

Foothills Christian Assembly Sermon August 15, 2021
Luke 23: 45 "The Veil of the Temple was Torn in Two"

There were also two others, criminals, led with Him to be put to death. 33 And when they had come to the place called Calvary, there they crucified Him, and the criminals, one on the right hand and the other on the left. 34 Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do." And they divided His garments and cast lots. 35 And the people stood looking on. But even the rulers with them sneered, saying, "He saved others; let Him save Himself if He is the Christ, the chosen of God." 36 The soldiers also mocked Him, coming and offering Him sour wine 37 and saying, "If You are the King of the Jews, save Yourself." 38 And an inscription also was written over Him in letters of Greek, Latin, and Hebrew: THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS 39 Then one of the criminals who were hanged blasphemed Him, saying, "If You are the Christ, save Yourself and us." 40 But the other, answering, rebuked him, saying, "Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation? 41 And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong." 42 Then he said to Jesus, "Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom." 43 And Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise." 44 Now it was about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. 45 Then the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was torn in two. 46 And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, "Father, 'into Your hands I commit My spirit.'" Having said this, He breathed His last. 47 So when the centurion saw what had happened, he glorified God, saying, "Certainly this was a righteous Man!" 48 And the whole crowd who came together to that sight, seeing what had been done, beat their breasts and returned. 49 But all His acquaintances, and the women who followed Him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things. 50 Now behold, there was a man named Joseph, a council member, a good and just man. 51 He had not consented to their decision and deed. He was from Arimathea, a city of the Jews, who himself was also waiting for the kingdom of God. 52 This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. 53 Then he took it down, wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a tomb that was hewn out of the rock, where no one had ever lain before. 54 That day was the Preparation, and the Sabbath drew near. 55 And the women who had come with Him from Galilee followed after, and they observed the tomb and how His body was laid. 56 Then they returned and prepared spices and fragrant oils. And they rested on the Sabbath according to the commandment.

I. Introduction

- a. Jesus Christ is the Second Adam, the perfect Man, and through the abundance of grace in Him, the saints of God are restored to more than Adam lost.

1. Romans 5 "...But the free gift is not like the offense. For if by the one man's offense many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many. 16 And the gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned. For the judgment which came from one offense resulted in condemnation, but the free gift which came from many offenses resulted in justification. 17 For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ."

2. Morales “Reading the narratives of Genesis 2–3 as pertaining merely to origins, unrelated to the rest of the biblical story, is a regrettably common approach. From the perspective of the Pentateuch’s overall composition, however, the theological role and paradigmatic function of Eden is deeply significant. As stated previously, the expulsion from Eden becomes the central tragic event propelling the entire drama of the Pentateuch (and of the rest of the Bible). Indeed, throughout the history narrated in Genesis, this dilemma is only intensified. After Adam and Eve have been expelled from the garden of Eden, it appears they did not stray from the bounds of Eden itself—Eden being broader than the garden within it. Though the lines are subtle and sparse, a definite landscape surfaces through the sketch: no longer able to abide in the divine Presence within the garden (holy of holies), humanity now meets with God at the gate of Eden’s garden, which has become the cultic site for sacrifice and worship. We have already considered various features that mark out the garden as an archetypal holy of holies; perhaps the most obvious one, however, was not addressed—namely the cherubim posted at the eastward entrance. ‘The cherubim reappear in only one other context in the entire Pentateuch, and that is in the Holy of Holies in the Sanctuary.’ Cherubim and other like creatures were the traditional guardians of sacred space in the Ancient Near East. The veil of the tabernacle’s holy of holies was embroidered with cherubim (Exod. 26:1, 31), and cherubim were also fashioned upon the atonement lid of the ark (Exod. 25:18–22). Later, the inner sanctuary of Solomon’s temple too would be guarded by large cherubim statues (1 Kgs 6:23–28). As explained in Leviticus, the tabernacle’s eastward door served as *the* place where Israelites would come to present their offerings before the Presence of YHWH”¹

b. Luke 23:45 “The Veil of the Temple was Torn in Two”

1. About the Veil
2. Three hours of darkness v44
3. The Veil of the Temple was Torn in Two v45
4. Jesus breathed His last v46
5. Questions to know, love and obey God

II. About the Veil

a. The Veil of the Tabernacle

1. God’s instruction to Moses: Exodus 26: 30-33
 1. “30 And you shall raise up the tabernacle according to its pattern which you were shown on the mountain. 31 "You shall make a veil woven of blue, purple, and scarlet thread, and fine woven linen. It

¹ Morales, L. M. (2015). [*Who Shall Ascend the Mountain of the Lord?: A Biblical Theology of the Book of Leviticus*](#). (D. A. Carson, Ed.) (Vol. 37, p. 56). England; Downers Grove, IL: Apollos; InterVarsity Press.

shall be woven with an artistic design of cherubim. 32 You shall hang it upon the four pillars of acacia wood overlaid with gold. Their hooks shall be gold, upon four sockets of silver. 33 And you shall hang the veil from the clasps. Then you shall bring the ark of the Testimony in there, behind the veil. The veil shall be a divider for you between the holy place and the Most Holy."

