

WEEK 43 — OUTLINE

The Veil, the Screen, and the Two Aspects of Reconciliation

Scripture Reading: Exo. 26:31-33, 36-37; 2 Cor. 5:18-21

« DAY 1 »

I. In the tabernacle a veil of blue, purple, and scarlet strands and fine twined linen was hung upon four pillars of acacia overlaid with gold (Exo. 26:31-32a):

- A. The veil, signifying the flesh of Christ, separated the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies and also covered the Ark of the Testimony (Heb. 10:20; Exo. 26:33; Num. 4:5):
 - 1. This signifies the separation between God and fallen man because of man's flesh (Gen. 6:3; cf. 3:22-24).
 - 2. This veil was torn through Christ's crucifixion, signifying that the flesh of sin was crucified through Christ's death on the cross to open a new and living way for sinful man to contact God in Christ as the propitiation cover in the Holy of Holies (Matt. 27:51; Heb. 10:19-20; Rom. 3:25; cf. Exo. 25:22).
- B. The pillars, like the boards, were made of acacia wood overlaid with gold and stood on silver sockets, which signify Christ's redemption:
 - 1. The pillars signify believers who are strong to bear the testimony of Christ's incarnation and crucifixion (Gal. 2:9; Rev. 3:12; 1 Tim. 3:15).
 - 2. The veil being attached to the pillars implies the identification, the oneness, of Christ as the veil with those believers who are pillars.
 - 3. The pillars in God's dwelling place no longer live in the flesh but bear the testimony that the veil of their flesh has been torn, i.e., that they themselves have been terminated and their flesh has been crucified with Christ (Gal. 2:20; 5:24).
 - 4. The riven veil on the pillars becomes an entrance for God's people to enter the Holy of Holies to have the full enjoyment of God.

II. A screen was made of blue, purple, and scarlet strands and fine twined linen, and for the screen five pillars were made of acacia overlaid with gold (Exo. 26:36-37a):

- A. The screen signifies Christ in His perfect humanity as the One who keeps all negative persons and things outside God's dwelling place, and as the One who died for our sins under God's judgment so that we may be forgiven by God and may enter into the Holy Place of His dwelling to begin to enjoy all the riches of God in Christ (1 Cor. 15:3; 1 Pet. 2:24; 3:18).
- B. The screen and the veil in the tabernacle signify two aspects of the all-inclusive

death of Christ:

1. The screen indicates that Christ died for our sins so that our sins may be forgiven and that we may be justified by God.
2. The veil indicates that Christ died for us, the sinners, so that our flesh, our fallen nature, may be torn, crucified, that we may enter into the Holy of Holies to enjoy God to the uttermost (2 Cor. 5:14-15, 21).

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C. The screen was for the entrance of the tent (Exo. 26:36):

1. The tabernacle in Exodus was enterable.
2. By being incarnated, God not only became a man; He also became an enterable tabernacle (John 1:14).
3. In the Old Testament the priests could enter into the tabernacle, and today all the believers in Christ, as priests, can enter into God and dwell in Him (Rom. 15:16; 1 Pet. 2:5, 9; Rev. 1:6; 1 John 4:13, 15).
4. The incarnated God has become our dwelling place, our home, as a place of enjoyment (cf. Psa. 90:1; Rev. 21:22).

D. Like the four pillars attached to the veil, the five pillars attached to the screen signify stronger believers who are identified with the incarnated and crucified Christ (Exo. 26:32, 37):

1. These pillars at the entrance of the tabernacle are evangelists, who declare to all that Christ died for their sins.
2. The pillars within the tabernacle are those who experience Christ in a deeper way, who daily attach themselves to the torn veil, to the Christ who was terminated in His flesh, and bear the testimony that they have been crucified with Christ (Gal. 2:20).
3. These two kinds of pillars provide entrances for sinners to be saved into God's dwelling place and then to be terminated so that they may come into God's Holy of Holies to enjoy God Himself in His fullness.

E. Between the five pillars supporting the screen there were four entrances into the tabernacle, and between the four pillars supporting the veil there were three entrances into the Holy of Holies (Exo. 26:32, 37):

1. The fact that the screen has four entrances indicates that God's dwelling place is open to all people from the four corners of the earth (Rev. 5:9).
2. The three entrances in the veil indicate that the Triune God Himself is the entrance for His redeemed people to enter not only His dwelling place but also Himself (Eph. 2:18; Luke 15:3-32; cf. Rev. 21:12-13).

