

Within the Veil in Hebrews

Within the Veil

A Bible Study

Introduction

Since the 1860's, but especially during the last twenty years, a succession of men has concluded that the sanctuary doctrine, as they once taught it in Adventism, was wrong. This, of course, is no trivial change in position. If the sanctuary doctrine is wrong then another thought follows quickly: Ellen White was wicked (not just wrong).

Since the latter issue is so crucial to Seventh-day Adventist, and since it would be begging the question to use Ellen White to prove a point when the question was whether she had integrity, a Bible study is in right order.

Books of objections require books of answers. Anyone reading "Cast out for the Cross of Christ" knows that it contains hundreds of arguments against the standard Adventist position. Anyone reading "Hebrews" by M. L. Andreason knows that it contains hundreds of arguments in favor of the standard position. The same could be said of books by Ford, Canright, and others (like Ballenger's) and of books by James White, Uriah Smith, J. N. Andrews, and others (like Andreason's).

If someone is looking for a verse by verse answer to Ballenger's objections they will find it in the form of opposing books. There is a reason that Ballenger did not state his position in the form of a verse-by-verse countering of the already-written Adventist position: It would have taken a mammoth book. I am being generous to say that is the only reason.

In summary, that is the same reason that no-one has taken up a paragraph-by-paragraph refuting of Ballenger. It is easier to write a Bible study that explains the truth.

In this study, however, I will limit myself to a Bible study on issues vitally relevant to Ballenger's material on the sanctuary.

Christ at God's Right Hand

Christ sits at the Father's right hand.

ÿ "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." Ps. 110:1

Biblical observations: This passage is written in the present tense, though it was fulfilled more than 1000 years after it was written. This is not strange or abnormal in scripture. Consider the following familiar passages from the Psalms:

I will tell of the decree: Jehovah said unto me, Thou art my son; This day have I begotten thee.
Ps 2:7

Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated wickedness: Therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee With the oil of gladness above thy fellows. Ps 45:7

For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet. I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me. They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture. Ps 22:16-18

It would be shallow to take these or other passages, especially from the Psalms, and to say that they must have been fulfilled in the Old Testament times because they were written in present tense during that time. A classic example of this from outside the Psalms is Isaiah 6.

In this passage Isaiah sees the Lord “high and lifted up” in the temple. Was Isaiah looking at the situation as it existed in his own day? Or did he look at it as it would exist in the future? What did he see?

1. He saw a time when angels commented that the whole earth is full of his glory (v. 3)
2. He saw a time when the house was filled with smoke (v. 4)
3. He saw a time when there was an altar with incense (v. 6)
4. He lived at a time when a message of hopelessness would be preached until the earth would be uninhabited (v. 11-12)

From Revelation it is easy to make a general statement about the timing of the fulfillment of Isaiah 6.

1. The glory of the Lord filling the earth happens in Rev. 18:1. It is still future in the Old Testament (Num 14:21) and was even future in Isaiah’s time (Hab 2:14; Is 11:9).
2. The house fills with smoke during the seven last plagues. Rev. 15:8. It signifies the close of human probation.
3. Intercession at the altar commenced in Revelation 8:2. There Jesus was given incense, representing His own merits, to offer with the prayers of all saints. It ends in 8:5 when the censer is thrown down.
4. The millennium, when the earth is again void, follows the close of probation and Christ’s coming and the time God when will have “removed men far away” (Is 6:11).

So Isaiah 6 is a prophecy of the closing of Christ’s work in the heavenly sanctuary. This point could be proven by a great deal more evidence.

The sum of what we have shown, as related to Ballenger’s arguments, is that the ministration

of Jesus in the heavenly sanctuary commenced when Jesus was “given much incense.” The prophecies of Isaiah 6 and of the Psalms that speak of Christ’s ministry in the present tense must not be understood to contradict others that speak of it in the future tense. The former are prophecies of the natural type by a God that speaks of “things which be not as though they were.” Ro 4:17.

What does the Bible say about the location of God’s throne? Namely, that the throne is mobile. Ezekiel 10 describes a vision very similar to that of Isaiah 6. There Ezekiel sees God’s throne (v. 1) above the cherubim. The timing is following the sealing of Ezekiel 9. Coals from the altar are thrown down to “the city.” (v. 6). The brightness of God’s glory fills the earth (represented by the court, v. 4) and the cloud fills the temple (v. 4).

The summary of the rest of Ezekiel 10 (and of Ezekiel’s first vision) is that the four living creatures are the base of God’s mobile throne. God’s glory moves from the Most Holy and leaves the temple (v. 18).

This is helpful to understand. In Daniel 7:13 Jesus is brought near to the Father on the clouds of heaven. This follows, in point of time, the rise of the ten horns and the little horn. Jesus is on His throne, no doubt. And it is mobile. What apartment is it in?

And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, **a throne was set in heaven**, and one sat on the throne. And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald. . . . And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and **there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne**, which are the seven Spirits of God. And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind. Re 4:2-6

In Revelation 4, at least, it was in the apartment represented as having the candelabra. In Revelation 8 Christ was with the altar of incense. No doubt that when the judgment commences in Daniel 7:13 and Revelation 14:7, the throne has moved to the Most Holy Place.

