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**The Cross: The Glory Of Jesus That Changes Us Into His Image**

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| Rev 13:8b (8)  ...the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.  John 17:4-5 (4)  I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. (5)  And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.  John 17:24 (24)  Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.  Genesis 3:22-24 (22)  And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: (23)  Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. (24)  So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.  Exodus 26:31-33 (31)  And thou shalt make a vail of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen of cunning work: with cherubims shall it be made: (32)  And thou shalt hang it upon four pillars of shittim wood overlaid with gold: their hooks shall be of gold, upon the four sockets of silver. (33)  And thou shalt hang up the vail under the taches, that thou mayest bring in thither within the vail the ark of the testimony: and the vail shall divide unto you between the holy place and the most holy.  Mar 15:37-38 (37)  And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost. (38)  And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.  We read from Genesis, when God thrust Adam out of the Garden due to his sin, and placed a barrier in the form of cherubims blocking Adam from getting back in.   * Then we read where the same thought of cherubims blocking man is found in the command for Moses to build a tabernacle with a veil blocking the most holy room where God's glory was. * Cherubim were put onto that veil. * We do not need to know what cherubim were in this particular message. * Just get the picture that cherubim blocked both the garden and figuratively blocked the most holy place in God's temple.   The reason God wrote to us about the Garden of Eden and where He threw Adam out of, is because God's aim is to restore mankind.  Now, God is not going to take you and put you back into a literal Garden again.   * But it's what the Garden was associated with that is the issue. * Man was in the garden before he sinned. * And after man sinned, he was thrown out of the garden and was kept out. * And God wants that relationship between Himself and ourselves restored. * The relationship with Him is the issue. * So guess what must be dealt with before we can be restored to that relationship? * SIN.   It is no coincidence that when Jesus died on the cross to save our souls and restore us back to God, that the veil in the temple was therefore ripped the moment he died.   * On that veil was the likeness of cherubims! * The very things that kept man out due to his sin. * So the message is clear that through the cross of Jesus' death, God has made a way for you and I to return to fellowship with Him once again!   But what was shown with the veil the day Jesus died is something that must actually happen to each of us individually.   * I mean, Jesus did not die so that everyone will automatically go to heaven one day and fellowship God. * The ripped veil indicated that the CROSS was the thing that would remove your sins. * The cross would remove your sins so that there is no need to block you personally out of the relationship with God that Adam had, once again. * And when you read on into the rest of the bible, we find that EACH OF US MUST EXPERIENCE THE CROSS IN ORDER TO INDIVIDUALLY RETURN TO GOD'S FELLOWSHIP.   So let us go to some further biblical truths that actually use the picture of a VEIL being removed when we come to believe in Jesus Christ and His death on the cross.  2 Corinthians 3:6 (6)  Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.  Paul was a preacher of the gospel.   * And then Paul begins speaking about the OLD TESTAMENT, the covenant with God before Jesus came and died on the cross, and compared it with the New COVENANT or New TESTAMENT.   2 Corinthians 3:7-8 (7)  But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away: (8)  How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious?  He says that the Old Testament was a MINISTRATION OF DEATH.   * He spoke of the Ten Commandments that were engraved on stone that represented the OLD TESTAMENT. * And that ministry was glorious! * Paul said we can represent the glory that the old testament had by an event that occurred when God first gave it. * God first gave the Old Covenant (also known as the Law of God or the Law of Moses) on Mount Sinai after Israel escaped Egypt under Moses' leadership. * When Moses came down from the mountain with the Ten Commandments, HIS FACE SHONE LIKE THE SUN. * It was so bright that they requested he put a VEIL on his face so they could stand to be in his presence.   That is a symbol of how glorious the entire Old Testament was.  But this ministry of SPIRIT of which Paul was a minister, is MUCH MORE GLORIOUS!   * Moses was great, but a greater than Moses is here today... JESUS CHRIST!   2 Corinthians 3:9-18 (9)  For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory. (10)  For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth. (11)  For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious. (12)  Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech: (13)  And not as Moses, which put a vail over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished:  The Old Covenant of Moses was so glorious that they had to veil his face.   * And Paul said there is another message here. * Just as the people could not look at his face, anybody under the Old Testament before Jesus could not see the fulfillment and the end of that covenant, * That covenant was going to end one day. * What was the end?   