

Podcast 304 The Curtain of the Courtyard

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: We're going to continue with our study of the tabernacle of witness, remembering that it's written for a witness, a reason, and it ultimately points to Christ as does the whole Bible.

I've been up for several hours this morning studying. Even though I thought I had prepared this lesson last week, I just went a lot deeper this morning. At some point, Scott, you're going to have to say, "OK, that's deep enough. We got the point," and we'll move on. You're going to have to be my brakes.

Let's pray. Father, thank You for Your holidays, like Thanksgiving, that help us to be thankful and grateful and look to You in a fresh way and connect with family at the same time, which You also designed and created.

Thank You for Your word, which is deep and meaningful at every level and ultimately points to Jesus. Help us today to have a fresh grasp of the intricacies of what You have woven into the scripture, the divine weaver, so to speak, and how You have, by Your spirit, put so much into each illustration, each phrase, each word, each nuance, and help us to be in the spirit today.

Give us ears to hear afresh in Jesus' name, and help me to teach well and be led by Your spirit as I go through these notes. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Scott: Amen.

Steve: We talked about the gate as the entrance into the courtyard. Using cubits, the size is 100 cubits long, 50 cubits wide, and it makes a rectangle, which makes it 100 plus 50 plus 100 plus 50, or a perimeter of 300 cubits all the way around.

If we think of a cubit as around 18 inches or about a foot and a half, then that makes it s 150 feet long, 75 feet wide, which, if you do the math, which I did, that's approximately 3,375 square feet or 1,500 square cubits. That's the courtyard.

Around the courtyard, there are hangings, there are curtains that are five cubits high, or seven-and-a-half feet, if we're going to go with feet. Let me read it now to see if it makes more sense from Exodus 27.

"You shall make the court of the Tabernacle. On the south side, there shall be hangings for the court of fine twisted linen 100 cubits long for one side, and its pillars shall be 20, with their 20 sockets of bronze, the hooks of the pillars and their bands should be of silver. Likewise for the north side in length there shall be hangings 100 cubits long, and its 20 pillars with their 20 sockets of bronze, the hooks of the pillars and their bands should be of silver.

"For the width of the court on the westside shall be hangings of 50 cubits, with their 10 pillars and their 10 sockets. The width of the court on the east side shall be fifty

cubits." Skipping down to 27:19. "The length of the court shall be 100 cubits, the width 50 throughout, and its height 5 cubits of fine twisted linen, and their sockets of bronze."

The first question is, "Where did they get the material to make this curtain, which is 300 cubits long, 5 cubits high?" That's a lot of fabric. It says in Exodus 25:1, "Speak to the people of Israel, that they take for me a contribution. From every man whose heart moves him you shall receive the contribution for me. And this is the contribution you shall receive from them."

I'm not going to read the whole list, just what pertains to the curtain. "Gold, and silver, and bronze, blue and purple and scarlet yarns and fine twisted linen." The material came from the people's heart. We know what happened in Egypt. Before they left they went to their Egyptian neighbors and asked for gifts, which God had directed them to do.

The Egyptians graciously gave them these gifts. This makes a difference in our thinking because when I think of the Israelites leaving Egypt, I'm thinking they're just leaving with the clothes on their back, some animals and some food, and God had to miraculously sustain them so that their clothes didn't wear out and their food was provided and the mana and the water from the rock while they were in the wilderness. They did receive interesting things from Egypt and it makes a difference, because the first word we're going to look at today is, "fine twisted linen." Fine linen in the Hebrew, comes from the "SHESH" which is a word probably with Egyptian origins, which makes me believe this is Egyptian fabric.

This is fine linen from Egypt. Fancy stuff. The same word is used when speaking of Joseph, who had just become Prime Minister in Genesis 41. "Pharaoh said to Joseph, 'See, I have set you over all the land of Egypt.' Then Pharaoh took his signet ring from his hand, and put it on Joseph's hand, and clothed him in garments of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck."

This is not linsey-woolsey from our early Frontier Days in America, or inexpensive cotton that we use to make sheets. This was fine linen, probably from Egypt. The word "SHESH" is only used 41 times in the Bible, 33 of these times are in Exodus. You got that picture now. This is fancy fine twined linen.

Now, if you noticed that middle word, twined, this is an adjective. It's a special kind of linen that's woven. Again, it is only used in Exodus 21 times in the Bible, the Hebrew word is "shazar." When I've exhausted my study of the Hebrew looking at "Shesh" and "shazar," then, I jumped over to the Septuagint.

