

The General Plan of the Tabernacle

by George Warnock

The Tabernacle represents God's presence and sanctuary for the people, foreshadowing the New Covenant and emphasizing the importance of faith in understanding God's truth.

Scripture: Exodus 19:6, Numbers 23:9, Numbers 24:5, Malachi 4:2, Romans 10:17, Philippians 3:12, 1 Peter 2:9

Topics: "Identity in Christ", "God's Presence"

Description

George Warnock emphasizes the significance of the Tabernacle as the dwelling place of God among His people, illustrating how it symbolizes a new beginning and a holy nation set apart. He reflects on the disobedience and discouragement of the Israelites despite God's glory surrounding them, contrasting their covenant with the life-giving covenant available through Christ. Warnock urges believers to embrace their identity as a royal priesthood and to pursue the fullness of God's promises, emphasizing the importance of faith and the Word of God in experiencing His glory. He calls for spiritual awakening, encouraging the congregation to remove barriers of unbelief and to walk in the light of God's truth. Ultimately, he reminds them that true communion with God is available to all who seek Him wholeheartedly.

Transcript

The Tent was situated in the very center of the camp of Israel, and over the Tent the cloud of His glory rested, day and night: by day as a pillar of cloud, and by night as a pillar of fire. It was God Himself dwelling in the midst of His people. The Tent faced the east, and there in the front of the gate were the tents of Moses and Aaron, who were responsible for the conduct of all who ministered in the sanctuary. Facing the east, it would speak to us of the promise of a "new day." The Temple of Solomon in Jerusalem also faced the east. For the promise is, "Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings" (Mal. 4:2).

As one might look down upon the Tabernacle from the hillsides, with thousands of little tents surrounding it, and God's glory covering the sanctuary like a canopy, one could not help but be aware that here was a distinct people, a separate people, a holy nation. Balaam the sorcerer wanted to curse them. He was going to be paid well for doing it. But in the spirit of prophecy he was compelled to say:

"From the top of the rocks I see him,

And from the hills I behold him:

Lo, the people shall dwell alone,

And shall not be reckoned among the nations" (Num. 23:9).

And again,

"How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob,

And thy tabernacles, O Israel!" (Num. 24:5).

And yet, even at that very moment the people were disheartened, discouraged, and disobedient. They were filled with murmuring and complaining because of the bitterness of the way, and the drought and barrenness of the wilderness journey. Oh, that we had eyes to see, and ears to hear, and a heart to perceive, that we might behold ourselves for a moment from God's viewpoint, and from the viewpoint of angels and principalities and powers of the heavenly realm! We may excuse Israel, for theirs was a covenant of death, a covenant of fading glory. But how shall we excuse ourselves who have been made partakers of a covenant of life, and a covenant of ever-increasing glory, and dwell in a Tabernacle "which the Lord pitched, and not man"?

The Tent itself had a partition called the veil, which separated the holy place from the most holy. Then surrounding the Tent, as well as the laver and the brazen altar which were outside the Tent, was an enclosure composed of fine linen hanging on posts which were placed in brazen sockets in the desert sand. This was called the outer court; and the linen surrounding it was much like a fence, which the priests entered from the east side in the course of their ministry. Altogether, then, we have three areas: the outer court, the holy place, and the holy of holies. There at the eastern gate the sinning Israelite would bring his sacrifice to the priest. The priest and Levite would then take the sacrifice to the brazen altar which was situated just inside the gate, sacrifice it unto the Lord, and the sinning Israelite could go away free--until he sinned again. Nor could he go into the sanctuary itself, for that was reserved for the priests. This was no arbitrary arrangement on God's part. His heart longed for a whole nation of kings and priests, and in the fullness of time He would create such a nation. God had promised them: "Ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation" (Ex. 19:6). Because of their disobedience they could not attain to it then, and the promise remained unfulfilled. When the true Sacrifice was made, and an unchanging priesthood was established in Christ, the promise was once again brought forward from God's heart: "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people" (1 Pet. 2:9). This too has failed to materialize in fullness, but the promise is there, and it remains for those who will go God's way--all the way. Let there be no misunderstanding here: what God declares concerning us is true. But He makes His declarations in the New Covenant that we might embrace them by faith and appropriate them, until the truth becomes practical and vital in our lives.

This truth we must emphasize over and over again, for we are living in a day when so-called positional truth, and dispensational truth have almost nullified the Word of God, and robbed God's people of the glory that He has for them. If men do not like the truth they can readily relegate it to some dispensation other than the one we are living in. Or if it is definitely truth for this dispensation, then they have a way of relegating it to the heavens. "That's positional truth. It's not something you experience today." But the answer is clear from the Word of God: It is ours and we must press toward the mark, "if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:12). What God has elected and chosen for me, to that end I must press on. I know I cannot go beyond faith, or beyond the Word, nor do I desire to do so. But "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God" (Rom. 10:17).

"Therefore, Oh Lord, give us hearing ears that we may hear Your truth. Give us open eyes to behold Your glory. Give us understanding hearts to perceive Your ways. There are no limits in You, and You have erected no barriers to the man of faith. But there are barriers that we often erect in our own hearts--hearts which are prone to presumption and unbelief. But as You would possess our reins with the pure and holy mind of Christ, then we shall truly walk with You in the pure light of Your holiness and truth, and abide under the shadow of the Almighty. Truly You are Light and Life in all Your Being, and if we abide under Your shadow we shall walk, not in darkness, for Your shadow is one of pure light; and every trace of sin and the carnal nature must vanish away in the pure Light of Your presence."

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