Gal 3:24 (24)  Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.  Jesus Christ is the end of the law.  Rom 10:4 (4)  For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.  And the people did not exactly know that fact.   * And so the veil on Moses' face represented the fact that the people could not see the purpose of the Law and where it was going to take them. * Jesus.   And Paul said that as a new testament preacher, he did not use VEILED speech, or VAGUE and OBSCURE teachings.   * It was VAGUE for the people to not know that law was going to lead them up to Jesus Christ. * It was a VEILING for people to not realize what God's intention was with them in giving them Moses' law.   But Paul said nothing is veiled any more!   * I am glad that God is not veiling anything from us today, who believe in Jesus! * New Testament ministers USE GREAT PLAINNESS OF SPEECH.   And then he speaks not only of the people in Israel under Law, before Jesus came, but also of the Jews who continued to read only Moses after Jesus came, who did not accept Jesus.  (14)  But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which vail is done away in Christ.  Until this day, means that even after Jesus came, the purpose of the law, the veil and the covered truths are still hidden from the Jews if they reject Jesus and continue to stick with Old Testament only.  (15)  But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart. (16)  Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away.  But thanks be to God that if any Jew who has stuck with the Old Testament and never accepted Jesus, and is therefore, blinded in their hearts, will ever TURN TO JESUS, that veil will be removed!   * Just as Jesus died on the cross and the veil of the temple ripped open, when someone believes the preaching of the cross and its purpose to take your sins away, from a man like Paul, a veil rips away from a soul's heart! * AND THEY SEE SOMETHING MARVELOUS!   (17)  Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.  Did you notice earlier that Paul said he was a minister of the SPIRIT, and not of the LETTER?   * Now he says THE LORD IS THAT SPIRIT. * In other words, the ministry of SPIRIT that he preached was MINISTERING THE LORD JESUS!   In fact, he says that here:  2 Corinthians 4:5 (5)  For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.  And the reason he says where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty, is because preaching SPIRIT, or preaching JESUS, causes you to be LIBERATED from a BLINDING VEIL.  What makes this sort of blinding veil so dangerous is that the VEIL is first mentioned in BLOCKING MAN out of the most holy place of the temple.   * And on the blocking veil were cherubims, that were first mentioned as BLOCKING the entrance to the Garden of Eden! * And if the blocking from the Garden represents the inability to fellowship with God due to our sin that caused God to block us away from Him, then this VEIL on a person's heart actually means they have SIN that is not removed and BLOCKS them from going to be with God in heaven forever! * And you can stick to Moses all you like, but until you turn to the story of Jesus and how He had to die on the cross to remove our sins, you are veiled from the glory of God and simply will never fellowship with God!   (18)  But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.  Look what happens when your heart gets into the preaching of our need for Jesus to die on the cross!   * A MIRACLE OCCURS! * God performs a personal wonder! * You not only see the glory of God that was formerly unveiled, and far more Glorious than anything Moses' ever represented, but THAT GLORY CHANGES YOU INTO THE IMAGE OF JESUS CHRIST!   By the Spirit of the Lord.   * In other words, BY THE MINISTRY OF SPIRIT that people like Paul preach.   And this brings up a whole new truth!  Jesus is said to be the LAST MAN ADAM.   * Like a NEW ADAM to start a new human race of sinless people. * He was the only man since Adam who had no sin. * So how can we become like Him? * Paul explained it. * Through the preaching of the cross, we learn that we have to believe Jesus' death was intended to be our deaths by SACRIFICE, so our sins could be dealt with. * And WE HAVE OUR SINS TAKEN AWAY SO WE ARE MADE LIKE JESUS!!! * WITHOUT SIN!   Now, that does not mean we cannot commit sins afterwards as Christians.   * But when we do sin, we need to repent and ask forgiveness!   Think about it.   * You could never be forgiven of sins if it had not been for Jesus' death! * Back to the veil ripping. * You could never, therefore, have the blockage removed so you could get back to fellowship with God again, without the cross of Jesus!   THE TRUTH SHALL SET YOU FREE!   * Set us free from what? * THE VEIL that is on our hearts that blocks us individually from God's fellowship due to our sin.   Look at what else Paul says that reminds us of Genesis.  2 Corinthians 4:5-6 (5)  For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. (6)  For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.  Genesis 1:2-3!   * Paul says that the same thing that happened when God said LET THERE BE LIGHT, happens when our hearts believe in Jesus and a veil is removed! * God shines LIGHT of the knowledge of the glory of God into our hearts! * And the reason he said it's in the face of Jesus, is contrasting that with the face of Moses that was veiled to represent how Old Testament could not fully and truly restore us back to God. * Jesus is the object of the Gospel. * His story about the cross is what the New Testament is all about! * BELIEVING THE GOSPEL is looking in to Jesus' unveiled face AND BEING CHANGED!   God changed this old dark world when he commanded light to shine out of darkness!  