

Bursting the Veil

Read Hebrews 9:1-9; Judges 1:9-15

There is a hidden love story with an incredible “The End” in one of the unlikeliest of places in the Bible—in the first chapter of the book of Judges. Among the tale of the conquered Canaanites by the tribe of Judah after the death of Joshua, is a gem of a story that women will *Ooo* and *Aah* over and men will respect.

Long story short, Caleb offers his daughter Achsah in marriage to the man who conquers the city of Kirjath-Sepher. His younger brother, Othniel, wins the prize. End of story? Not quite. Once married to Othniel, Achsah urges him to ask her father for land. Caleb gives them a southern land but she also asks for a water supply and he gives her the upper and lower springs.

Are you at the edge of your seat yet? I know you’re not. A superficial reading of this story has probably left you huffing and puffing at the arranged marriage. Hang on! A closer look reveals a fresh perspective and the study of biblical Hebrew adds an astounding depth to its meaning.

Humor me for a few minutes. We’ve already read the text in a straightforward fashion. Suppose we read the story slightly different and substitute *God* for Achsah’s father Caleb and *Jesus* for Othniel, whose name means *lion of God*. Nothing less than spine-chilling! Jesus as the bridegroom puts His life on the line to redeem Achsah when He took possession of Kirjath-Sepher or *city of the book*. Debir, which means *Holy of Holies*, was formerly known as Kirjath-Sepher.

As the innermost sacred space of the tabernacle, the Aaronic high priest only entered the Holy of Holies once a year on the Day of Atonement—no bells, no speaking and barefoot (Leviticus 16:1). When Jesus died on the cross, the temple veil dividing

the holy place from the Most Holy tore in two from top to bottom, granting believers access to the Almighty God through Jesus' substitutionary death (Matthew 27:50-51a).

With that said, here's the icing on the wedding cake: Once married to Jesus, the *church-bride* Achsah enters God's throne room and asks for a special favor from God and she's given the gift of His Spirit with an unending flow like rivers of living waters. Achsah's name means *anklet* or *adorned*, but according to *Hitchcock's Bible Names Dictionary* it also means *bursting the veil*. Only her feet covered with the gospel of peace, which is the Word of God, would allow her to enter with boldness into the Most Holy place where the Shekinah Glory of God dwells.

Dare we as the body of Christ—the bride without spot or blemish—imagine what life would be like if we truly claimed our spiritual inheritance through Christ Jesus? We would be bursting through the veil to grasp the promises of God as abundant gifts wrapped and ready for a receiving heart; expecting more spiritual riches from our heavenly Father than what we've settled for. The end of this sweeping romance opens the door to a promised land flowing with much more than milk and honey.

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