- a. Veil's purpose: "a divider for you between the holy place and the Most Holy Place"
- b. Divide: to divide, separate, distinguish, differ, select, make difference, divide (asunder), (make) separate, sever.

2. God's instructions obeyed:

1. The veil is made: Exodus 36:35,36 "35 And he made a veil of blue, purple, and scarlet thread, and fine woven linen; it was worked with an artistic design of cherubim. 36 He made for it four pillars of acacia wood, and overlaid them with gold, with their hooks of gold; and he cast four sockets of silver for them."
2. The veil is hung as commanded: Exodus 40:17-21 "And it came to pass in the first month of the second year, on the first day of the month, that the tabernacle was raised up. 18 So Moses raised up the tabernacle, fastened its sockets, set up its boards, put in its bars, and raised up its pillars. 19 And he spread out the tent over the tabernacle and put the covering of the tent on top of it, as the Lord had commanded Moses. 20 He took the Testimony and put it into the ark, inserted the poles through the rings of the ark, and put the mercy seat on top of the ark. 21 And he brought the ark into the tabernacle, hung up the veil of the covering, and partitioned off the ark of the Testimony, as the Lord had commanded Moses."

b. The Veil of Solomon's Temple

1. 2 Chronicles 3:14 "And he made the veil of blue, purple, crimson, and fine linen, and wove cherubim into it."

c. The Veil of Herod's Temple

1. Josephus "...before these doors there was a veil of equal largeness with the doors. It was a Babylonian curtain, embroidered with blue, and fine linen, and scarlet, and purple, and of a contexture that was truly wonderful. Nor was this mixture of colors without its mystical interpretation, but was a kind of image of the universe; ...This curtain had also embroidered upon it all that was mystical in the heavens, ... representing living creatures." (Wars 5.5.4)
2. Ancient Jewish writings speak of Herod's curtain being 40 cubits by 20 cubits. Also, those writings speak of the curtain being as thick as a man's hand and requiring 300 priests to move it about, but this may be hyperbole according to later Jewish writings.

d. Cherubim

1. Actual cherubim guarding the way to the tree of life
 1. Genesis 3 “Then the Lord God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever"-- 23 therefore the Lord God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken. 24 So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.”
2. Over the Mercy Seat in the Tabernacle: Exodus 25:17-22
 1. “You shall make a mercy seat of pure gold; two and a half cubits shall be its length and a cubit and a half its width. 18 And you shall make two cherubim of gold; of hammered work you shall make them at the two ends of the mercy seat. 19 Make one cherub at one end, and the other cherub at the other end; you shall make the cherubim at the two ends of it of one piece with the mercy seat. 20 And the cherubim shall stretch out their wings above, covering the mercy seat with their wings, and they shall face one another; the faces of the cherubim shall be toward the mercy seat. 21 You shall put the mercy seat on top of the ark, and in the ark you shall put the Testimony that I will give you. 22 And there I will meet with you, and I will speak with you from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are on the ark of the Testimony, about everything which I will give you in commandment to the children of Israel.”
3. On the Tabernacle external curtains: Exodus 26:1
 1. “Moreover you shall make the tabernacle with ten curtains of fine woven linen and blue, purple, and scarlet thread; with artistic designs of cherubim you shall weave them.”
4. On the Tabernacle Veil hiding the Holy of Holies Ex 26 – above
5. God spoke to Moses from between the two Tabernacle cherubim
 1. Num 7:8,9 “Now when Moses went into the tabernacle of meeting to speak with Him, he heard the voice of One speaking to him from above the mercy seat that was on the ark of the Testimony, from between the two cherubim; thus He spoke to him.”
6. In 1 Samuel, God dwells “between the cherubim” of the Tabernacle. (4:4,6:2) – also in 2 Kings, 1 Chronicles, Ps 80, Ps 99, Isaiah 37
7. Over the Mercy Seat in Solomon’s Temple – 1 Kings 6:23-28
 1. “Inside the inner sanctuary he made two cherubim of olive wood, each ten cubits high. 24 One wing of the cherub was five cubits, and the other wing of the cherub five cubits: ten cubits from the tip of one wing to the tip of the other. 25 And the other cherub was ten cubits; both cherubim were of the same size and shape. 26 The height of one cherub was ten cubits, and so was the other

cherub. 27 Then he set the cherubim inside the inner room; and they stretched out the wings of the cherubim so that the wing of the one touched one wall, and the wing of the other cherub touched the other wall. And their wings touched each other in the middle of the room. 28 Also he overlaid the cherubim with gold."