III. The screen and the veil are related to the two aspects of reconciliation spoken of by Paul in 2 Corinthians 5:18-21:

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- A. Paul was authorized by God to represent Him to carry out the ministry of reconciliation (vv. 18, 20).
- B. The ministry of reconciliation is not merely to bring sinners back to God but, even the more, to bring believers absolutely into God (Eph. 2:18).
- C. Until we are wholly one with the Lord, being in Him and allowing Him to be in us absolutely, we will need the ministry of reconciliation (1 John 4:13).

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- D. Two steps are required for us to be fully reconciled to God (2 Cor. 5:19-20):
 - 1. In 2 Corinthians 5:19 it is the world that is reconciled to God, but in verse 20 it is the believers, who have already been reconciled to God and are to be reconciled further to God.
 - 2. The first step of reconciliation is to reconcile sinners to God from sin (v. 19):
 - a. For this purpose Christ died for our sins that they might be forgiven by God (1 Cor. 15:3; Luke 24:46-47; 1 John 2:12).
 - b. Originally, we were not only sinners but also enemies of God; through the redeeming death of Christ, God has justified us, the sinners, and reconciled us, His enemies, to Himself (Rom. 5:10a; Col. 1:21-22).
 - c. This is the objective aspect of Christ's death; in this aspect He bore our sins on the cross that they might be judged by God upon Him for us (1 Pet. 2:24; Isa. 53:11-12; Heb. 9:28; Col. 1:22; Rom. 8:3).

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- 3. The second step of reconciliation is to reconcile believers living in the natural life to God from the flesh (2 Cor. 5:20):
 - a. For this purpose Christ died for us—the persons—that we might live to Him in the resurrection life (vv. 14-15).
 - b. This is the subjective aspect of Christ's death; in this aspect He was made sin for us to be judged and done away with by God that we might become the righteousness of God in Him (v. 21).
 - c. In the objective aspect of His death Christ bore our sins; in the subjective aspect He became sin (1 Pet. 2:24; Rom. 8:3; 2 Cor. 5:21).

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- d. Because we are still separated from God and because we are not fully one with God and altogether in harmony with Him, we need the second step of reconciliation.
- e. The subjective aspect of the death of Christ needs to be applied to our situation and

to our natural life (Rom. 6:6; 8:13; Gal. 5:24; Matt. 16:24):

- (1) This application of the subjective death of Christ crucifies our natural life, rending the veil that separates us from God's inner presence.
 - (2) In order that we may be reconciled to God in full, the Father exposes our natural life and unveils our real situation to us (1 John 1:5, 7):
 - (a) As a result, we condemn our natural being and apply the cross subjectively, and this application of the death of Christ crucifies our natural life.
 - (b) As our natural man is crossed out, we experience the second step of reconciliation; in this step the veil of our natural man is rent so that we may live in God's presence.
 - (3) Instead of taking place once for all, the second step of reconciliation is continuous.
4. By the two aspects of His death, Christ fully reconciles God's chosen people to God (Rom. 5:10; 2 Cor. 5:19-20).

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Morning Nourishment

Exo. 26:33 “And you shall hang up the veil under the clasps and bring in the Ark of the Testimony there within the veil; and the veil shall make a separation for you between the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies.”

Heb. 10:20 “Which entrance He initiated for us as a new and living way through the veil, that is, His flesh.”

In the tabernacle there were two veils, or two curtains. The first veil, located at the entrance to the Holy Place, was called the screen; the second curtain, separating the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies, was called the veil. Chapter 26 of Exodus speaks first of the inner veil and then of the screen. Verse 31 says, “And you shall make a veil of blue and purple and scarlet strands and fine twined linen; it shall be made with cherubim, the work of a skillful workman.” This was the veil which made a separation between the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies (v. 33). Verses 36 and 37 say, “And you shall make a screen for the entrance of the tent, of blue and purple and scarlet strands and fine twined linen, the work of an embroiderer. And for the screen you shall make five pillars of acacia and overlay them with gold.”...These two veils signify two aspects of the all-inclusive death of Christ. (Life-study of Exodus, p. 1195)

