

prevailed over the Apostle's candour; he could not resist flinging an apple of discord among his enemies. "I am a Pharisee," he cried; and we can understand how for the moment he almost did feel himself a Pharisee again.

I do not say that this construction entirely explains or excuses St. Paul's dealings with the Sanhedrim. Dean Farrar has detected a note of subsequent compunction in Acts xxiv. 21. But I submit that such a reading of the narrative does help to make the whole episode more natural and more coherent, more psychologically *possible*. It illustrates the Apostle's temperament, and it is in no contradiction with his epistles. And thus it serves indirectly to confirm what it seemed apparently to invalidate.

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*THE VEIL OF THE TEMPLE RENT IN TWAIN  
FROM THE TOP TO THE BOTTOM.*

THIS was a thick, gorgeously coloured veil, which divided the interior of the temple into two parts; the outer part being for the daily services of the priests, the inner one, called "the holiest of all," being shut out from view by this veil, which stretched from the one side of the temple to the other. Within this veil no one was allowed to enter on pain of death save the high priest, and he only once a year, on the great day of Atonement (Lev. xvi.); and "not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the errors of the people" (Heb. ix. 7). For he, being a sinful man like the people themselves, could make no atonement for them till atonement had been made for his own sins. For this purpose, a bullock having been killed for a sin-offering and a ram for a burnt-offering, he carried their blood within the veil, and sprinkled it seven times before and upon the mercy seat as an atonement for his own sins

and those of his house. This done, he came forth again, and taking the blood of a goat as a sin-offering for the people, he carried it within the veil, and did with it as he had done for himself. Whereupon a cloud covered the mercy seat, in token of the acceptance of these offerings for the atonement of both priest and people, till He should "appear to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself" (Heb. ix. 26). After this the high priest, now representing the great High Priest, came forth to bless the people in these words: "The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: the Lord make His face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: the Lord lift upon thee His countenance, and give thee peace."

Yet in all the blood of beasts, on Jewish altars slain, there was not a drop of atoning virtue; "for it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sin" (Heb. x. 4). It was a kind of *promissory note*, which, when Christ should "appear in the presence of God for us" (Heb. ix. 24), would be duly cashed, so to speak, by the Father.

On the credit of this atonement, to be in due time offered, all the saints of the ancient Economy, who could know nothing of the *way* in which their sins were forgiven save in figure, were received up into heaven.

Nor are we left in doubt whether they are actually there at present, the two great representatives of the saints of the ancient Economy—Moses and Elijah, the one representing the saints under the *Law*, the other those under the *Prophets*, appeared in glory at the Transfiguration of our Lord on the mount. "Behold," says the evangelist, "there talked with Him two men, which were Moses and Elijah." It was a dialogue, it seems, between them and Jesus. And what were they "talking" about? It was not about the "glory" they were enjoying in heaven. It was about "the *decease* which He was to accomplish in Jerusalem." They

seem to have watched His progress thus far, and were eagerly looking forward to the great event on which hinged their right to be where they were. What *He* said to *them* we can scarcely conjecture. But they, while adoring Him for the love that had brought them thus far to the appalling crisis, would venture, I think, to cheer Him on; nor can I doubt that, with the human feeling which He anticipated the worst, the emotions to which they would give vent would inspire fresh courage, and kindle that "noble flame" of which Cowper sings, when "hasting to Jerusalem, He marched before the rest."

But until the deace had been actually accomplished, the veil of the temple behoved still to hang, keep out of view the holiest of all. Even His dying agonies on the cross did not rend it; and not till with His expiring breath He uttered with a loud, exultant shout, *Τετέλεσται*, "*It is finished*," was the veil rent.

But what rent it? For at that moment not a soul was to be seen in the temple. The priests and the people were all at Calvary, which was at some distance from the temple, watching the crucifixion. It was that shout of victory, "*It is finished*," that did it, as the evangelist emphatically expresses it, "*Behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.*" Up to that moment it was death to go within the veil. But now that it was thrown wide open, it is life to go in.

"Having, therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest *by the blood of Jesus*, through the (rent) veil, let us draw near."

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