8. On the curtain of Solomon's Temple – above 2 Chron 3

9. On the inside walls of Solomon's Temple – 1 Kings 6:29

1. "Then he carved all the walls of the temple all around, both the inner and outer sanctuaries, with carved figures of cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers."

10. On the doors into the inner sanctuary in Solomon's Temple: 1 Kings 6

1. "For the entrance of the inner sanctuary he made doors of olive wood; the lintel and doorposts were one-fifth of the wall. 32 The two doors were of olive wood; and he carved on them figures of cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers, and overlaid them with gold; and he spread gold on the cherubim and on the palm trees."

11. Actual cherubim seen by Ezekiel in his vision – Ezekiel 10

1. And I looked, and there in the firmament that was above the head of the cherubim, there appeared something like a sapphire stone, having the appearance of the likeness of a throne. 2 Then He spoke to the man clothed with linen, and said, "Go in among the wheels, under the cherub, fill your hands with coals of fire from among the cherubim, and scatter them over the city." And he went in as I watched. 3 Now the cherubim were standing on the south side of the temple when the man went in, and the cloud filled the inner court. 4 Then the glory of the Lord went up from the cherub, and paused over the threshold of the temple; and the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of the Lord's glory. 5 And the sound of the wings of the cherubim was heard even in the outer court, like the voice of Almighty God when He speaks. 6 Then it happened, when He commanded the man clothed in linen, saying, "Take fire from among the wheels, from among the cherubim," that he went in and stood beside the wheels. 7 And the cherub stretched out his hand from among the cherubim to the fire that was among the cherubim, and took some of it and put it into the hands of the man clothed with linen, who took it and went out. 8 The cherubim appeared to have the form of a man's hand under their wings. 9 And when I looked, there were four wheels by the cherubim, one wheel by one cherub and another wheel by each other cherub; the wheels appeared to have the color of a beryl stone. 10 As for their appearance, all four looked alike--as it were, a wheel in the middle of a wheel. 11 When they went, they went toward any of their four directions; they did not turn aside when they went, but

followed in the direction the head was facing. They did not turn aside when they went. 12 And their whole body, with their back, their hands, their wings, and the wheels that the four had, were full of eyes all around. 13 As for the wheels, they were called in my hearing, "Wheel." 14 Each one had four faces: the first face was the face of a cherub, the second face the face of a man, the third the face of a lion, and the fourth the face of an eagle. 15 And the cherubim were lifted up. This was the living creature I saw by the River Chebar. 16 When the cherubim went, the wheels went beside them; and when the cherubim lifted their wings to mount up from the earth, the same wheels also did not turn from beside them. 17 When the cherubim stood still, the wheels stood still, and when one was lifted up, the other lifted itself up, for the spirit of the living creature was in them. 18 Then the glory of the Lord departed from the threshold of the temple and stood over the cherubim. 19 And the cherubim lifted their wings and mounted up from the earth in my sight. When they went out, the wheels were beside them; and they stood at the door of the east gate of the Lord's house, and the glory of the God of Israel was above them. 20 This is the living creature I saw under the God of Israel by the River Chebar, and I knew they were cherubim. 21 Each one had four faces and each one four wings, and the likeness of the hands of a man was under their wings. 22 And the likeness of their faces was the same as the faces which I had seen by the River Chebar, their appearance and their persons. They each went straight forward.

12. On the walls of Ezekiel's temple vision – Ezekiel 41

- e. So, the Veil of the Tabernacle and Solomon's Temple, and very likely Herod's Temple, were decorated with artistic renditions of cherubim. Also, we know cherubim with flaming swords were set to guard the way back into the inner sanctuary of the Garden, to the Lord's Presence and the tree of life.
- III. Three hours of darkness v44
- a. "Now it was about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour."
 - b. The entire land of Israel (and possible the whole earth) was covered with darkness between noon and 3pm while Jesus hung on the cross. And, this would ordinarily have been the time when the hundreds of thousands of lambs were being prepared for slaughter at the temple, while the men of the families stood outside the temple, lined up, awaiting their lamb. We looked at this in my sermon "Three Days and Three Nights in the Heart of the Earth" from March 28 this year, when I quoted Pastor Kayser. I will quote Pastor Kayser once again so we can seek to set ourselves there in Jerusalem on that day.
 - c. Christ is sacrificed and dies during the same hours as the Passover lambs