Today's Reading

In material, color, and workmanship the veil was exactly the same as the first layer of the covering of the tabernacle (Exo. 26:1). The veil, signifying the flesh of Christ (Heb. 10:20), separated the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies (Exo. 26:33) and also covered the Ark of the Testimony (Num. 4:5). This signifies the separation between God and fallen man because of man's flesh (Gen. 6:3; cf. Gen. 3:22-24 and footnotes). This veil was torn through Christ's crucifixion, signifying that the flesh of sin was crucified through Christ's death on the cross to open a new and living way for sinful man to contact God on Christ as the propitiation cover in the Holy of Holies (Matt. 27:5 and footnote 1; Heb. 10:19-20; Rom. 3:25; cf. Exo. 25:22). (Exo. 26:31, footnote 1)

The pillars, like the boards, were made of acacia wood overlaid with gold and stood on silver sockets, which signify Christ's redemption. Hence, the pillars signify believers (Gal. 2:9; Rev. 3:12; 1 Tim. 3:15) who are strong to bear the testimony of Christ's incarnation and crucifixion. The veil being attached to the pillars implies the identification, the oneness, of Christ as the veil with those believers who are pillars. The pillars in God's dwelling place no longer live in the flesh but bear the testimony that the veil of their flesh has been torn, that is, that they themselves have been terminated and their flesh has been crucified with Christ (Gal. 2:20; 5:24). The riven veil on the pillars becomes an entrance for God's people to enter the Holy of Holies to have the full enjoyment of God. (Exo. 26:32, footnote 2)

The screen as the entrance to the tent was made of the same material as the first layer of the covering and the veil separating the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies (cf. Exo. 26:1, 31). The screen signifies Christ in His perfect humanity as the One who keeps all negative persons and things outside God's dwelling place, and as the One who died for our sins under God's judgment (1 Cor. 15:3; 1 Pet. 2:24; 3:18) so that we may be forgiven by God and may enter into the Holy Place of His dwelling to begin to enjoy all the riches of God in Christ.

The screen and the veil in the tabernacle signify two aspects of the all-inclusive death of Christ. The screen indicates that Christ died for our sins so that our sins may be forgiven and that we may be justified by God. The veil indicates that Christ died for us, the sinners (2 Cor. 5:14-15, 21), so that our flesh, our fallen nature, may be torn, crucified, that we may enter into the Holy of Holies to enjoy God to the uttermost. These two curtains are related to the two aspects of reconciliation spoken of by Paul in 2 Corinthians 5:18-21 (see footnote 2 on v. 20 there). (Exo. 26:36, footnote 1)

Further Reading: Life-study of Exodus, msgs. 99-100

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Morning Nourishment

John 1:14 “And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality.”

Eph. 2:18 “For through Him we both have access in one Spirit unto the Father.”

The tabernacle in Exodus was enterable. By being incarnated, God not only became a man; He also became an enterable tabernacle (John 1:14). God’s original intention was that all the children of Israel would be priests (Exo. 19:6) and have the right to enter into the tabernacle, that is, to enter into God and dwell in God. In the Old Testament the priests could enter into the tabernacle, and today all the believers in Christ, as priests (Rom. 15:16; 1 Pet. 2:5, 9; Rev. 1:6), can enter into God and dwell in Him (1 John 4:13, 15). The incarnated God has become our dwelling place, our home, as a place of enjoyment (cf. Psalms 90:1; Rev. 21:22). (Exo. 26:36, footnote 2)

Today’s Reading

Like the four pillars attached to the veil (Exo. 26:32), the five pillars attached to the screen signify stronger believers who are identified with the incarnated and crucified Christ (see footnotes 2 and 3 on v. 32). These pillars at the entrance of the tabernacle are evangelists, who declare to all that Christ died for their sins. The pillars within the tabernacle are those who experience Christ in a deeper way, who daily attach themselves to the torn veil, to the very Christ who was terminated in His flesh, and bear the testimony that they have been crucified with Christ (cf. Gal. 2:20). These two kinds of pillars provide entrances for sinners to be saved into God’s dwelling place and then to be terminated so that they may come into God’s Holy of Holies to enjoy God Himself in His fullness.

