

## BFF 315 At the Entrance to the Tent of Meeting

**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'm better than I was a week ago, but I'm still in the woods. I've been doing everything I know naturally. I finally went to a doctor yesterday, and he was helpful. Gave me some good advice and prescription. Hopefully, in a day or two, I'll be even better.

**Scott:** Was that just a wicked cold?

**Steve:** Yes. A week and a half ago, I spoke at a one-day retreat. It was nasty. I woke up and I thought, "I should just go back to bed," but I thought, "No, I have a commitment." I got in the car, and I went. I was happy that I went, but when I got home, I knew I was paying a price, and I tried to go to bed.

By Monday morning, I went for a strep test, my throat was so bad, and that was negative. Tuesday, my wife carefully puts in a COVID test in my room. Apparently, it's just a nasty cold.

**Scott:** God bless you.

**Steve:** Thank you. We're going to pick up. I thought we were going to enter the tent and talk about the showbread. I felt God direct me to the entrance of the tent of meeting. If you put in little search, "entrance" and "tent," you'll find 115 references. I have gone through all 115 of those references, and I've selected a few that we're going to talk about.

If you think this is going to be boring, hang on till the end. I did my homework, then, I sought God, and He gave me some really good stuff so hang on there till the end.

Let's pray. Father, thank You for meeting the children of Israel so faithfully over and over and over. Thank You for the concept of the tabernacle, where God can dwell among men. I pray that You give us ears to hear today what you have for us, help me to have ears as I speak of what the Spirit is bringing to us. In Jesus' name, Amen."

**Steve:** I've got several scriptures to read, then we're going to look for the application. Exodus 29:38-46 "This is what you shall offer on the altar: two lambs a year old day by day regularly. One lamb you shall offer in the morning, and the other lamb you shall offer at twilight. And with the first lamb a tenth measure of fine flour mingled with a fourth of a hin of beaten oil, and a fourth of a hin of wine for a drink offering. The other lamb you shall offer at twilight, and shall offer with it a grain offering and its drink offering, as in the morning, for a pleasing aroma, a food offering to Jehovah. **It shall be a regular burnt offering throughout your generations at the entrance of the tent of meeting before the LORD, where I will meet with you, to speak to you there.**

**There I will meet with the people of Israel, and it shall be sanctified by my glory.** I will consecrate the tent of meeting and the altar. Aaron also and his sons I will consecrate to serve me as priests. I will dwell among the people of Israel and will be their God. And they shall know that I am Jehovah their God, who brought them out of the land of Egypt that I might dwell among them. I am Jehovah their God.

Between the two mornings so the morning would be when the sun rises at six and when it begins going down at noon, so between the two mornings would be about nine o'clock. Twilight is a little trickier, but it's possibly between 12 and 6, or three o'clock. Let's say nine o'clock to three o'clock.

Exodus 29:42-3 are significant scriptures, "It shall be a regular burnt offering throughout your generations at the entrance of the tent of meeting before Jehovah where I will meet with you to speak to you there. There I will meet with the people of Israel, and it shall be sanctified by My glory.

This is a beautiful picture. We see that God is going to dwell in the tent. The priests are going to come up to the door of the tent, or at the entrance of the tent of meeting. That expression is used many times.

Exodus 33:9-10 When Moses entered the tent, the pillar of cloud would descend and stand at the entrance of the tent, and Jehovah would speak with Moses. And when all the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the entrance of the tent, all the people would rise up and worship, each at his tent door."

The ministering women: Remember that there were mirrors brought from Egypt, that the "women who ministered at the entrance of the tent" offered to be used to make the basin of bronze. I hate to bring this up, but you might remember, too, in the book of 1 Samuel, when Eli was priest and his boys were harassing these same women who were ministering at the entrance of the tent.

OK, what else happened at that entrance of the tent? This is the biggest thing I got out of the study. Exodus 40:11-15 "You shall also anoint the basin and its stand, and consecrate it. Then you shall bring Aaron and his sons to the entrance of the tent of meeting and shall wash them with water and put on Aaron the holy garments."

