

Passion Narratives, Class 14, handout

Review of the Veil = the flesh of Christ.

Heb 10.19-22: “Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, 20 by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through *the veil, that is, His flesh*, 21 and having a High Priest over the house of God, 22 let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.”

Protoevangelium of James (mid-2nd c): X. 1 Now there was a council of the priests, and they said: Let us make a veil for the temple of the Lord. And the priest said: Call unto me pure virgins of the tribe of David. And the officers departed and sought and found seven virgins. And the priests called to mind the child Mary, that she was of the tribe of David and was undefiled before God: and the officers went and fetched her. And they brought them into the temple of the Lord, and the priest said: Cast me lots, which of you shall weave the gold and the undefiled [the white] and the fine linen and the silk and the hyacinthine, and the scarlet and the true purple. And the lot of the true purple and the scarlet fell unto Mary, and she took them and went unto her house.

[And at that season Zacharias became dumb, and Samuel was in his stead until the time when Zacharias spake again.] But Mary took the scarlet and began to spin it.

XL 1 And she took the pitcher and went forth to fill it with water: and lo a voice saying: Hail, thou that art highly favored; the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women.

And she looked about her upon the right hand and upon the left, to see whence this voice should be: and being filled with trembling she went to her house and set down the pitcher, and took the purple and sat down upon her seat and drew out the thread.

2 And behold an angel of the Lord stood before her saying: Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found grace before the Lord of all things, and thou shalt conceive of his word. And she, when she heard it, questioned in herself, saying: Shall I verily conceive of the living God, and bring forth after the manner of all women? And the angel of the Lord said: Not so, Mary, for a power of the Lord shall overshadow thee: wherefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of the Highest. And thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins. And Mary said: Behold the handmaid of the Lord is before him: be it unto me according to thy word.

XII 1 And she made the purple and the scarlet and brought them

unto the priest. And the priest blessed her and said: Mary, the Lord God hath magnified thy name, and thou shalt be blessed among all generations of the earth. 2 And Mary rejoiced and went away unto Elizabeth her kinswoman...

Red is the color of blood and therefore of humanity. Purple the color of royalty.

Mary spins the red & purple yarn to make a new veil for the Temple. We are to understand that this is the same veil that hung in the Temple when Christ was crucified.

Mary therefore symbolically spins the humanity & royalty of Christ. [Recall John 2.19, where Jesus says of Himself, “Destroy this Temple and in three days I will raise it up.”]

At the same time, the Annunciation occurs, and Mary accepts to “spin” in her womb the real, authentic humanity of Christ (the red).

Christ’s royalty (purple) is seen in that Mary is from the royal tribe of David.

At the Crucifixion, the side of Christ is pierced.

Per Heb 10.20, the flesh of Christ is the veil of the Temple [of His body] When the veil of His flesh is pierced literally, the veil of the Jewish Temple is torn literally, as well.

The real veil (the flesh of Christ) and the symbolic veil (of the Temple) are torn simultaneously.

When the side of Christ is pierced, the heart of God is revealed.

When the veil of the Temple is rent, the heart of the Holy of Holies is revealed.

When both occur, God ceases to be hidden and remote, but becomes accessible and near

Signs accompanying Jesus' death (Matt 27.51-56; Mk 15.38-41; Lk 23.45, 47-49)

Matt 27.51 Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split, 52 and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; 53 and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many.

54 So when the centurion and those with him, who were guarding Jesus, saw the earthquake and the things that had happened, they feared greatly, saying, "Truly this was the Son of God!"

[**Lk 23.47** So when the centurion saw what had happened, he glorified God, saying, "Certainly this was a righteous Man!"]

Lk 23.48-49: And the whole crowd who came together to that sight, seeing what had been done, beat their breasts and returned. 49 But all His acquaintances, and the women who followed Him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.

Matt 27.55 And many women who followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to Him, were there looking on from afar, 56 among whom were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's sons.

Mk 15.40-41 ...and Salome, 41 who also followed Him and ministered to Him when He was in Galilee, and many other women who came up with Him to Jerusalem.