Between the five pillars supporting the screen there were four entrances into the tabernacle, and between the four pillars supporting the veil there were three entrances into the Holy of Holies. The fact that the screen has four entrances indicates that God’s dwelling place is open to all people from the four corners of the earth (Rev. 5:9). The three entrances in the veil indicate that the Triune God Himself is the entrance for His redeemed people to enter not only His dwelling place but also Himself. (cf. Rev. 21:12-13 and footnote 1 on v. 13.) (Exo. 26:37, footnote 1)

Recently I have seen that the screen and the veil in the tabernacle are related to Paul’s word concerning reconciliation in 2 Corinthians 5. For many years I was puzzled by this chapter, especially by Paul’s appeal to the Corinthians to be reconciled to God. In this chapter Paul is definitely dealing not with unbelievers, but with believers. Nevertheless, he concludes this chapter with a word about reconciliation. Why in speaking to believers does Paul refer to his ministry as a ministry of reconciliation? Had those in Corinth not already been reconciled to God? Since they were genuine believers, they no doubt had been reconciled. Second Corinthians 5:19 says, “God in Christ was reconciling the world to Himself, not accounting their offenses to them, and has put in us the word of reconciliation.” Then in verse 20 Paul goes on to say, “On behalf of Christ then we are ambassadors, as God entreats you through us; we beseech you on behalf of Christ, Be reconciled to God.” We need to see that here Paul speaks of reconciliation in two ways, or in two aspects. One aspect is related to sinners; the other aspect, to believers.

If we know the significance of the veil and the screen in the tabernacle, we shall be able to understand how Paul deals with the Corinthian believers in 2 Corinthians 5. The Corinthians had passed through the first veil, the screen, at the entrance to the tabernacle. But they had not yet passed through the second veil, the inner veil, the veil separating the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies. This means that they had not experienced both aspects of the reconciliation between us and God...They had been reconciled to God to some extent, but not to the extent of being able to come into the Holy of Holies to enjoy God in full. For this reason, they needed a further reconciliation, the reconciliation Paul speaks of in 2 Corinthians 5:20. (Life-study of Exodus, pp. 1195-1196)

Further Reading: Life-study of Exodus, msgs. 101-102

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Morning Nourishment

2 Cor. 5:18 “But all things are out from God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Christ and has given to us the ministry of reconciliation.”

20 “On behalf of Christ then we are ambassadors, as God entreats you through us; we beseech you on behalf of Christ, Be reconciled to God.”

The Corinthian believers were genuine brothers in Christ, and Paul repeatedly addressed them as such. Nevertheless, in 2 Corinthians 5:20 he beseeches them to be reconciled to God. Then in verse 21 he goes on to say, “Him who did not know sin He made sin on our behalf that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” This is deeper than Christ dying for our sins. For Christ to be made sin for us so that we may become the righteousness of God is different from Christ dying so that we may have our sins forgiven and be justified by God. (Life-study of Exodus, p. 1197)

Today’s Reading

If we read 2 Corinthians 5 carefully, we shall see that there are in fact two aspects of reconciliation. In verse 19 Paul says that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself. Notice that concerning the reconciling of the world to God, Paul does not tell us that Christ was made sin. On the contrary, he simply says that God did not account their offenses to them. This aspect of reconciliation involves sinners, as indicated by Paul’s use of the word world. But according to verse 20, even the reconciled ones, the believers, still need to be reconciled.

Most Christian preachers today speak only of the first aspect of reconciliation, the aspect of God not accounting sinners’ offenses to them. Few, if any, speak of the second aspect of reconciliation, the aspect related to Christ becoming sin so that we may become the righteousness of God in Him. This aspect, which is much deeper than the first, is signified by the second veil in the tabernacle. Only when we pass through this veil are we thoroughly reconciled to God and able to enjoy Him in full. (Life-study of Exodus, pp. 1197-1198)

If we would have a proper understanding of what it means to work together with God, we need to recall what Paul said at the end of 2 Corinthians 5. Paul has already said that he has been commissioned by God with the ministry of reconciliation, that is, with the work of reconciling others to God.

