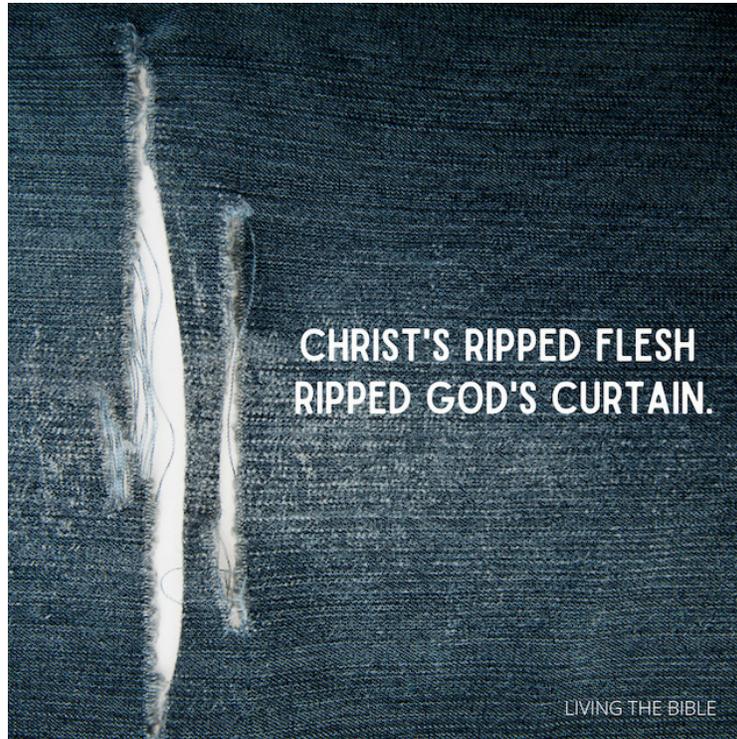

GOD'S CURTAINS

EXODUS 26



I was in a church a while back which had many converted Roman Catholics in it. I asked the pastor what had drawn so many Roman Catholics to this church. He said he noticed a change when he started speaking about how Jesus is our connection to God.

These Roman Catholics had been told all their lives that they were disconnected from God and the only way to connect with God was through priests and the Roman Catholic church. But they still felt disconnected from God. So, when this pastor started proclaiming Jesus Christ as our direct connector to God, that resonated deeply and attracted many Roman Catholics in that community as the news of this spread among them. It is appealing, isn't it?

But such connection was not so easy, direct, or free in the Old Testament. Although God gave the Tabernacle as a meeting place with Israel, there were still a number of barriers that prevented direct connection with God. Among these barriers were a number of curtains which we find in Exodus 26.

LEARNING

GOD'S CURTAINS PROTECT (12-14)

God devoted a whole chapter to detailed instructions about various curtains he wanted in the Tabernacle: the number, the color, the materials, the layers, the connectors, the position, the embroidery, and so on.

Partly, this was to protect the Tabernacle from the weather. For example, the outside layer of the curtain was waterproof and windproof goatskins. But it was also to protect the people from straying into God's presence unprepared. They separated, but also protected.

GOD PROTECTS US
FROM OURSELVES AND HIMSELF.

So, would any old curtains do?

GOD'S CURTAINS BEAUTIFY (1, 31)

While the outer layer of the curtain was functional, the inside layers were beautiful. They had beautiful colors (blue, purple, scarlet) and beautiful design, with cherubim embroidered into them. Although only the priests could enter, when they did, they were surrounded by beauty.

GOD GIVES A BEAUTIFUL WELCOME
INTO HIS BEAUTIFUL PRESENCE.

So, can I see what's on the other side?

GOD'S CURTAINS HIDE (36)

The curtains draped over the Holy Place and the Most Holy place hid the furniture inside them from prying eyes. Sure, the priests could go in and come out to tell the people what was there and what each piece of furniture meant. But the people couldn't learn directly. The truths in the furniture were hidden from their eyes. This reminded them that the Tabernacle was still shadow-truth. It revealed but it also hid.

GOD GIVES SOME TRUTH
TO MAKE US HUNGER FOR MORE TRUTH.

LOVING

We find a very different picture in the New Testament. There God rips curtains and removes them through Jesus Christ. The moment Jesus died on the cross, we read, **And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom** (Matt. 27:51). When his flesh was torn and shredded so were God's curtains. Jesus is God's curtainless Tabernacle through whom we can connect directly, freely, and safely with God in his beautiful presence. **Therefore... 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, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith** (Hebrews 10:19-20).

LIVING

Connect with God through Christ the connector.
