

The Pattern of the Tent

by George Warnock

George Warnock's sermon explores the significance of the tent's pattern as a shadow of heavenly realities and the fulfillment found in Christ and His Church.

Scripture: Exodus 25:40, Haggai 2:9, John 2:19, Ephesians 1:22, Hebrews 8:5, Hebrews 10:1

Topics: "Heavenly Temple", "Christ's Sacrifice"

Description

George Warnock delves into the significance of the heavenly pattern shown to Moses on the mount, emphasizing that the Levitical order was a shadow of heavenly things, not the perfect representation. He challenges the notion that Christ's sacrifice is insufficient by highlighting the full efficacy of the blood of Christ to take away all sin. Warnock explores the evolving patterns of God's temples and tabernacles, culminating in Christ as the ultimate manifestation of the heavenly Temple. He stresses the importance of God's new order and the greater glory He has in mind, urging believers to anticipate and align with God's unfolding plans.

Transcript

"And look that thou make them after their pattern, which was shewed thee in the mount" (Ex. 25:40). As Moses dwelt in the midst of the celestial glory for 40 days and 40 nights, talking with God face to face, God gave him very detailed instructions for the building of the sanctuary. In this pattern we have a picture of the heavenly realm which was to be made manifest in the fullness of time. Paul calls the whole Levitical order "the example and shadow of heavenly things" (Heb. 8:5). Notice this very carefully: it was not a perfect representation of the real, but only a type, only a shadow. "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect" (Heb. 10:1).

Of course most Christians do not believe that "the very image" can bring perfection either. And if this be so God may be charged with abolishing a faulty religious system which could not bring perfection, and then replacing it with a new religious system which was still "faulty," if it too was not able to bring perfection to those who embraced it. We might just as well continue on with the sacrifices of bulls and goats, and the ashes of a red heifer, if the sacrifice of Christ can do no better. Why should He have suffered so much in vain? (God forbid the very suggestion! But it is not really mine. It is the suggestion of those who ignorantly deny the full efficacy of the blood of Christ to take away all sin.) For God has ordained that in the fullness of time the Substance of all Old Testament offering and sacrifice would be revealed; and that He would

bring forth the perfection that the Old Testament pointed to in many of its types and shadows, but was never able to fulfill. The shadow speaks of an outline, a sketch. The "very image" speaks of that which is perfect, the real thing. So Christ is said to be the "image of the invisible God" and "the express image of His Person." He is not just a resemblance of God, but the exact similitude and expression of God in human form.

This is important for us to remember. For in our study of the tabernacles and temples of God we are going to discover that the pattern changes as one temple replaces another; and the tabernacle or temple that has gone into ruin and later restored is vastly different than the original structure. Why would God see fit to change the pattern from time to time? For the simple reason that it was just a shadow of the heavenly realm; and in changing it we have a different view of what God had in mind, as He outlined the substance in a somewhat different light, perhaps in a more brilliant light. Finally the heavenly Temple is revealed and manifested in Christ Himself Who declared Himself to be the very Temple of God in the earth. "Destroy this temple," He said, "And in three days I will raise it up" (Jn. 2:19). He was not the shadow, but the "very image." But there was to be a further expression of the "very image" as the Lord Jesus was glorified; that from the throne of Zion's holy mountain He might rule and reign as "head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all" (Eph. 1:22-23). His intention being to build the Church together "for an habitation of God through the Spirit" (Eph. 2:22). Yes, God needs His people because He needs a permanent Home in which He might dwell--a Home that is compatible with His own nature and character.

Try as Israel may, therefore, to bring about a restoration of her glory to something that might equate the glory she had in the days of David, or Solomon, she will not succeed. And try as the Church may to bring about a restoration to something that might resemble the glory of early apostolic days, she too is going to be greatly frustrated and perplexed. Whether we speak of natural Israel or the Church, in striving for something that is far below God's intention, we fail to see and to anticipate the greater glory that God has in mind. For He has promised "the glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former" (Hag. 2:9). Many good ministers are puzzled as they try their best to re-establish the order and structure of the "New Testament Church." But if God has something "new" in mind, the Holy Spirit (Who is the Vicar of Christ on earth) will not seek to accommodate those who are endeavoring to bring about this kind of restoration. God has still greater things in mind. Certainly He will restore that which was lost, and the years that the caterpillar, the cankerworm, the palmerworm, and the locust have eaten. But when God has a new order in mind, in vain do we try to restore the old one. Fundamental principles of truth remain unchanged, for Jesus Christ is the Truth, and therefore eternal and unchangeable. But until the fullness of Christ is formed within His people, God will continue to do new things and bring about a new order wherein His people shall walk. And all this will be in strict conformity to the revealed Word of God, quickened and made alive to His people in the day when He arises to perform the intentions of His heart. Invariably when God moves forward with His people it is the quickening Word that leads them forth into new things. It is always according to scripture. And God always confirms what He is doing in many, many ways, so as to encourage His people to move on with Him. The trumpet sound is certain and clear. His sheep know the Voice, and they seek to follow in obedience.

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