

# Tearing of The Curtain in The Temple

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The temple that stood in Jerusalem in the days Jesus Christ was on the earth was a magnificent building. It took the Jewish people 46 years to build, according to the book of John chapter 2 verse 20.

*Job 2:20 They replied, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and you are going to raise it in three days?"*

The temple was divided into several parts, and each had a particular purpose in the worshipping of God. The innermost room was called the "Holy of Holies" and was the room where God's presence was in the temple.

Only the High Priest could enter the "Holy of Holies", and then only once a year on the "Day Of Atonement", to atone for the sins of Israel. To enter this part of the temple at any other time of the year, or by any other person, was a sure death sentence.

This room, the holy of holies, was separated from the rest of the temple by a massive curtain or veil. The exact sized of the curtain is not known, but according to Jewish tradition, the curtain was about 60 feet high. It was very thick with a thickness of about 4 inches.

So it was a massive curtain. The book of Exodus informs us how it was made. They made it from blue, purple and scarlet materials along with twisted linen.

The veil represents the separation of a Holy God from sinful humanity because our sins have separated us from God as we see in Isa 59 verses 1 and 2.

*Isa 59:1 Behold, Yahweh's hand is not shortened, that it can't save; nor his ear dull, that it can't hear.*

*Isa 59:2 But your iniquities have separated you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear.*

As we can see from verse two, our sins have separated us from God. He designed the temple in a way to keep us separated from himself. This was the purpose of the curtain or veil.

It is well worth reading the rest of Isaiah 59 to see why the curtain was in place to make a dividing line between God (holiness) and humanity (sinfulness).

## The Significance.

The very moment Jesus died on the cross, this massive curtain in the Temple was torn in half from the top to the bottom as recorded for us in Matthew 27 verses 50 and 51.

*Mat 27:50 Jesus cried again with a loud voice, and yielded up his spirit.*

*Mat 27:51 Behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from the top to the bottom. The earth quaked and the rocks were split.*

The height and thickness of this veil makes what happened when Jesus died on the cross even more remarkable. From verse 51, we see the curtain was torn from the top to the bottom. This would have required a massive amount of energy to tear such an enormous curtain in two. It is also interesting to note that it was torn from the top to the bottom. Signifying that it was God the Father himself who tore this massive curtain.

This was a very dramatic sign that showed us that this incredible sacrifice of Jesus was sufficient atonement for the sins of all humanity. The shedding of His blood paid for our sins and freed us from the death penalty. This opened the way into the “Holy of Holies” where the presence of God resided.

Before this amazing sacrifice of Jesus, only the high priest could enter this part of the Temple, and then only on one day of the year. What this did for us was amazing. It gave us the right to come before the “Throne of Grace” without fear. To actually approach Almighty God with our prayers and requests.

Now the way into the holy of holies has been opened for all people and for all time for both the Jews and the Gentiles. God also abandoned the temple and no longer lives in a dwelling made by human hands. God was now finished with the temple in Jerusalem and it was finally destroyed by the Romans in A.D. 70.

*We read in Acts 17:24 The God who made the world and all things in it, he, being Lord of heaven and earth, doesn't dwell in temples made with hands,*

The temple needed to be removed because as long as it stood, the old covenant would continue with its sacrifices. The old covenant had to make way for the new covenant to be fully established, as Hebrews 8 verse 13 shows.

*Heb 8:13 In that he says, "A new covenant", he has made the first old. But that which is becoming old and grows aged is near to vanishing away.*

This is made even clearer in Hebrews 9 verses 8 and 9.

*Heb 9:8 The Holy Spirit is indicating this, that the way into the Holy Place wasn't yet revealed while the first tabernacle was still standing;*

*Heb 9:9 which is a symbol of the present age, where gifts and sacrifices are offered that are incapable, concerning the conscience, of making the worshiper perfect;*

The temple is no longer needed. We are now permitted to enter the very presence of God through this torn curtain. The writer of the book of Hebrews describes this beautifully in Hebrews 10 and verses 19 to 23.

*Heb 10:19 Having therefore, brothers, boldness to enter into the holy place by the blood of Jesus,*

*Heb 10:20 by the way which he dedicated for us, a new and living way, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;*

*Heb 10:21 and having a great priest over God's house,*

*Heb 10:22 let's draw near with a true heart in fullness of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and having our body washed with pure water,*

*Heb 10:23 let's hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering; for he who promised is faithful.*

The veil in the temple was a constant reminder to us that sin has no place in the presence of God. No amount of animal sacrifices could truly atone for the sins of



mankind. But Jesus Christ, through his death on the cross, has now removed all barriers between God and man. We may now approach the throne of grace with boldness and confidence as revealed to us in Hebrews 4 and verse 16.

*Heb 4:16 Let's therefore draw near with boldness to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy, and may find grace for help in time of need.*

We no longer need the services of a human high priest or animal sacrifices for our forgiveness. Now we have our Lord Jesus Christ in Heaven. The only one who can intercede for us with our Heavenly Father as recorded in Hebrews 7 verse 25.

*Heb 7:25 Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.*

The death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ paid for our sins. The tearing of the curtain made it possible for all humankind to approach God. And as we can plainly see in 1Ti 2:5, Jesus is the only mediator between us and God.

*1Ti 2:5 For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,*

Many people today still rely on a priest to confess their sins to. This is no longer necessary. Understand 1Timothy 2: verse 5 and see there is only one mediator between God and man, and that is Jesus Christ. No-one else can intercede for us. Absolutely no one else, no saint, no angel, no man and definitely no woman has the authority to intercede between God and mankind. This prerogative has been reserved for Jesus Christ and for him alone.

Thank you for reading this book and may our most gracious God bless you and your family.

Leslie Rendell has been studying the bible for most of his life. When he is researching a topic, he looks at what other people have said in their books, or on the world wide web. He believes it is important to see opinions from every angle of a subject to be able to give his own informed decision. But still the most important reference is always the bible. There is no other authority when it comes to matters of what God expects from those He has created in His own image. If there is a conflict between the bible and man's thoughts, The bible will win every time.

All though he has not had any formal bible education, he believes the bible can be understood by the average bible reader. Otherwise how could they ever understand what God's will is for their lives?

Apart from bible studies, Leslie loves to spend time with his family watching his daughter grow into a wonderful woman and mother. His grand children starting on their life journeys, and now some great grand children to watch growing up. It is a special time in his life to see his family grow.

He is retired and now lives in the South West of Western Australia. Apart from his love of the Bible and his family, his other hobby is photography, where he loves to photograph God's creation.

If you have read one of Leslie's books, he would appreciate you leaving a comment on his website ([www.leslierendell.com](http://www.leslierendell.com))



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## **About the Author**

Leslie Rendell has been studying the bible for most of his life. When he is researching a topic, the most important reference book is always the bible. There is no other authority for matters of what God expects from those He has created in His own image. If there is a conflict between the bible and man's thoughts, the bible will win every time. Although he has had no formal bible education, he believes the average bible reader can understand the bible. Otherwise, how could they ever know what God's will is for their lives? He is retired and now lives in the South West of Western Australia. Apart from his love of the Bible and his family, his other hobby is photography, where he loves to photograph God's creation.

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