

Matthew 27:45

There were four signs that occurred at death of Jesus

- 1) Darkness over the whole land from 6hour to 9th hr (for three hours! until the time he died)
- 2) The veil of the temple was rent two.
- 3) There was an earthquake
- 4) # bodies of dead saints came out of the tombs
 - The 2nd is our focus this a.m.

The sign of the torn veil. (Mt 27:50-51)

1. **Behold!** Unlike the darkness/earthquake/bodies, this miracle was only seen by a few.
 - a. Only the priests would witness [common people not allowed into temple]
 - b. Perhaps more priests than normal (?) [Passover, various cities visiting Jerusalem]
 - c. Not all eyes would behold this. Yet God wants us to stop, look.
 - d. **Behold!** Stop. Look. Ponder. That is what I'm trying to help us to do this am
 - e. May not seem gripping to us as an earthquake, dead bodies raised, darkness @ noon...but it is incomparable - let's see the history.

2. **The tabernacle.** Exodus 26: 31-33
 - a. Moses on Mount Sinai. God giving him instructions. Build him a tent, a sanctuary, he is going to dwell among these people. 25:8
 - b. Vs 30 But it was a tent (not like Jesus day)
 - 1) **Mobile** (curtains/boards that pop out), like a moving house, so where God goes, would go. Point is, He would stay w/ them, make his abode w/ them
 - 2) Yet (as intimate as it sounds) everything about the tabernacle screams **say back**. PIC
 - a) **Zones of holiness**, the closer you got to center, more restrictions there were
 - Gentiles/unclean Israelites lived outside camp
 - Israel inside camp, but only Levites encamp in immediate vicinity of tabernacle
 - Even priests have restrictions, Lev 16, only one man goes into holy of holies
 - b) Analogy: nuclear reactor, as one moves closer to the core, u get hit w/ increasing levels of radiation. As get closer to Holy of Holies, an increasing level of Holiness
 - c. Two sections to it:
 - 1) Larger (holy place), smaller cube (most holy place, 15x15)n PIC
 - a) **Most holy place**, God comes down in cloud form, sits above mercy seat, communes w/ people. Talk to Moses from there. Accept sacrifice once a year on day of atonement, from high priest, not the priest, but HP, no one else allowed in
 - b) What separates that room was not a line drawn on the floor, or yellow tape, saying restricted area, rather a curtain, called the veil. PIC - Lancaster PA.

3. **The Veil** as described in verse 31-33
 - a. **Behold** - look at It's **fabric**
 - 1) Described as blue, purple, scarlet thread, fine twisted linen.
 - Colors of the heavens
 - Don't miss the garden likeness

- Jesus day, It would have been [60ft tall, 30ft wide, 72 twisted plaits, 24 threads each]
- b. **Look** at the Cherubim - embroidered on curtain (veil).
- 1) Heavenly beings, closest to God, his bodyguards. Protect access to this holy God
 - 2) You note the gold/silver (Closer to God, more precious metals used)
 - Courtyard posts (bronze basins, curtains silver hooks/rings) (26:11)
 - Tent HP, walls with sockets of silver (26:19-21)
 - Holy of holies, everything covered w/ gold (26:29, 32)
 - 3) Above was blue - So a blue roof w/ flying cherubim. We are in heaven.
 - Heb 8. Moses constructed a copy, a shadow of real tabernacle in heaven.
- c. **Veil's purpose:** to make sure no one sees or gets near ark, because that is where God sits
- 1) **Only** the high priest could go there.
 - 2) If anyone else goes inside the veil - killed Lev 16:1
 - 3) HP went in **only** once a year - day of atonement, or he would die 16:2
 - a) When he approached he put coals/incense on altar. Room filled w/ smoke from incense, lest he accidentally see God & die. Lev 16:12-13
 - b) Moses on Mt, 40 days, getting this blueprint, covered w/ a cloud (24:18)
 - c) Shake finger (dipped in blood) 7 times toward mercy seat of ark, to make atonement for himself and the people sins (sense the dangerous nature of this)
 - Cleansing/purifying, all things must be purified w/ blood
 - Even though no one enters the entire year, the tabernacle and all things still need cleansed. Blood is critical, sin is pervasive and, life must be given to purify, even heavenly things must be purified (Jesus will take his own offering up to the heavenlies to present before God can dwell with us). Heb 9:26 .
 - d) This is the holy place. It is where God is (we don't have things like that in our country - they give oval office tours, but hardly a fair comparison). This veil protected the people from the the power and absolute, indescribable, & unapproachable holiness of God. 1 Tim. 6:15-16
4. **Matt 27:51 Behold** - Veil is torn in two (couple things, it happened...)
- a. At the very instant Jesus died v 50.
 - 1) No one knows that in the temple. No one hears Jesus say, it is finished. It's ¼ mile away
 - 2) **When?** At the **9th hour** Jesus cried out. Vs 46.
 - a) Priests are in there ministering (evening sacrifice). Normally a priest would be standing in front of the Holy place offering incense (Luke 1:8-10).
 - b) Like working at nuclear power plant, all of a sudden, all protective walls / barriers break down, you're standing there, here comes unrestricted toxic radiation coming at you. You're dead! Its the way you feel. You are finished. It's over. Imagine being a priest standing there at that moment. What do you do???
 - b. Rips from top to bottom, not bottom to top.
 - 1) 60 ft high. no man could reach the top to tare this veil; this was God at work
 - 2) Width of a palm, no man could tare it by his own power - what strength would it take?
 - 3) Veil begins to split - probably heard the noise before they saw it. No one looking 60 ft up in air. They are just going about their work - all of a sudden.....they look, there it is.
 - a. What would you do?
 - b. How traumatizing, I imagine you'd turn and run. They don't want to see back there, that is certain death.
 - c. No way to explain it than a miracle.
 - c. vs 50-51 "Behold" Look!
 - 1) What I want to help you do this a.m. is to "Behold" [its a visual thing]

- 2) Earthquake - *felt thing, heard thing, seen thing* - but this, **behold** what God is doing. Ponder what is being told us.

5. **Significance: What God is saying?**

- a. First, the end of the Old Testament system - inadequate, did not provide forgiveness such as for men to truly enter the presence of God (forbidden/keep out)
 - 1) Idea: God must dwell separately from this sinful nation, they are unclean, He is pure, you can't approach me except thru one man who has worked all day long to purify himself in various ways to approach me - BUT, that's over!
 - 2) The intermediary system is finished w/ Jesus
 - 3) Barrier btw God and man is ripped into - Full access (Eph 2)
 - 4) Christ is opening the way to God for us (Heb 10.19-22)
- b. I don't think we can fully appreciate that the way the Jews appreciated it.
 - 1) All our lives we've sung songs to God
 - 2) Prayed to God
 - 3) Understood God is in our midst
 - 4) We are use to that - I wish we weren't quite so comfortable w/ it, we are use to it
 - 5) But for the Jews, terrified that if they saw God they would die, like Jews at Sinai who cried, if he talks to us we will die. The rending of temple veil was unprecedented, it offered them a bold blessing they'd never imagined - walking into that room
- c. So as we close, want to read w/ you two fairly lengthy readings and then we will go directly to the table: Hebrews 9: 2-12; 10:19-22
 - 1) What you and I are gonna partake of:
 - 2) The memorial of the event that opened the way for us to :
 - Pray to God directly
 - Receive from God the word directly
 - Confess our sins with God directly
 - To commune w/ God of all the ages, of all the universe, because Jesus by his death ripped the veil that separated us from Him. Lets celebrate that, this day