"And you shall anoint him and consecrate him, that he may serve me as priest. You shall bring his sons also and put coats on them, and anoint them, as you anointed their father, that they may serve me as priests. And their anointing shall admit them to a perpetual priesthood throughout their generations."

This is where priests were ordained. This is where the priests were set apart to represent the people to God, and God to the people.

There was a trumpet call to summon the people of God to the tent. Numbers 10:1, "Jehovah spoke to Moses saying make two silver trumpets of hammered work, you shall make them and use them for summoning the congregation and for breaking the

camp. And when both are blown, all the congregation shall gather themselves to you at the entrance to the tent of meeting.

"But if they blow only one, then the chiefs, the heads of the tribes of Israel shall gather themselves to you." Before the camp was about to break up and move to another location, these silver trumpets would summon the people to the entrance of the tent of meeting.

Miriam

This is a very important place, this entrance of the tent of meeting. It's also where justice was handed down. Remember when Miriam and Aaron started fussing about Moses' wife? Suddenly it says in Numbers 12, "Jehovah said, 'Come out you three to the tent of meeting.'" Then the three of them came out and Jehovah came down in a pillar of cloud and stood at the entrance of the tent and called Aaron and Miriam, and they both came forward. We know what happened. Miriam became leprous, the whole camp is waiting while she is outside the camp because she's unclean.

Let God decide

In Numbers 16, you think they would have learnt something about Miriam fussing against Moses, but now Korah appears with 250 of the leaders, and he says, "Hey, what makes you two puppies so special? We are chosen as well." Moses said to Korah, "Be present, you and all your company before Jehovah, you and they and Aaron tomorrow. Let every one of you take a censer, put incense on it. Every one of you come before Jehovah with the censer."

And so, they took the censers, put fire in them, laid incense on them. They stood at the entrance of the tent of meeting with Moses and Aaron. Then Korah assembled all the congregation against them at the entrance of tent of meeting.

Now, I don't know about you, but I'm thinking of dynamics here. We know how big this whole area is with the curtains all around them. It's 50 cubits by 100 cubits. How can you get a million people in that? Still, the leaders were at the entrance of the tent of meeting and the remaining people are all around outside the courtyard.

Then God showed up, and you know what happened. It wasn't pretty. Those men died, and Moses even said, "Let's make this clear. This is not me against Korah. These men have spoken rebellion and the earth opens up and swallows them." And that's what happened. Awful, but then you think the people would again learn, but they didn't learn.

At the end of the 16th chapter, "Moses and Aaron came to the front of the tent of meeting. Jehovah spoke to Moses saying, 'Get away from the midst of this congregation that I may consume them in a moment.' And they fell on their faces."

They were praying to God, who was standing at the tent of meeting, Moses and Aaron. Then Moses quickly said to Aaron, "Quick, take your censer, go into the congregation because judgment's begun." 14,700 people died of the plague.

Then Aaron returned to Moses, at the entrance of the tent of meeting when the plague was stopped. It is a beautiful and terrible picture when a priest is standing before God and His judgments and man, and pleading for mercy.

#### Water from the Rock

**Numbers 20:4**, "The people came to Moses, 'We don't have any water. This place is nothing like what you promised, let's go back to Egypt.' Moses and Aaron went from the presence of the assembly to the entrance of the tent of meeting, fell on their faces, and the glory of Jehovah appeared unto them.

"And Jehovah spoke to Moses saying, 'Take the staff, assemble the congregation, you and Aaron, your brother, and tell the rock before their eyes to yield its water.'" This is where Moses brought water from the rock at the entrance of the tent of meeting.

**Steve**: Most of us just know about Balaam, because he had a talking donkey. He was a really interesting guy because he heard from God, and he prophesied, and some of his prophecies are still being felt today. There are several chapters of the Bible which record the Spirit of God is speaking through him.

**Sadly**, it appears that Balaam is still courting the favor of Balak, and he said to Balak,, "You know how you can bring these Israelites down? Send out your girls, and intermingle with them." It became the sin of Peor. Later God told Moses, "Go wipe out the Midianites," and the word of God records "and Balaam died." He's mentioned again in Revelation in the New Testament.