Vails and Veils

There are two different spellings of the word “veil” in the KJV. This is almost trivial except for the person trying to find the instances of each with a concordance. The spellings are “vail” and “veil.” The former is used in all Old Testament cases except So 5:7.

In the New Testament two different words are indicated. “Vail”, as used by Moses to cover his face, is *kaluma*. It corresponds to the Hebrew *masveh* as can be readily seen by comparing Ex 34:33-35 with 2Co 3:13-16.

“Veil” in the New Testament is derived always from *katapetasma*. This word is a compound of the Greek preposition “kata” and a form of “petomai.” The latter verb means, literally, to “fly” and the former indicates a downward motion or relation. Simply put, the word means “spreading

down” or, more flamboyantly, “flying down.” It is a nice word for “curtain.”

Ballenger clearly equates *katapetasma* with *poreketh*. In terms of usage, however, it is more like *masak*.

Poreketh 06532, translated always “vail” in the Old Testament

Masak 04539, translated usually as “hanging.”

Kaluma 2571, translated always “vail” in the New Testament

Katapetasma 2665, translated always “veil” in the New Testament

“Hanging” is the proper idea of *katapetasma* and explains why Paul would deviate from an Old Testament distinction of the veils. In the sanctuary there are two hangings, *masak*, (a third guards the courtyard) though there be but one vail, *poreketh*.

In four passages *masak* and *poreketh* are used together. In those passages *masak* is translated “covering.” These passages are Ex 35:12; 39:34; 40:21 and Num 4:5. These cases refer to the second veil. In cases where *masak* refers to the first curtain it is translated “hanging.”

The summary of these things is that argument drawn from *poreketh* as the “vail” of the Old Testament is misleading when applied to *katapetasma* in the New Testament. There are two *katapetasma*'s in the holy places. There are two *masak*'s in the holy places. There is only one *poreketh*.[\[1\]](#)

Veils in Hebrews

Three passages in Hebrews speak of the veil. The second of these, Hebrews 9:3, falls in the middle of a passage that is vital to the larger question we are addressing. Hebrews 9, when understood, either overthrows the sanctuary doctrine of Adventism or ratifies it. With that end in mind we will examine it first.

Ballenger dismisses the word “second” as a triviality that should not be used to undermine his primary thesis. But the word does directly undermine his thesis in the most simple manner and his readers would not be wise to follow him in dismissing it.

The passage we will study is below with several important Greek transliterations highlighted in superscript. Emphasis is supplied.[\[2\]](#) If one will look for answers to the following questions while reading the passage he will find the answers: What furniture is in the *hagia*, the first tent? What furniture is in the *hagia hagion*, the second tent? Was the way of the second tent manifest in Paul's day? Was the meaning of the first tent relevant to Paul's day? Which tent was Paul unable to speak about particularly?

Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary.

For there was a tabernacle made; **the first**, wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the shewbread; **which is called** the sanctuary^{hagia}. And **after the second veil**^{katapestasma}, **the tabernacle which is called** the Holiest of all^{hagia hagion}; Which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; And over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercyseat; of which *we cannot now speak particularly*. Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. ^[YLT] And into **the second**, once in the year, only the chief priest, not apart from blood, which he doth offer for himself and the errors of the people, the Holy Spirit this evidencing that **not yet hath been manifested** the way of the holy places^{hagion}, the **first tabernacle** having yet a standing; which is a simile in regard to the **present time**, in which both gifts and sacrifices are offered, which are not able, in regard to conscience, to make perfect him who is serving, Heb 9:1-9

If you have answered each of the questions above from the passage you can say with clarity that the Holy Place represented the ministration of Jesus during the time of Paul. You can say that the Most Holy Place would not be explained to men until the Holy Place ministry was closed.

You could also gather that *hagia hagion* is better translated holy (*hagia*) of holies (*hagion*). (The adjective, as per Greek grammar, is also plural. English does not do the same). The first apartment, hollowed by the presence of Jesus, is called *hagia*.[\[3\]](#)

The third of the three veil passages in Hebrews is in the next chapter.

Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the ^[YLT] holy places^{hagia} by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil^{katapestasma}, that is to say, his flesh; Heb 10:19-20

From the previous chapter we learned that the way of the first tent, called *hagia*, was for the present time of Paul. We saw that the way into the second tent was not yet manifest.

What was manifest is that the way, or progression, of the holy places would be manifest at some point. Hebrews 10 tells us that the way into the holy places, whichever apartment happens to apply to our time, is by the blood of Jesus. The plural "places" removes all difficulty.

If the passage had to be limited to one apartment or the other, we would have to say it is the holy place—for the *hagia* of chapter nine had the table of showbread. But it is better, perhaps, to allow it to mean both as it apparently does in the term "way of the" holies in chapter nine.

