

Podcast 302 The Tabernacle of Witness

Scott Moore: Welcome to the "Building Faith Families Podcast" with Steve Demme. I'm your host, Scott Moore. Thanks for joining us today.

Good morning, Steve. How are you today?

Steve: It's interesting, as I was going through my notes for today, I noticed that my name appears several times. What do you think of that?

Scott: Your name appeared in your notes?

Steve: What's one of the most famous sermons in the book of Acts?

Scott: Oh, Steven.

Steve: Absolutely. There you go.

Scott: There you go.

Steve: Who was another character in the book of Acts and the book of John? Philip. That's my middle name. Bet you didn't know that.

Let's pray.

Father, thank you for Your word. Thank you for an appetite to love Your word. Thank you for every word that's inspired and profitable for our teaching but also for revealing Your Son. I pray that You'll help me to speak well today and help us all to have ears to hear what the Spirit is saying to us. In Jesus' name, amen.

Scott: Amen.

Steve: Yesterday I noticed this little section in Psalm 119:129–132.

"Your testimonies are wonderful. Therefore, my soul keeps them. The unfolding of Your words gives light. It imparts understanding to the simple. I open my mouth and pant because I long for Your commandments. Turn to me and be gracious to me as is Your way with those who love Your name."

I researched the words, "The unfolding of Your words gives light." I liked that expression, unfolding. The amplified version says a little bit different.

Psalm 119:129, "The entrance and unfolding of Your words gives discernment and comprehension to the simple." Then the next two verses, "I opened my mouth and panted with eager desire." I am attracted to those words, pant, long for, and the unfolding.

I remember reading Psalm 119 decades ago and thinking, "Wow, David really loves the Bible," and I prayed and asked God to help me love the Bible like David loves the Bible. He's answered that prayer, thank the Lord. May God give us the unfolding of His words today.

In John 12:21 some Greeks were going up to worship at the feast and they approached Philip who was from Bethsaida of Galilee, and began to ask him, "Sir, we

wish to see Jesus." That is such a great phrase. In the New Living Translation, it is, "Sir, we want to meet Jesus," which I like a little bit better.

Today, we're going to talk about the tabernacle. I want to make sure that we make clear that we're studying the tabernacle because we want to meet Jesus there. We want to see Him, meet Him, and know more about Him.

Ephesians 1:17, Paul is praying for the church in Ephesus, and he says, "May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, give you the spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him."

Now we're going to have a little quiz for you, Scott, right in the beginning here. See if you can tell me what that root word is for revelation.

Scott: The root word for revelation? I'm drawing blank.

Steve: What's the Greek word for revelation? I think we had at once before.

Scott: Revelio.

Steve: That's good. :-)

Steve: It turns out it's the same word that's used in the first five words of Revelation 1:1, the revelation of Jesus Christ, and the word is "Apokalypsis."

Scott: Oh yes, now I remember.

Steve: Normally, when I hear the word apocalypse, I'm thinking of strange things, happening in the end times. The whole world in disarray.

Steve: The fact is that the book of Revelation is the "Revelation of Jesus Christ." This is what Paul was praying for, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ would give them the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him.

Jesus Himself said in John 5, "You search the scriptures because you think that in them, you have eternal life. It is they that bear witness about Me" which we discussed on the previous podcast.

In Acts 7:44, which is part of Stephen's sermon, He says, "Our fathers had the tent of witness in the wilderness." That a neat expression? "The tent of witness."

In another translation, it reads, "the tabernacle of the testimony." Same Greek words, same phrase, just translated a little differently. Tent and tabernacle are the same, witness and testimony are comparable.

Then it goes on to say, "Just as He who spoke to Moses, directed him to make it according to the pattern that he had seen." When Moses was on the Mount, he must have spent a good bit of time studying the tabernacle because in the book of Exodus, there's probably eight or nine chapters devoted to how to build the tabernacle.

Several times that phrase is used, "According to the pattern that he had seen on the Mount."

I'm going to read a little bit longer portion of this passage in Acts 7:44–47 "Our fathers had the tabernacle of the testimony of the wilderness even as He appointed who spoken to Moses that he should make it according to the figure that he had seen. Which also our fathers, in their turn, brought in with Joshua when they entered on the possession of the nations that God thrust out before the face of our fathers, unto the days of David who found favor in the sight of God and asked to find a habitation for the God of Jacob but Solomon built Him a house."

This is Stephen in his final testimony right before he is martyred. Stephen gives us an overview of the tabernacle from the tabernacle of Moses to the temple of Solomon.

In the King James the word tabernacle appears 328 times. In the New American Standard, 128. The ESV is 108 and the new NLT is 290. Tabernacle appears in 23 books in the Bible, almost a third of the books in the Bible. As you'd expect, a big chunk of them are in the Pentateuch, but also in the Kings when they're building the temple and again when they restore the temple in Ezra and Nehemiah.

Ezekiel has a pile of scriptures about the tabernacle, as does Revelation, and you're going to have trouble reading the book of Hebrews which has whole chapters referencing the tabernacle.

When you take all the elements of the tabernacle such as the ark, the mercy seat, the showbread, the menorah, the lamp stands, the oil, the priestly garments, the sacrifices, the incense, the doors, gates, courts, the holy place, and the most holy place this covers a lot of territory in Scripture.

Remember, the reason we're studying is so we can learn more about Jesus.

Genesis begins with wonderful communion between God and Adam and Eve, God and man, no sin, no separation, no stain, no guilt, nothing. They are in communion. When sin enters, the world changes.

Then in Exodus, God searches out Moses on the mountain, and reveals Himself in the burning bush. Then God moves from the mountain into the camp and is with them all through the wilderness. He was with him in the pillar of fire. He was with him in the pillar of cloud, and now He lives in this tabernacle. It's a beautiful picture.

