without imagination I've spoken about the fear and the reverence they would have had for that holy place what it was for them there at the time of that evening sacrifice on that afternoon to be there and suddenly to hear this loud ripping noise as this veil was torn in two from the top to the bottom its entirety and this place that they held in great great reverence now laid bare and open to them the place that they had never had any access to and now it's laid bare and open to them it reminds us of going all the way back to the garden of

[35 : 20] Eden how we spoke of the death that came into the experience of man the three fold death and how death now had been defeated because Christ in his death defeated physical death spiritual death eternal death and the way of access now into his nearer presence time is going I'm going to quickly move on and finish with this in the days that followed the rending of the veil what the priests reported was never ever denied it was never challenged because as I've said earlier I think the priests only had a physical fear I can't say that for certain and I'm going to explain that in a minute but it must have been with sheer incredulity that their report was received by those who had been outside the city and had seen the rending of the true veil as they then heard added to the account of everything that they had witnessed the darkness the death the loud voice the centurion the earthquake the rending of the rocks the splitting of the rocks many believe from top to bottom just as the veil was rent the opening of the graves and now to all of that there is added this incredible account of the priests of how they recorded the rending of the veil in the temple and it was never ever challenged and it was never ever denied quite simply because why would they make it up

I believe when they reported it they reported it with great great reverence but there's something else that's very very very interesting for us and this is why I've been saying I'm not sure if the priests had anything other than a physical fear as they served because in Acts chapter 6 we read these words at verse 7 and the word of God continued to increase and the number of disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem and listen to this and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith and many Bible expositors and commentators quite simply believe that as the priests themselves came away in the days following and as they reflected on what they had observed and the true significance for them now as they pieced what they had witnessed to what had taken place outside the rending of the true veil and how that corresponded exactly at the same time as the rending of the symbolic veil everything that that meant for them and these fascinating words and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith and so as we think of this and finally in applying this to ourselves today how we should appreciate what it means for us to draw near to

God we began today with these words let us draw near to God how we should understand what that means that we are passing through this veil that has been rent the true veil that has been rent the true veil that is the flesh of Christ that enables us to draw near and as Hebrews emphasizes what assurance that should give us that God has done all that for us individually and collectively so that we now can have free access right into his nearer presence something that was so prohibited and denied to the priests but through the rent veil we now have this access into his nearer presence the veil declared separation the veil declared here and no further the rent veil now communicates this to us come unto me all ye that labor come come unto me draw near come to me

I want to hear you I want you to draw near I want you to understand what has been done for you and if you're here today and you have not yet closed in with Christ what an encouragement this is for you the Pharisees said in condemnation of Christ this man receives sinners having no understanding of what they said they said it in bitter criticism and yet it is such a comfort and a consolation to each and every one of us today this man receives sinners and I think this was very very much on the mind of Paul when he said this he that spared not his own son but delivered him up for us all how shall he not with him also freely give us all things if he has done that will he not freely give you sooner today outside of

Christ come with boldness and come with assurance and come with the word of scripture on your tongue and say you have said whoever draws near to me I will draw near to him him that comes to me I will in no wise cast out well we began today talking about separation reflecting on the veil and now with the veil having been rent we have free access into the nearer presence of God and how as we reflect upon separation how we ought to understand more and more and more of what we have recorded for us in the eighth chapter of the book of

[42:12] Romans where Paul simply asks the question who shall separate us from the love of God who shall separate us from the love of Christ because it is Christ that has taken away the separation through the rending of the veil and so as we close I hope that our thoughts this day will help us understand more of what he left with the disciples in the upper room discourse when he said to them I am the way I am the new and the living way that I am going to open up for you through my flesh through the rending of my flesh so that you will have free and full access into the nearer presence of God may he bless his thoughts upon our word we will close with our word of prayer our eternal and sovereign father in heaven we do give thanks unto thee for thy truth and its teachings and we pray even now oh lord that we will be solemnized in thy presence with the consciousness of the way that we take into thy nearer presence with prayer and are heard and accepted in the beloved but there at thine own right hand as our great mind of old has said there is the mystery that is the dust of the earth enthroned at thine own right hand interceding for us may we know what it is to take the new and living way asking to be received accepted and cleansed in the blood that was shed for the remission of sin and the praise shall be thine forever in heaven amen we'll conclude at this time singing from psalm 141 in the scottish psalter psalm 141 page 435 oh lord i unto thee do cry do thou make haste to me and give an ear unto my voice when i cry unto thee and then the significance of these words as in since let my prayers be directed in thine eyes and the uplifting of my hands as the evening sacrifice we'll sing from verse 1 to 4 to god's praise o lord i am to thee to cry do thou make hast to me i am give a nearer unto my voice when i cry out to thee but listen set my prayer be directed in thy eyes unto the lifting of my hands as he been

sacrificed said lord i hold before my hand they follow my lips the door my heart can cry now not but true he he is i should to practice with his heart and his heart and his heart and his heart and his heart and his heart heart and his heart and his heart let me not satisfy me with a word of prayer oh high and holy one thou who art able to keep us from stumbling and to present us blameless before the presence of thy glory with great joy glory glory majesty dominion and authority before all time and now and forever amen