

BFF305 The Shoulders

Every piece of this tabernacle, this tabernacle of witness, points to God's perfect plan to reveal His Son.

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: I am pursuing.

Scott: You're pursuing?

Steve: I always think of that expression when Gideon and his men had been engaged in arduous warfare all day, and yet they were still pursuing. They said they felt faint, but were still pursuing. Many times I don't feel 100 percent, but I like to think I'm pursuing.

Scott: There you go.

Steve: Or pushing forward.

Steve: A little review. We've been talking about the curtains that went around the courtyard. Perhaps this lesson should have been two lessons ago when we were talking about the gate. Part of the curtains are what the Bible calls the hangings, which are on both sides of the entrance to the gate.

This podcast is being recorded in December which is Advent season. Advent comes from the Latin word "adventus" meaning coming, which is a translation of the Greek word "parousia." This is anticipating the first coming of Christ.

In 2021 we are not just remembering his first coming, but we're anticipating His second coming. When I consider the tabernacle, what I have in my heart is this was also an advent. This is God coming down on the mountain. God coming into the tent of meeting. God dwelling with His people.

God dwelt with Adam and Eve in the garden. God will dwell with us in Revelation. There'll be no more sin, there'll be no more shame. There'll be no more separation between God and man. The tabernacle is our Heavenly Father taking the initiative to come into our camp.

The more I study this, the more I realize how intricate and carefully chosen are the words that God picked. Every piece of this tabernacle, this tabernacle of witness, points to God's perfect plan to reveal His Son. This is not thrown together. "Let's just have a Tabernacle." This is what Moses was studying on the mountain.

This is what God told him several times, "Do it just like I showed you." God put a lot into this tabernacle. The more I dig, the more I see how smart God is and how wonderful He is. As the Bible says, man shall truly live by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Father, and all scripture is profitable.

I was talking to my oldest boy at lunch the other day and asking him some questions about Hebrew. I needed some refreshers. He said, "Our whole generation has been influenced by theologians who have discounted the Pentateuch. They've magnified the prophets more than the Pentateuch."

Even though we don't espouse or follow liberal teachings, still, I think we've all been influenced to think that somehow God evolves over the course of scripture. Yet God never changes. He's the same yesterday, today and forever.

Let's Pray:

Father, help us today as we study Your words some more. To see Your fingerprints on it and to receive the benefits from it. To receive the insights from it so that we can be, as it says in Timothy, fully equipped in every good work. Help us to glean, what we need to glean. Help us to see Jesus even more in this tabernacle of witness. In Jesus' name, amen.

Scott: Amen.

Steve: Where are you in your Bible reading? Are you almost done for this year?

Scott: Yeah, pretty close. We finished Daniel in the Old Testament. In the New Testament, we're in 2 John, I believe.

Steve: We're following similar courses. I'm in the middle of Daniel right now. I read Daniel 5 and 6 today. In the New Testament, I'm about the same place, 2 John.

God is always teaching His people. He's teaching all the nations. I'll give you a little sampling. Exodus 7:5, "The Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord when I stretch out my hand against Egypt."

Then, Ezekiel 30, I saw the same thought again, which made me think about, "I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations and disperse them throughout the countries then they will know that I am the Lord."

This is God's heart. God is patiently calling the nations to himself, and when His judgments are in the earth and when He's despoiling their false gods, it's so that they will know that He is the true God. There's a whole bunch more in there.

I continue to see that theme throughout scripture. There's two places that God has led me to do, as you call it, I like it, deep dives. The first one is in Psalm 100, which I've been studying for the last couple of years, but I'm going deeper right now.

Then, the second is the tabernacle. I touched on this at the end of the last podcast a little bit, but I want to do it some more. Psalm 100:1 says, "Make a joyful noise, or shout joyfully to the Lord."

That word is "hari'u" from "rua" which means to raise a shout, or give a blast. It's the same word used by Joshua, to tell the people to shout when the walls of Jericho fell. It's a joyful, powerful, triumphant shout.

Psalm 100:3 says, "Know that Jehovah Himself is God, it is He who made us and not we ourselves. We are His people, and the sheep of His pasture." If you remember, we talked about the courtyard, which could also mean the sheepfold.