Many years ago, I had a very limited understanding of reconciliation. My understanding was that before we were saved, we were enemies of God, and there was no peace between us and God. Instead of peace, we were at enmity with God. But when we repented and believed in the Lord Jesus, His blood washed away our sins, and we received God’s forgiveness. As a result, we were justified by God and reconciled to Him. Having been reconciled to God in this way, there was no longer enmity between us and God. Instead, we had peace with Him. This understanding of reconciliation falls far short of the full meaning of reconciliation in the New Testament. It is not the full significance of reconciliation as ministered by the apostle Paul.

I have read a number of books which refer to this subject, but none of them pointed out that the ministry of reconciliation is not merely to bring sinners back to God, but, even the more, to bring believers absolutely into God. Hence, it is not sufficient simply to be brought back to God; we must also be in Him.

The biblical understanding of reconciliation includes more than merely being brought back to God. It is to be brought back into Him. Therefore,...to bring others to God means to bring them into God and to make them absolutely one with Him.

Until we are wholly one with the Lord, being in Him and allowing Him to be in us absolutely, we shall continue to need the ministry of reconciliation, the ministry with which Paul was commissioned. Paul was commissioned with the work of bringing the believers into God in a way that was absolute and practical. (Life-study of 2 Corinthians, pp. 342-344)

Further Reading: Life-study of Exodus, msg. 103; Life-study of 2 Corinthians, msg. 39

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Morning Nourishment

2 Cor. 5:19 “Namely, that God in Christ was reconciling the world to Himself, not accounting their offenses to them, and has put in us the word of reconciliation.”

Rom. 5:10 “For if we, being enemies, were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more we will be saved in His life, having been reconciled.”

Originally, we were not only sinners but also enemies of God. Enmity is the greatest problem between man and God. Through the redeeming death of Christ, God has justified us, the sinners, and has reconciled us, His enemies, to Himself. We were reconciled to God when we believed in the Lord Jesus. By faith we have received God’s justification and reconciliation. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, p. 1397)

Today’s Reading

As believers we have been redeemed by being reconciled to God in the first step. Second Corinthians 5:19 and 20 show that reconciliation has two steps. In verse 19 it is the world that is reconciled to God. In verse 20 it is the believers, who have already been reconciled to God, who are to be reconciled further to Him. This clearly indicates that there are two steps for us to be fully reconciled to God. In the first step we, as sinners, are reconciled to God from sin. For this purpose Christ died for our sins (1 Cor. 15:3) that they might be forgiven by God. This is the objective aspect of Christ’s death. In this aspect He bore our sins on the cross to be judged by God upon Him for us. The second step is that, as believers living in the natural life, we need to be reconciled to God from the flesh. For this purpose Christ died for us—the persons—that we may live to Him in the resurrection life (2 Cor. 5:14-15). This is the subjective aspect of Christ’s death. In this aspect He was made sin for us (2 Cor. 5:21) to be judged and done away with by God so that we may become the righteousness of God in Him. By these two aspects of His death the Lord Jesus has fully reconciled God’s chosen people to God.

These two steps of reconciliation are clearly portrayed by the two veils of the tabernacle. The first veil is called the screen (Exo. 26:37). A sinner was brought to God through the reconciliation of the atoning blood to enter into the Holy Place by passing the screen. This typifies the first step of reconciliation. The second veil (Exo. 26:31-35; Heb. 9:3) still separated him from God, who is in the Holy of Holies. This veil needed to be rent that he might be brought to God in the Holy of Holies. This is the second step of reconciliation. Many believers have been reconciled to God in the first step, having passed through the first veil and having entered into the Holy Place. But because they still live in the flesh, they need to pass the second veil, which has been rent already (Matt. 27:51; Heb. 10:20), to enter in through the Holy of Holies to live with God in their spirit (1 Cor. 6:17). This is reconciliation in the second step. Because of the need for believers to have the second step of reconciliation, Paul, in 2 Corinthians 5:20, says, “Be reconciled to God.”

The first step of reconciliation was accomplished when we believed in the Lord Jesus. At the time we were forgiven, freed, washed, sanctified, and justified, God reconciled us to Him in position. However, in disposition we are still against God in many ways and in many things. For this reason, we need further reconciliation.