1. Kayser "Those were the precise hours when preparations would have been made in the temple between 12:00 and 3:00 o'clock so that they would be ready to efficiently sacrifice the over 250,000 lambs that would have had to be slain between three o'clock and five o'clock. And they had to end at five to give enough time to go to their homes and not break the Sabbath which started at 6 pm. Now that's a lot of lambs to get prepared from noon to three and to be slain from three to five. And Josephus indicates that on a typical Passover, almost three million people traveled to Jerusalem from around the world. Of course, not all of them would have to be present at the temple. Since ten people could eat a lamb, Josephus said that there were usually 250,000 men who would be waiting for a lamb at the temple standing in line down the streets leading up to the temple. God wants to make sure that there is a spectacle that the nation of Israel will not be able to deny."

IV. The Veil of the Temple was Torn in Two v45

- a. 45 "Then the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was torn in two."
- b. What would all those men at the temple have seen and experienced?
 1. Kayser "And then when they are relieved to finally have the power turned back on at 3pm, here's what they would have witnessed (putting all the different sources together - which Ernest Martin does a nice job of). According to Josephus, a Roman historian, and the Talmud, they would have seen the outside doors open up on their own, they would have heard a loud voice saying, "We are leaving this place," (that would be freaky - but that was the glory cloud leaving), they would have then felt an earthquake, they would have seen a several ton lintel holding up the outer curtain fall to the ground (the outer curtain going down with it), then they would have seen the inner curtain being torn from top to bottom. It was obviously God who was ripping that curtain from top to bottom. That was the moment of Christ's death, and it was also supposed to be the moment in which lambs would have been slain. But panic ensued, and they could not do what they were scheduled to do. God did not want any competition with His final Lamb. (All of this symbolism is totally messed up on a Friday theory.) Well, what captures the vision of the people the moment the lights are turned back on is the holy of holies. They can see right down the corridor. Their eyes have unwittingly seen what not a one of them ever dreamed as being possible. Thousands of priests witnessed it, and perhaps tens of thousands of Jews would have been perfectly positioned to have seen all the way down into the Holy of holies. What was done was not done in a corner. And the significance of this could not have been lost on the priests. It's no wonder that so many priests became Christians in Acts 6. Christ with one sweep of His hands was wiping away the sacrificial system to anyone who had eyes to see."

- c. The tearing of the veil represents the removal of the cherubim guarding the way to God's Presence, for those who trust in Christ. In the Old Covenant, this removal was only available once per year, and only in one place, and only for one man. To enter at the wrong time in the wrong way as the wrong person meant instant death. Now, in Christ, all the Redeemed are made partakers of God's Presence, every day, in every place. And, all the Redeemed are restored to all that was lost by Adam.
- V. Jesus breathed His last v46
- a. 46 "And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, "Father, 'into Your hands I commit My spirit.' " Having said this, He breathed His last."
 - b. Note how Luke connects the death of Christ with the tearing of the Temple veil. It is Christ's death alone that makes the new and living way.
 - 1. Hebrews 10 "For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect. 2 For then would they not have ceased to be offered? For the worshipers, once purified, would have had no more consciousness of sins. 3 But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. 4 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins. 5 Therefore, when He came into the world, He said: "Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, But a body You have prepared for Me. 6 In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You had no pleasure. 7 Then I said, 'Behold, I have come-- In the volume of the book it is written of Me-- To do Your will, O God.' " 8 Previously saying, "Sacrifice and offering, burnt offerings, and offerings for sin You did not desire, nor had pleasure in them" (which are offered according to the law), 9 then He said, "Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God." He takes away the first that He may establish the second. 10 By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. 11 And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. 12 But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, 13 from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool. 14 For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified. 15 But the Holy Spirit also witnesses to us; for after He had said before, 16 "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them," 17 then He adds, "Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more." 18 Now where there is remission of these, there is no longer an offering for sin. 19 Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, 20 by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, 21 and having a High Priest over the house of God, 22 let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of

faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. 23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.”

VI. Questions to know, love and obey God

- a. We are brought back into “better than Eden” by Jesus, the perfect Adam.
- b. Into unbroken fellowship with our Creator.
- c. Back into the capacity to carry out our Creator’s original mandate:
 1. Genesis 1:26-28 “Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." 27 So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. 28 Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."
 2. Back into the power to live out God’s Law of love, His moral law.
- d. No longer requiring the ongoing sacrifices of the OT restorative law.