This theme runs all the way through scripture. We are His people. We're the sheep of His pasture. Then, the fourth verse in Psalm 100, "Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise, joyful shouts, triumphant." The gates and courts of the Tabernacle.

As you're entering through this gate, if you look to the left and to the right, there are fabric hangings. I'm going to read Exodus 27:14-15, "The hangings for the one side of the gate shall be 15 cubits, with their three pillars and their three sockets. For the other side shall be hangings of 15 cubits with their three pillars and their three sockets."

I looked up two words that I felt I needed to do a little more study, hangings and the side of the gate. There are two different words there.

You're going to be surprised with this. The hangings come from "qela" which means sling or "qela" which is to sling or hurl forth. How's that? The more I thought of it, if you have fabric hanging between pillars, it's hanging.

That's probably what a sling would look like if you're holding it on your side. At least the ones that I've seen that David used to try and reenact, it wasn't a slingshot, a wire that we do pull back a rubber band, but it was something that hung at your side and you would circular whoop, and then you let go the pouch.

That makes sense. The hangings. The root word though is sling. What was a surprise to me and very edifying, is the word for the side of the gate means shoulder or shoulder blade or side.

I read the 67 times it's used and about half of them, it's translated shoulder or shoulder blades. About half of them are side. That blessed my socks off, because the first thing I thought of, was these two hangings, which are on both sides of the gate. If I'm looking at the gate, on the left and on the right, there are the shoulders or shoulder blades.

Think of Jesus being the gate, the door, the way to the Father. Picture His head right there. This is Jesus. He's the way, the truth, and the life. Nobody comes to the Father except through Him. Yet, the sides of the gate are called the shoulders. Boy, that blessed me.

Now, I have a visual image. As I'm looking at the gate, I'm thinking of Jesus being the gate, the door, the way to the Father. I'm thinking of His shoulders on both sides. These shoulders are made up of some interesting fabric.

Verses 16 and 17, "The gate to the court, there shall be a screen, a covering, of 20 cubits of blue and purple and scarlet material and fine twisted linen, the work of a weaver." We've already talked about the fine-twisted linen, probably from Egypt.

Let's think about these three colors, blue and purple and scarlet. The word for blue is "tekheleth," used 49 times in the Bible. I just picked two times. What could that blue have been representing? How could that blue have been significant?

The first thought I came to, was Exodus 24:10. It's when Moses and the leaders were on the mountain, it said they saw the God of Israel and there was under His feet as it were a pavement of sapphire stone, like the very heaven for clearness.

I picture a frozen lake, best I can do. It's a pavement. It's something hard. Yet, it's made out of sapphire stone. Sapphire, I had to look this up, beautiful blue. When I saw that blue, I thought, "Well, if I'm looking at that blue being woven through the fabric, I'm thinking of God."

Numbers 15:37-41, God said to Moses, "Speak to the people of Israel, tell them to make tassels on the corner of their garments throughout their generations, and to put a cord of blue on the tassel of each corner. It shall be a tassel for you to look at and remember all the commandments to do them, not to follow after your own heart."

These people had a piece of blue fabric, a cord of blue on the tassel of each corner of their garments. As they saw their friends wearing their tassels, and as they put on their own tassels, it was a reminder to them to keep the truth, to keep God's commandments, and to not follow their own heart. Blue is truth. We know that Jesus is the truth.

Scarlet is used 42 times in the Bible. Interestingly, the first mention is in Genesis 38. I believe you remember the two twins that came out of their mother's womb, and then they went back in.

The first person that raised his hand out, they tied a little scarlet cord, a scarlet thread on his finger, so that they knew who was the oldest, because, very important, who's one that gets the birth right. That scarlet also appears in Joshua 2, remember when the spies went into the land?

Scott: Yeah.

Steve: They went into Rahab's house and they said, "Look, you tie the scarlet cord in your window through which you let us down and you shall gather into your house, your father, your mother ... "

Then, it says, verse 21, this is chapter 2 of Joshua, "According to your words, so be it." Then, she sent them away and they departed and she tied the scarlet cord in the window.

Isaiah 1:8, "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."