John 1:14, "The Word became flesh and tabernacled among us." I like that. This is one of the five times this word, tabernacle, is used as a verb in the New Testament. "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, or tabernacled among us, and we have seen His glory, glory, as of the only Son from the Father full of grace and truth."

God is always taking the initiative, in coming down on the mountain, moving into the tent, then into the temple during the time of Solomon. God took a huge step when He then came in the flesh and tabernacled among us. Jesus, God in the flesh.

In **John 14:6** Thomas is asking the question, and in the seventh verse Philip is also there. "How do we know where you're going?" Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father, but through Me."

No one comes to the Holy of Holies where God sits on the mercy seat and communes with His people. Nobody comes to the Holy of Holies, but through Jesus. That's why we are expecting to meet Jesus in the tabernacle.

We will see Him in the door to the courtyard. We're going to see Jesus in the gates. We're going to see Jesus in the showbread. We're going to see Him in the lamp stands. and all the way into the Most Holy Place.

I don't want to get way ahead of myself, but I'm laying the foundation here. Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. That's one thing we've been noticing as we've been studying scripture in the podcasts on Jesus fulfilling all things that were written of Him.

As we watch how carefully God has crafted scripture to reveal His son to His people, and the foundation that He's laid so that when Jesus stands up and says, "I am the door," it means something, because these people have been looking at that door into the tabernacle for years. This is the way to the Father.

Then, Jesus says, "I'm not only the door, I'm the way, the truth, and the life. Nobody comes to the Father but through me." There's a whole bunch of passages. "He that has seen me has seen the Father," etc.

I've sensed God encouraging me strongly to study the tabernacle, and that's what I've been doing. I've been spending hours on this. It's been revelatory because I'm seeing Jesus and I'm also seeing how much God wants us to dig and search the scriptures, and pant, you might say, as David talked about, and ask God to unfold them and give us understanding like we prayed based on Psalm 119.

He didn't put it all out there on a platter. He wants us to do some digging, and I'm benefiting from the digging is what I'm trying to say. I'm going to wrap it up now with two longer passages from Revelation. Recall that in Genesis, Adam and Eve enjoyed perfect communion with God.

As we know from our last several podcasts, the scripture cannot be broken. The scripture gives us hope. Romans talks about the comfort of the scriptures in Romans 15:4.

I hope that these two passages will give us hope because what God set out to do as soon as Adam and Eve sinned and is to restore that intimate communion that He had with the first couple. People like David and others got taste of it, and Moses. They experienced communion with God, their Father.

Beginning in Revelation 7:13. "One of the elders addressed me saying, 'Who are these clothed and white-robed, and from where have they come?' I said to him, 'Sir, you know.' He said to me, 'These are the ones coming out of the Great Tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the lamb.'

Therefore, they're before the throne of God and serve Him day and night in His temple." Got it? Temple. "He who sits on the throne," see it's all through the Bible,

temple, throne, "will shelter them and will spread His tabernacle over and shelter them."

He will spread His tabernacle over them and shelter them with His presence. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more. The sun shall not strike them nor any scorching heat.

The Lamb, in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd. He will guide them to springs of living water and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes. Incredible promise. They came out of the Great Tribulation, though. Maybe they got saved in the Great Tribulation. Maybe that shook them up, and they ran to Jesus.

They found that He was the way, the truth, and the life. They met Him, like those Greeks wanted to do. Now, here they are before the throne and God is sheltering them and tabernacling with them.

Revelation 21, "Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away and the sea was no more. I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, 'Behold, the tabernacle of God is with man.'" Another version says the dwelling place. It is the same word. "He will tabernacle with them. He will dwell with them, and they will be His people. God Himself will be with them as their God."

"He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. Death shall be no more. Neither shall there be mourning nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." This is the ultimate tabernacle. This is where we're aiming where there are no gates, and there are no veils, and there are no curtains, and no doors.

There is just God and us. He's dwelling with us. We're His, He's ours. We are one and everything is as it was in the Garden of Eden.

That, folks, is absolutely going to happen just as much as we are standing, breathing, and eating. That is written. This is the stuff we've been talking about. Jesus is going to fulfill these promises and declarations to the letter. It is written. The scripture can't be broken. This is going to happen. As we're going to go through difficult times, we must hold on to the Word of God. Amen.

Scott: Yeah. It's comforting when you think about it in this light. If you've ever had a place, maybe it was a church building that you felt safe and secure in and you're always welcome. Maybe it was your grandmother's house or your own house or whatever. Somewhere where you felt totally safe, and secure, and loved, and welcome.

They're happy to see you. You know everyone there. That's the image I'm getting, is like God Himself is that place for us. When you're going through these crazy times, it sure helps to feel like that. You don't have to run to a building. He has made His tabernacle with us and around us. We're in there with Him.

Steve: Amen. We're going to be like Adam and Eve. We're going to be one with Him. We're going to commune with Him. He's going to be our forever Dad. We're going to be His kids. We're not going to have any funny feelings. We're going to be absolutely satisfied.

Thankfully we've gotten tastes of these things in the past, but we are going to be satisfied to the core of our being because this is what God designed us for. He designed us to be in communion with Him.

Scott: Amen.

Steve: Father, thank you for Your word. Thank you that the scriptures that you have carefully crafted. Spirit of God has breathed into these words and they point us to Jesus. Help us to see Jesus afresh. Not only in this study, but in all of our studies. As we read the Word of God, reveal Jesus to us so that we can love Him more, know Him better, and be prepared and changed into His image in Jesus' name. Amen.

Scott: Amen. That's our show for this week, folks. Thanks for joining us for the Building Faith Families Podcast with Steve Demme. If you have a question for the show, email Steve at spdemme@Gmail.com.