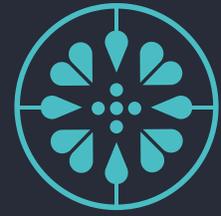
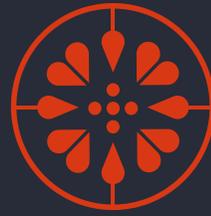


# The Purpose of Sanctuary

DEVOTIONAL BY PASTOR RICK GARRETT



Sanctuary it seems, is as old as humanity itself. In the first pages of the Bible, back in the beginning, we find that God planted a Garden in the East where He placed Adam and Eve. (Genesis 2:8)

The Garden of Eden was, in a very real sense, a sanctuary within the wild new creation. It was a place of peace that provided the man and woman with shalom – a place where they could live and work and rest all in the presence of God.

When Adam and Even fractured the sanctuary God had created for them, they were forced to face a harsh new reality. One that still required them to live and work and rest, but now these necessities had to happen apart from the shalom they had experienced in the presence of God.

As Adam and Eve leave the Garden of Eden, they take the first steps of a journey that for them will never end. In fact, we are still taking steps in the journey they began. Desperately attempting to find the shalom they lost, while knowing it will never be fully realized until we once again enter the presence of God – this time forever.

As Adam and Eve begin their journey, the story of sanctuary continues to unfold: a faint shadow of what they once experienced, mingled with just enough hope to remind them that one day things would be restored. In this new reality, sanctuary is no longer a place - like the Garden of Eden - but is now an episodic experience where God visits His people to answer their prayer or commission them with a purpose. These interactions often culminate with a new name being given for God focusing on His provision in the interaction. (See sidebar on the right.)

## SOME OF THE NAMES OF GOD:

Jehovah El Roi: The Lord who sees me (Genesis 16:8)

Jehovah-Rohi: The Lord My Shepherd (Psalm 23:1)

Jehovah-Jireh: The Lord Shall Provide (Genesis 22:13-14)

Jehovah-Rapha: The Lord Who Heals (Exodus 15:22-26)

Jehovah-Nissi: The Lord Is My Banner (Exodus 17:15)

Jehovah-M'Kaddesh: The Lord Who Sanctifies (Leviticus 20:7-8)

Jehovah-Shalom: The Lord Who Is Peace (Judges 6:24)

Jehovah-Tsidkenu: The Lord Who Is Righteous (Jeremiah 23:5-6)

Jehovah-Shammah: The Lord Who Is There (Ezekiel 48:35)

As the theme of sanctuary continues to unfold, we see it move to the tabernacle in the wilderness (Ex 40:34-38), the temple in Jerusalem (2 Chron 5:13-14) and eventually the Holy Spirit falling on His people (Acts 2:1-4). But if we look back to the original sanctuary, there are some things we can learn that will help us as we take steps toward entering the sanctuary of God yet again:

### Sanctuary is a place of **work**.

So often we think of sanctuary merely as a place of rest. A place to retreat from work, to take a nap, and recover from all of our labor. Yet interestingly, when God places Adam and Eve in the sanctuary of the Garden of Eden, they do not find their work complete, but only that it has just begun. "The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden *to work it and keep it.*" Gen 2:15.

Instead of ending our work, true sanctuary brings purpose to our work. It allows us to see the meaning behind the work. In fact, part of the work is to maintain and share the sanctuary we have experienced. It becomes both the purpose of our work and one of the goals of our work.

### Sanctuary is a place of **expansion**.

It seems that God placed Adam and Eve inside a sanctuary and then tasked them to expand it. The Garden of Eden was the place God intended for them to live out the command He had given them – "And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.'" Gen 1:28. God wanted Adam and Eve to work until the rest of Creation matched the Garden, they were to expand the sanctuary so that others could share in the joy they found.

### Sanctuary is a place of **rest**.

The task God gave to Adam and Eve was enormous – expand the Garden until it filled the whole earth. However, God in His goodness also told Adam and Eve to rest. "So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation." Gen 2:3.

God did not tell us to rest when our work was complete, but rather to rest because our work will never be complete. He tells us to rest to increase our faith in Him, trusting that He is the God who never sleeps or slumbers (Ps 1:21), who works while we rest, and sustains our previous effort while we pause (Col 1:17).

As you think about these truths of sanctuary above, **which one speaks most clearly to you today?** As you begin to *Enter the Sanctuary* through these online devotionals, **what truths do you want take with you?**

Close by writing a prayer to God. Focus on the things God has spoken to you during your study of "sanctuary" – things that you want to remember. Thank God for these insights and commit 2023 to Him.