When I see that red, I'm thinking of Jesus, the sacrifice. He takes our sins and he makes them white. Red scarlet yarn was also used in purification from leprosy.

Purple, "argaman" is used in King Solomon's description. It says King Solomon made himself a carriage from the wood of Lebanon, he made his posts of silver, his back of gold, his seat of purple.

In the book of Esther, in the palace of King Ahasuerus, there were white cotton curtains and violet hangings fastened with cords of fine linen and purple.

When Mordecai became the big cheese, it says he went out from the presence of the king in royal robes of blue and white, with a great golden crown and a robe of fine linen in purple.

Blue, red, purple. I see truth. I see sacrifice. I see royalty. Jesus is the King. Jesus is the sacrifice. Jesus is the truth." Have you ever seen all that before?

Scott: When you look back at this, you're saying every word means something, and it's important.

Steve: I have more good news. These three colors were woven together and the work of a weaver. I looked up the word weaver which is "raqam."

Raqam means to variegate. It's also translated an embroiderer, or a skillful weaver. This is someone that has some skills. If you remember, the two fellows that God set apart to do the work on the Tabernacle were Bezalel and Oholiab.

In Exodus 38, it says, "These are the records of the tabernacle, the tabernacle of the testimony, as they were recorded at the commandment of Moses, the responsibility of the Levites under the direction of Ithamar the son of Aaron the priest. Bezalel the son of Uri, son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah made all that the Lord commanded Moses, and with him was Oholiab, the son of Ahisamach of the tribe of Dan, an engraver and designer and embroiderer in blue and purple and scarlet yarns and fine twined linen."

It was probably Oholiab that did a lot of the work on the fine twined linen. He was an embroiderer, a designer. In blue, purple, and scarlet yarns. Oholiab. His name? Ohel O-H-E-L means tent. Ab means father. Oholiab means "father's tent."

Isn't that beautiful? Here's Oholiab working on his Heavenly father's tent, his father's tabernacle, his father's dwelling place now. I have goosebumps right now as I'm telling you this. This is beautiful.

Raqam is used nine times to describe the weaver? Eight times it's used in Exodus talking about the tabernacle. Here's the ninth time in Psalm 139.

"You formed my inward parts. You knitted me together in my mother's womb. I praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are Your works. My soul knows it very well. My frame was not hidden from You when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth."

Ultimately, God is the weaver. God is the skillful embroiderer. God is the one who's sovereign and who weaves together all these different aspects of our life and makes us who we are. This passage in Psalm 139 points me to God.

Many years ago I had the opportunity to see Corrie ten Boom speak when she was still alive. She would hold up a beautiful embroidery. I think it was a blue background with a gold crown on the front. Then she would turn it around, and it was a mess. The back of that embroidery was all these pieces of thread and knots. It was a disaster.

When we look at our life, oftentimes we see all those little loose threads. We say, "What in the world is this coming to?" However from God's perspective, He is skillfully weaving all of our life experiences. When we see the other side, we see the crown.

God is the skillful embroiderer. God is the one who wove us together in the depths of the earth. He's the one that knitted us together in our mother's womb. He's the one that fearfully and wonderfully made us. Amen.

Scott: Amen. He's the one that's orchestrating every moment of our lives. I read that verse sometimes and think, "It feels like He left it at that. Oh yes, He knit me together wonderfully, but the rest of my life's up to me." No, He's orchestrating all of that, too, and weaving that together.

Steve: Amen. God, the weaver, the embroiderer, weaves these themes through this fabric. Blue, truth, God. The red, scarlet, deliverance, sacrifice. The blue, purple, royalty, kingship of Christ. Then He commissions a man whose name means father's tent, who's anointed to design and embroider these materials. Pretty powerful stuff.

Father, thank You for Your word that points us to Jesus, reveals not only Jesus, but Your plan and Your purpose and your...We've talked about it. You've magnified above all things, Your name and Your word. Thank you for these insights into Your word.

Write it on our hearts. Help us when we see the blue and the red and the purple to think of Jesus. Help us when we look at the front of the gate, we see the shoulders and we think of Jesus being the way. Help us as we see all these intricate weavings, to think of how you are intricately weaving our lives together. We worship You, and we thank You. 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.