Here we should observe that Hebrews 9 is a masterpiece of revelation. The task of the apostle was to write to persons to whom the book of Daniel was sealed and, at the same time, for persons that would understand it. He was to write in regard to the Most Holy Place sufficiently to make it plain that a future progression would be revealed—but without revealing it.

It is the latter quality of Hebrews 9 that demands that we begin with prophetic interpretation and proceed to the interpretation of Hebrews 9.

Ballenger's primary point in Hebrews is undermined by both Hebrews 9 and 10. Both use the term veil in such a way as to overthrow his interpretation of chapter 6. Hebrews 9 used the term "second veil" as if a first veil had been mentioned somewhere. Hebrews 10 uses the term "veil" to refer to the entrance of the sanctuary or holy place, the *hagia*, itself.

Hebrews 6 parallels Hebrews 10 in thought and provides the antecedent that explains "second" in chapter 9.

That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil ^{*katapestasma*}; Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. Heb 6:18-20

Forgiveness in the Old Testament

Paul briefly addresses the issue of Old Testament forgiveness in Romans 3. How could God forgive men and grant them righteousness prior to the cross?

Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a mercy seat (margin) through faith in his blood, [YLT] for the shewing forth of His righteousness, because of **the passing over of the bygone sins in the forbearance of God**—for the shewing forth of His righteousness in the present time, for His being righteous, and declaring him righteous who is of the faith of Jesus. Ro 3:24-26.

Though Jesus was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, all forgiveness that antedated Calvary was apparent injustice to those not knowing the future. It was a forbearance that might mar God's reputation for righteousness. The cross showed, in the present time of Paul, that the passing over the past sins had been, indeed, righteous.

This perspective is not divine. God inhabits eternity. The Father and the Son understood the nature of the sacrifice to be made and treated men, such as Abraham, with the same quality of righteousness that is granted to us today. Nevertheless, this "everlasting righteousness" was not brought in until the cross. Daniel 9:24.

The pre-cross application of this righteousness is the salvational meaning of Revelation 13:8. The term "before the foundation of the world" is used by Peter, Paul, Matthew and John to refer to God's ordained plan for saving men.

This did not make the cross superfluous when the time came for the sacrifice. Nor did it make Christ's intercession superfluous when the time came for his mediation to begin. Nor does God's plan make the judgment superfluous now that the books have been opened.

Defiling of the Sanctuary

Ballenger is correct when he writes that it is the sins of God's people, not their confessions of the sins, that defile the sanctuary. The sins of Judah are written on the horns of the altars. Jer. 17:1. The sins of men, every thought, are recorded in the books of record. Ecc 12:14. These records of sin are the source of defilement.

But the pioneers were not in error when they emphasized the cleansing of the sanctuary by the putting away of sin and by the judgment. On the Day of Atonement the sanctuary's defilement was removed in two different ways.

For those who partook in the services the sins were transferred from sinner to Savior. The record was cleansed. Their sins were, in type, blotted from the sanctuary.

For those who neglected to take part in the services the names, in type, were removed from the register of God's people. The book of life was freed of their presence. They, along with Satan, bore the brunt of God's wrath against the impenitent.

A Summary of the Study

The strong points of Adventist eschatology are built on the bedrock of prophetic interpretation. This study has not reviewed the connection between Daniel 7 and 8, or 8 and 9. It has been, rather, confined to the ground chosen by Ballenger for opposing our position.

And here, in the ground thought by Ballenger to be most fit for establishing his own thought and overthrowing that of the movement, he has been shown to be weak.

But that weakness will be so much the more apparent to those that review the fundamentals of Miller's interpretation of Daniel and the study of Crosier's self-repudiated article on the types. These works contain no references to modern visions. Yet they present a work more thorough, a ground more winning, a scholarship less faulty, than that of Ballenger.

We live in a time when what can be shaken will be shaken.

May men remember that "none of the wicked will understand." Yet the wicked have great minds, powerful wit, and help from at least one experienced source in their expositions. The wicked "by good words and fair speeches deceive the" hearts of the uneducated. They are to be avoided. Rom. 16:17-18.

And only those who are seeking to conform their lives to God's standard of holiness will escape the curse of 1 Cor. 11:19.

John 7:17 is still true. What sin have you cherished? What command have you slighted? What counsel have you despised? Then repent before you step into the seat of the Bible expositor. It is your only safety.

[1] As a balance to this I should add that Old Testament words often converge in New Testament terms. New Testament writers seeking for a Greek word to reflect either *masak* or *poreketh* might have had no better choice than *katapetasma*. But rather than hurting the argument here, this rather helps explain why the gospels use *katapetasma* for the second veil without specifying “second.”

[2] Verses 7 to 9 are from Young’s Literal Translation. The KJV mistakenly uses a past or pluperfect tense in these verses where the Greek has a perfect tense. Young’s renders it correctly and is used here for that reason. The change in version is signified by [YLT].

[3] Why the plural form for one apartment? Both apartments are holy. The adjective, since it applies to both, is made plural in both cases to match the scope of its nouns. But in its introduction here the two uses of *hagia* are clearly distinguished.

For the Word Document, Click Here: [Within the Veil](#)