For those of you that have just started listening, the Septuagint means 70, because of it's 70 authors. The Old Testament Hebrew was translated into Greek by these 70 translators. Their work help us to have a link between the Old testament and the New Testament which was written in Greek.

In Greek, the word for fine twined linen comes from "býssos." According to Thayer, who's a wonderful resource when you do your Greek studies, this fabric is very expensive. It's a form of linen which he says is, "A specific species of Egyptian flax or linen made from it, that is very costly and delicate." The Greek reinforces what the Hebrews has already stated.

It's probably Egyptian in nature. It's fine. It's costly. It's delicate. This is special stuff. That Greek word "býssos" is used in Luke 16 when speaking about the rich man and Lazarus. It says, "There was a rich man. He habitually dressed in purple and fine linen." This is the cloth of wealthy people. Just as it was the cloth of Joseph, this is the cloth of the rich man.

Now, I'm going to put you on the spot just a little bit, Scott. When you hear the words "fine linen," does anything pop into your mind?

Scott: Nothing biblical.

Steve: All right, it's OK. It turns out, a word very closely related to "býssos" is "býssinos." It's an adjective, as opposed to a noun. Fine linen is a noun. "Býssinos" is an adjective. These two words are both used in Revelation, but especially "býssinos."

Revelation 19:8, "It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints."

Revelation 19:14, when Jesus comes back and His armies with him and following him it says "The armies, which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following him on white horses."

Now, the form of that word is used twice in the 18th chapter talking about Babylon. "The great city, Babylon," "Cargoes of fine linen." Fancy stuff, but when I think of the word "fine linen," I'm thinking of Christ, because there is no way that we have righteous garments without Jesus. He is the only one that clothes us in righteous garments. We are clothed in Christ.

When we come to Christ, he forgives us our sins and we are clean. Isaiah 1:18 "Come now, let us reason together, says the LORD: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool."

You might say we are clean but naked. He doesn't leave us there. He then clothes us in His righteousness. His acts of righteousness that he performed. We're clothed in Christ. Fine linen covers us, and everybody that's following Jesus. The only reason that the saints are on those horses is because of what Jesus has done for them.

2 Corinthians 5:21 "For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."

Isaiah 61:10 "I will greatly rejoice in the LORD; my soul shall exult in my God, for He has clothed me with the garments of salvation; He has covered me with the robe of righteousness."

Consider Joshua the High Priest in Zechariah 3:3–5 NASB “Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments and standing before the angel. He spoke and said to those who were standing before him, saying, ‘Remove the filthy garments from him.’ Again he said to him, ‘See, I have taken your iniquity away from you and will clothe you with festal robes.’ Then I said, ‘Let them put a clean turban on his head.’ So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him with garments, while the angel of the LORD was standing by.”

Steve: There is 3,375 square feet of linen. When I see that linen, I think of white, I think of clean, I think of Jesus, who gives us fine linen garments. It's surrounding this courtyard.

Now, let's talk about the courtyard itself. The word courtyard comes from a Hebrew root “chatser” and is used 189 times. Many of those times it's used to describe the courtyard in the book of Exodus, 8 times in the 27th chapter, 20 times in the 35th to the 40th chapter.

Then Moses went up to the mountain, came back down. And returned to find the people worshipping the golden calf. We have a couple chapters where that gets sorted out. Then, Moses reiterates the instructions for the Tabernacle.

Chatser is an enclosure. It's from the root word “chatsar,” which means to blow a trumpet. Five times that expression is used. When I move to the Septuagint for the Greek end of this, I found some interesting things.

The Greek word for courtyard is “avlí,” which is a noun, and could be translated a courtyard, a court, a building with an interior courtyard, an uncovered walled area, that is enclosed, but without a roof, an open-air courtyard in a mansion or a palace.

2 times out of the 12 times that it's used in the New Testament, it refers to a sheepfold. When you think about it, it's a building with parameters. It's got walls. It's open-air at the top. You can either be in the sheepfold, or you can be in the courtyard of a mansion or a palace. It's the same root word.

If your mind is following along, the two times that it's used as a sheepfold are found in John 10. “Truly, truly, I say to you, he does not enter by the door into the fold of the sheep, but climbs up some other way, he is a thief and a robber.” We have to enter in by the door, which we're already studied, the gate, which is Jesus who is the way into the fold of the sheep.

It's another picture of an enclosed area for us to live in. We're the sheep, but we have to come in through the door, the gate. John 10:16 says, “I have other sheep, which are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will hear my voice, and they will become one flock with one shepherd.”

Jesus speaks of this fold, this courtyard, you might say, and He is the gate into this courtyard. We know that inside the courtyard is the Holy of Holies, which is where we meet the presence of God, Himself. Does this make a nice image in your mind?