We have been reconciled to God in the first step in order to be saved in the life of God’s Son. “If we, being enemies, were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more we will be saved in His life, having been reconciled” (Rom. 5:10). Reconciliation to God through Christ in the first step has been accomplished already, but to be saved in Christ’s life from so many negative things is still a daily matter. Yes, we have been forgiven, freed, washed, sanctified, justified, and reconciled to God in the first step. However, there are still many things from which we need to be saved in Christ’s life. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 1397-1398, 1400)

Further Reading: The Conclusion of the New Testament, msg. 128

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Morning Nourishment

2 Cor. 5:21 “Him who did not know sin He made sin on our behalf that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”

1 Pet. 2:24 “Who Himself bore up our sins in His body on the tree, in order that we, having died to sins, might live to righteousness; by whose bruise you were healed.”

For us to experience the first step of reconciliation, it was necessary for Christ to die for our sins. In 1 Corinthians 15:3 Paul declares, “Christ died for our sins.” But in order for us to be reconciled further, even fully, to God, it was necessary for Christ to die also for us, not only for our sins. For Christ to die for our sins is one thing, but for Him to die for us is something else. Christ died for our sins so that our sins may be forgiven by God and taken away. Christ also died for us so that we may be terminated. Christ’s dying for our sins accomplishes the first step of reconciliation, and His dying for us accomplishes the second step. (Life-study of 2 Corinthians, p. 129)

Today’s Reading

Paul has this second step in mind when he says, “One died for all” (2 Cor. 5:14). According to this verse, Christ died not for sins; He died for persons. The objective aspect of Christ’s death involves His dying for our sins. But the subjective aspect of Christ’s death involves His dying for us. This subjective aspect enables the believers to be reconciled to God in full. Furthermore, in the objective aspect of His death Christ bore our sins. However, in the subjective aspect He became sin. Today there is much teaching among Christians about Christ dying for our sins and bearing our sins, but not much is said about Christ being made sin on our behalf.

Since we, as fallen human beings, are sin, for Christ to be made sin actually means for Him to become us. The subjective aspect of the death of Christ puts us to death. According to Romans 8:3, God condemned sin in the flesh. This means that He condemned us; He condemned the natural man. Furthermore, the veil, the natural man, the natural life, the flesh, was cleft through the subjective aspect of Christ’s death. When sin was condemned and when the veil was rent, we were terminated. As a result, the second veil was taken away and we may be fully reconciled to God. Therefore, we should not remain in the Holy Place; we should come forward into the Holy of Holies. Moreover, we should no longer know one another according to flesh, but we should know one another according to spirit.

Eventually, those who have been brought back to God in the Holy of Holies will enjoy Christ to the uttermost and even become the righteousness of God in Him. Paul speaks of this in 2 Corinthians 5:21 where he says, “That we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” Righteousness issues from God for His administration (Psa. 89:14; 97:2; Isa. 32:1), which is Christ to be our righteousness (Phil. 3:9; 1 Cor. 1:30), making us God’s righteousness in Him, not merely righteous before God. Through His redemption, man as a sinner, even as sin, is made God’s righteousness, reconciled to the righteous God, and a new creation living to Him for God’s eternal purpose. The apostles are commissioned to minister such a Christ, with all the glorious issues of His marvelous achievement, to His believers who are His members to form His Body.

God desires to have a people on earth who are not only righteous persons; He wants a people who, in the sight of God, the devil, the angels, and the demons, are the very righteousness of God. To be made righteous before God is one thing; to be God’s righteousness is another thing. To become the righteousness of God is the highest enjoyment of the Triune God in Christ.

In Adam we fell so low that we became sin. Not only were we sinful before God—we became sin itself. But now in Christ, having been brought thoroughly back to God, we may enjoy Christ to such an extent that in Him we become God’s righteousness. What a salvation! What a reconciliation! To have this enjoyment is to be on the peak of God’s salvation, to be on the peak of our holy Zion. (Life-study of 2 Corinthians, pp. 129-132)

Further Reading: Life-study of 2 Corinthians, msg. 14

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Morning Nourishment

Rom. 6:6 “Knowing this, that our old man has been crucified with Him in order that the body of sin might be annulled, that we should no longer serve sin as slaves.”