#### Corporate Prayer

As a result of the sin which Balaam's counsel produced the people were gathered at the entrance praying. This was a place for corporate prayer, for corporate repentance, and corporate seeking of God. While they were seeking God, Numbers 25:6-7 Behold, one of the people of Israel came and brought a Midianite woman to his family, in the sight of Moses and in the sight of the whole congregation of the people of Israel, while **they were weeping in the entrance of the tent of meeting**. When Phinehas the son of Eleazar, son of Aaron the priest, saw it, he rose and left the congregation and took a spear in his hand."

I've got three more references to the importance of this doorway, and then we're going to look for applications. The daughters of Zelophehad were from the tribe of Manasseh and their dad didn't have any boys, and they were wondering if they were going to get an inheritance.

What they did was they stood before Moses and before Eleazar, the priests and before the chiefs and all the congregation at the entrance of the tent of meeting. This was big stuff. This was a big business decision because it had to do with the inheritance of these tribes, and God gave them an answer. (Numbers 27:1-3)

#### Joshua

Deuteronomy 31:14–15 "When Moses' days were winding down, Jehovah said to Moses, 'Behold the day's approach when you must die, call Joshua, present yourselves in the tent of meeting that I may commission him.' And Moses and Joshua went and presented themselves in the tent of meeting, and Jehovah appeared at the tent in a pillar of cloud, and the pillar of clouds stood over the entrance of the tent."

Joshua was commissioned, the priests have been ordained, business takes place, corporate prayer occurs and in Joshua 19, it says that the land was distributed by lot at Shiloh before Jehovah at the entrance of the tent of meeting.

As I was praying about this subject, God quickly said, "Proverbs, in all thy ways, acknowledge Him, and He will direct your paths."

"In all thy ways, acknowledge Him," Paul says, "In everything, by prayer and supplication, making your request known before God." The children of Israel did everything of importance at the entrance of the tent of meeting.

What made this spot hallowed ground, is the fact that it's before God who dwells in the tent of meeting, whose glory came down on the tent of meeting, who appeared in the pillar at the tent of meeting.

Can we, in our generation, put God first in everything, because this is what Israel did? As long as they kept God at the center of everything, they were protected, they were blessed, they prospered, they grew, they overthrew nations greater and mightier than they were. To be successful, we've got to keep God at the entrance of the tent of meeting. We've got to keep God in the forefront.

I wrote a book called "Stewardship," and it's the whole idea of how to make sure that God is first in your business, and applying principles from scripture, not being unequally yoked, not co-signing loans, these kinds of principles are all spelled out in stewardship. It's all about biblical principles that I've applied in my business. I think it's one of the reasons that God blessed us.

Marriage and dating or courtship

Our family came up with a definition of courtship, "purposeful dating under God, or putting God first in your relationship."

If you're considering a potential spouse, the first question is, "Are they a believer in Jesus?" If they're not, the relationship is over. That's it.

There are other things to consider, and that's why you have to pursue this person to find out if God is leading you. We need to put God first in everything, and not just say, "Well, I'm going to go live with this person for a couple of years to see if we're compatible, and then I'm going to go ask God to bless it."

No, no, no. We're starting at the entrance of the tent of meeting. We're putting God first. We're seeking first His kingdom. We're following Him above all, and we're

praying about everything. We're praying about dating, we're praying about business, we're praying about education.

When 9/11 happened, and everybody was saying, "Where's God? Where's God?" Billy Graham's daughter said, "You've asked God to get out of your schools. You've asked God to get out of government. You've asked God to get out of your country. Now, you're wondering where God is?"

We were founded on the principle "One Nation Under God." We used to say this in the Pledge of Allegiance, but we've taken God out. Now you're asking where is He? If you want Him back, you have to ask Him back.

We have taken this ridiculous, devilish concept of the separation of church and state, separation of dating and marriage, separation of business from faith. There is no separation. It's everything under God. Everything goes through the tent of meeting.

God has something to say about who's ordained, who's commissioned, business decisions, land decisions, personal decisions Miriam and Moses or conflict resolution. God is involved in all of these things, if we'll bring our issues to the tent of meeting.