Really, it's an interesting blend of Greek, which is Greeks focused on words, whereas Hebrews focused on these images. It's an interesting dynamic because I'm studying the words, but I'm also looking at the images in both situations.

I love the pictures that these words are painting and I'm seeing this courtyard, not just as this wonderful delicate, fine linen, which is around the edges, which is probably a white or an off-white, but then I'm also seeing the gate, which is Christ. I'm seeing inside where we live. This is the home of the sheep, the sheepfold.

Now, this is where we have to come back. You remember the other word for courtyard? It was chatser, which is the enclosure of the court used 189 times. It comes from the root word "chatsar," which means to blow a trumpet.

I probably wouldn't have seen this connection if I hadn't been studying deeply into Psalm 100. As you know, Psalm 100 is something that God just opened up to my mind in 2018, when He said, "Seek me through the principles in Psalm 100, which is coming through His presence with singing, give thanks unto Him, and bless His name.

Psalm 100 begins with, "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord." Or shout joyfully. The Hebrew word is "hari'u" and it comes from "rua," which means to raise a shout or give a blast. It is used 45 times in the Old Testament.

Two of those times, that word is used when Joshua commanded the people, "You shall not shout or make your voice heard, neither shall any word go out of your mouth, until the day I tell you to shout. Then you shall shout!" They were looking at these huge walls. An impenetrable fortress, and boy, when those trumpets blew, I would have been inspired. I would have let out something guttural, right down from the depths of my being, and I would have shouted. That's where that word comes from Psalm 100. Make a joyful noise, shout joyfully.

I've added this now to my regime, you might say. When I come into God's presence based on Psalm 100. I don't wake up my neighborhood by shouting. Inside, I say, "Hallelujah!" Then, it says, "Make a joyful shout," and so I've been studying that word, joyful. I don't want to be a morose Christian. I sometimes sing the song, "I'm so glad I'm a part of the family of God."

I want to be a joyful Christian. I don't want to go to my Heavenly Dad and say "Sigh, another day of following Jesus." I want to start my day out with, "Hallelujah! Another day to be an adopted son of the King."

Scott: Pretty soon we're going to get reports from the local news on where you are of a man walking around his neighborhood with a one-man band going, blowing his trumpet and banging on his cymbals and stuff and say, "Hallelujah."

Steve: What a way to be known, though.

Scott: That would be awesome.

Steve: Now, let me read Psalm 100. Just a couple of verses. I'm not going to read all of them. "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord." That's verse one. Then, verse four says, "Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise." You see the

connection? Courtyard, it means to blow a trumpet. It's like the root word. It's embedded in it.

I don't know how much it affects it or not, but I want to enter into God's courtyard with praise. I want to enter into His gates with thanksgiving.

I want to make a joyful blast when I come through those gates. I know this might be a little bit of a stretch, but I'm just telling you, when I saw that connection, I thought, "Only God that could have done this." If you were God, wouldn't you want your children to come into your presence with a joyful shout?

Scott: That reminds me when my kids were little and I'd come home from work and they'd be like, "Daddy" and just come run and hug me.

Steve: Exactly. This is what happens now when our grandkids come to our house if they walk in and they're happy and they make noise and my heart beams. That's a picture when we come into God's court, we should be happy and grateful.

Enter His gates with thanksgiving, His courts with praise. Make a joyful shout. When I saw that the word for courtyard means, root word, to blow a trumpet, all the dots began to connect and that's just blessed my socks off. This is probably a good place to stop, what do you think?

Scott: That image of my kids yelling daddy when I walk through the door and run up to hug me, that was such a picture for me of what worship is supposed to be.

Steve: Amen.

Scott: From that time in my life on I've tried to remember that.

Steve: Amen. Let's pray, Father, thank You for that picture, and thank You for all of these fascinating words that You've chosen to reveal Your son in. Thank You that he is the gate and the door into the fold. Thank You that he's calling people into the fold. Thank You that this precious fine linen, which was contributed by the people from their hearts whose hearts stirred them.

Yet we know that there is no fine linen without Jesus. He is the one that cleanses us. He is the one that gives us fine linen. Jesus, you are all through this tabernacle. Thank you for revealing what you have so far and thank you for being our teacher, spirit of God.

We do seek you joyfully. We come into your presence with thanksgiving and we enter into your gates or vice versa with praise, in Jesus name. Bless us all where we are in our own walk with you, and bless us all in our homes, that we will be able to take that kind of attitude into it. 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. If you have a question for me, you can reach me at scott@unsocializedmedia.com. Thanks for joining us. Have a great week.