And He changes our WORLDS!  John writes about GENESIS, or as he put it, the BEGINNING.  1 John 1:1 (1)  That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life;  The whole point of the gospel is to restore FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD AGAIN.  1 John 1:3 (3)  That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.  Jesus is in a certain SORT OF PLACE.   * And we need ot get into that PLACE and fellowship with Him.   1 John 1:5-7 (5)  This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. (6)  If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: (7)  But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.  He is in LIGHT.   * HE IS LIGHT! * He is glory! * And you are not fellowshipping with him in that light IF YOU ARE NOT CHANGED AND STILL SIN. * John is trying to explain that THE WAY YOU LIVE WILL BE CHANGED if you let this GLORY shine on you! * ...if you let this TRUTH shine on you, because the glory is the light of knowledge, Paul said. * You simply will not be a sinful type of person if you truly fellowship with Jesus, because anyone who fellowships with Jesus IS CHANGED FROM GLORY TO GLORY to become LIKE HIM. * We are made in His image.   That is what John also said:  1 John 2:6 (6)  He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.  If you abide IN HIM, then you should be acting like He is acting, because fellowship with Jesus actually performs a miracle of CHANGING YOU and AFFECTING YOU to be more like Him.   * And I am not talking about making yourself try to act like Jesus as much as you can. * YOU ARE CHANGED! * God actually performs a miracle on your very way of living!   I call this "GARDEN-LIFE."   * It is a life away from sin. * Sin casts you out of this fellowship and position with God.   Your sins are taken away when you believe the message of the cross with everything in you.   * That is how His death REMOVES YOUR SINS. * It saves you from your sins. * And as the veil ripped open when Jesus died, you enter a GARDEN LIFE relationship with God again. * The cherubim in the entrance step aside and its as though you walk into the GARDEN of LIGHT.   So read this again and get a whole new LIGHT on these verses...  1 John 1:6-7 (6)  If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: (7)  But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.  What is the first thing that we read about when man lived OUTSIDE the garden?  Genesis 4:5 (5)  But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.  Genesis 4:8 (8)  And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.  And look what John says:  1 John 2:7-10 (7)  Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning. (8)  Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth. (9)  He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. (10)  He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him.  REVELATION literally means UNVEILING.   * When you truly put your heart into the Word of God when it is preached, or when you read it yourself, or even in prayer, YOU WILL EXPERIENCE REVELATION! * UNVEILING! * And what happens according to 2 Cor 3:18 when you have the veil removed? * YOU ARE CHANGED INTO THE IMAGE OF JESUS.   When something hits you and the lights, as it were, go on in your heart, know that SOMETHING IN YOU HAS CHANGED AND MADE YOU MORE LIKE JESUS!  He is still making us more and more like Him, church!   * It's not a single experience. * It’s ONGOING!   When an apostolic preacher preaches Jesus, it's like GOD COMMANDING LIGHT TO SHINE OUT OF DARKNESS all over again.   * And GOD CHANGED THE WORLD when He did that!   But it all starts by you having to ADMIT that sin separates you from God.   * Turning your heart to Jesus involves RECOGNIZING that and acknowledging that. * So John said...   1 John 1:8-10 (8)  If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. (9)  If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (10)  If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.  He says you sinned, and you cannot ignore that and say you serve Jesus.  I think this is what Jesus was trying to say here:  John 17:24-26 (24)  Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. (25)  O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. (26)  And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.  How could Jesus ask for people to be with Him when his disciples were standing right there listening to his prayer?   * Well, He was the only without sin and was spiritually in the Garden all alone. * In other words, though people were all around Him, he was the only one who was in a relationship with God like that, where one has no sin and fellowships with God.   And notice that He said that if they are WITH HIM, then they can BEHOLD HIS GLORY!   * John said it in 1 John as well. * Walk in the light as He is in the light. * And Paul said that this GLORY changes us into his same image! * So Jesus wanted us to behold His glory so that WE CAN BE CHANGED to become like Him! * THE CROSS would make all of this possible.   I think this is what Jesus was trying to say when we read:  John 17:5 (5)  And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.  It’s the cross.  John 7:39 (39)  (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)  Being glorified speaks of the cross.   * The death of the cross made JESUS INTO GLORY that John said He saw, and fellowshipped with. * Fellowship! * Jesus was physically with people, but they were not actually with Him in the more important sense of FELLOWSHIP. * He prayed for us to be with Him where He was -- in the Garden!   John 17:24 (24)  **Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me**: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. |