Gal. 5:24 “But they who are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and its lusts.”

The Corinthian believers had been reconciled to God, having passed through the first veil and having entered into the Holy Place. Yet they still lived in the flesh. They needed to pass the second veil, which had been rent already (Matt. 27:51; Heb. 10:20), to enter into the Holy of Holies to live with God in their spirit (1 Cor. 6:17). The goal of 2 Corinthians was to bring them there that they might be persons in the spirit (1 Cor. 2:15), in the Holy of Holies. This was what the apostle meant by saying, “Be reconciled to God” [2 Cor. 5:20]. This was to present them full-grown in Christ (Col. 1:28). (2 Cor. 5:20, footnote 2)

Today’s Reading

The second step of reconciliation is much deeper than the first step, for it takes place not in the outer court outside the tabernacle but within the Holy Place inside the tabernacle. Instead of taking place once for all, this kind of reconciliation is continuous. If you consider your experience, you will realize that no matter how long you have been a seeking Christian, you still have the sense deep within that you are separated from God’s presence by something, mainly by your natural life, your old man, your self. You may be very good, nice, pious, “holy,” and “spiritual,” yet you know that there is still something separating you from God’s presence. You are not fully one with God, altogether in harmony with Him. Instead, because you are still separated from Him, you need the second step of reconciliation. You need the application of the subjective death of Christ to your situation. In other words, the subjective death of Christ needs to be applied to your natural life. This application of the subjective death of Christ crucifies your natural life, rending the veil that separates you from God’s inner presence.

If we are sincere and honest with God in our seeking of Him, we shall realize that this is our situation. This is the reason that often we begin our prayer with confession. We may say, “Father, I confess that I am still separated from You. In a sense, I am with You, but in a deeper sense I am not with You. I am separated from You not by something sinful but by my natural life. Father, forgive me, and grant mercy to me that I may apply the subjective death of Christ to my inward being to such an extent that my natural life will be thoroughly crucified.” This is to experience the rending of the veil within us so that, through the rent veil of the natural life, we may be reconciled to the inner presence of God the Father.

In order that we may be reconciled to God in full, the Father exposes our natural life and unveils our real situation to us. As a result, we condemn our natural being and apply the cross subjectively. Then as our natural man is crossed out, we experience the second step of reconciliation. In this step the veil of our natural man is rent so that we may live in God’s presence. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 1586-1587)

We thank the Lord for what He has shown us concerning the veil and the screen and concerning the necessity to have the flesh rent so that we may experience God in the Holy of Holies. Having seen these things, we can no longer be content with the outer court or even the Holy Place.

If we are in the Holy of Holies, there will be no way for us to go elsewhere. We can never again be content to live in the Holy Place. The vision we see in the Holy of Holies will imprison us.

We praise the Lord for showing us the two veils, the inner veil and the screen, and for revealing the two aspects of reconciliation. We all need to pass through both veils and experience both aspects of reconciliation so that we may enter into the Holy of Holies to enjoy the Lord to the uttermost. (Life-study of Exodus, pp. 1201-1202)

Further Reading: The Conclusion of the New Testament, msg. 146; Life-study of 2 Corinthians, msg. 37

Lo! in heaven Jesus sitting

Praise of the Lord — His Exaltation

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D G G/B D D/A D⁷ D⁷/F[#]
1. Lo! in heav - en Je - sus sit - ting, Christ the Lord is there en -
G D/A G/B G⁷ C Am G/D D⁷ C/G G
throned; As the man by God ex - alt - ed, With God's glo - ry He is crowned.

2. He hath put on human nature,
Died according to God's plan,
Resurrected with a body,
And ascended as a man.

3. God in Him on earth was humbled,
God with man was domiciled;
Man in Him in heav'n exalted,
Man with God is reconciled.

4. He as God with man is mingled,
God in man is testified;
He as man with God is blended,
Man in God is glorified.

5. From the Glorified in heaven
The inclusive Spirit came;
All of Jesus' work and Person
Doth this Spirit here proclaim.

6. With the Glorified in heaven
Is the Church identified;
By the Spirit of this Jesus
Are His members edified.

7. Lo! a man is now in heaven
As the Lord of all enthroned;
This is Jesus Christ our Savior,
With God's glory ever crowned!