I understood that in the early days of higher education, the chapel was the center of the campus. The chapel was the focal point of the architecture on the campus. I'm looking right now at my college – Grove City College -- I have a plate up on my shelf, and it's a picture of the chapel.

When Thomas Jefferson built the University of Virginia, the library was at the center, not the chapel. That was a not so subtle shift. This was putting man's ideas ahead of God's ideas. God needs to be at the center of everything. God needs to be first in all of our relationships, all of our decisions, all of our stuff.

We need to be praying all the time whether it's a local school board meeting, whether it's a federal meeting of the House of Representatives, we need to be starting with prayer. We need to be considering God, and asking Him to rule in the affairs of men.

This is what Benjamin Franklin did, apparently, when they were making the Constitution and the process wasn't going well. He finally said this wonderful exhortation. He said, "We need to be praying. We need to have God at the forefront of everything."

**Scott:** Wow, that was a wide berth of stuff. I didn't know where you were going when you started with the entrance to the tent of meeting. At first I was thinking, "Yeah, this is awesome. It's the presence of God there. This is where you come to meet with Him." Then it went to feeling pretty nervous about being asked to the tent, to the entrance to the tent, like a lot of bad stuff happened there, but it was all righteous stuff. I get the feeling. I might have been one of the people who's, if Aaron or somebody said, "Hey, I want to see you at the entrance to the tent of meeting," I might have been a little nervous.

**Steve:** The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom. It's not a bad thing to be a little nervous. There you go.

**Scott:** Exactly. None of this is wrong. When I read the Old Testament, I realize I'm one of the ones who was probably going to be smote? Smoten? Smited? Whatever the past tense of smite is. At some point, I probably would have done something to get myself killed. That's why I need Jesus all the time.

When everything needs to be at the entrance to the tent of meeting, when everything needs to be run through God, there's nothing that's not under God. That's why we have the Holy Spirit. That's why we need to learn to hear His voice, and try to follow Him as best we can.

**Steve:** Well, this is one reason we pray before we eat. I pray before I drive. When I'm driving out of my driveway, I ask God to protect us and lead us, and help us. I pray when I have meetings. When I go to conferences, I pray at the beginning, I pray at the end. It's one tangible way of making sure that in all our ways we're acknowledging Him, it's just helpful.

We need to continue to do it though, because naturally, we don't want to. Naturally, we want to make our own decisions, then we ask God to bless them. Bring them to the tent and say, "Now sprinkle some oil on this and bless them." We need to start by going to the tent of meeting instead of finishing there.

Let me tell you something sweet that happened. Yesterday was National Down Syndrome Day. I think you probably saw on my Facebook page, but it's also on our website, I posted a video of Johnny at work. He also knows I am battling a cold and Johnny asks me almost every morning, "Are you better?" He doesn't like sickness, he wants me to say yes, but I have to say, "No."

This morning, while we're eating breakfast, he reaches over, and puts his hand on my shoulder. He said, "Pray". I said, "OK." I closed my eyes, and he prayed his heart out for me that Pop would be better.

That's the same thing that we need to be doing because often my first inclination is to take herbs, or run to the doctor, or rest. Those are all legitimate things, but the first thing we need to be doing is praying. We need to put God first in everything.

**Scott:** Amen.

**Steve:** Amen. Thank you, Father, for this reminder. Thank you for giving us a model of a theocentric culture where everything went through God. Regardless of whether they were praying, or dividing up land, or settling personal disputes, ordaining people, commissioning people, making business decisions, You were the center.

You were the focus. I pray that we'll be able to learn that lesson today. Right where we are in our education, in our business decisions, in our marriage decisions, and how we raise our children, all these issues, we put you first. Bring us back. Bring our country back. Bring this world back.

Help us to be truly one nation under God in Washington, state governments, local governments, and the homes, but we know it starts in the homes. Let all of these things move us back. Draw us back. We invite you back.

We've cast you out, so to speak, and now we do our part and say, "No, come, Lord Jesus." Come and be King in the United States of America, King over all the earth 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](mailto:spdemme@gmail.com). If you have a question for me, you can reach me at [scott@unsocializedmedia.com](mailto:scott@unsocializedmedia.com). Thanks for joining us. Have a great week.