

The Tabernacle in the Wilderness

by

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CHAPTER TEN

The Blood-Sprinkled Mercy Seat

PLEASE TURN IN YOUR BIBLES WITH ME TO EXODUS 25:17-22. And may I give you this word that if you'll listen carefully and heed the teaching contained herein, I can guarantee that your thinking will never go astray from basic Christian doctrine. The teaching concerning the blood-sprinkled Mercy Seat is basic, foundational, and eternal.

THE REASON FOR ITS GREAT VALUE

Now the Ark of the Covenant located in the Holy of Holies, was shaped like a chest and contained three things: the law of GOD written on two tables of stone, the golden pot of manna, and Aaron's rod that budded. [86]

The covering or lid of this chest was the blood-sprinkled Mercy Seat. Exodus 25:17 declares that it was to be made of pure gold. Thus it had a greater value than the golden Altar of Incense which was made of wood overlaid with gold. Being made of solid gold, the Mercy Seat's value is estimated to have been around \$60,000 in present day value (1955).

However the great value of the Mercy Seat lay not in its solid gold. Rather it derived from the shed blood of the sacrificial lamb that was sprinkled upon it yearly on the Day of Atonement.

The Overshadowing Cherubim, likewise made of solid gold, and part and parcel with the Mercy Seat itself, were made always to look, not at the pure gold, but at the shed blood sprinkled on the Mercy Seat. (See Exodus 25:20).

These Cherubim, guardians of the holiness of GOD, help us to realize that "**we are not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ**" (I Peter 1:18, 18). They help us to learn, along with Paul, to "**know nothing among us save Jesus Christ and Him crucified**" (I Corinthians 2:2).

A PROPITIATORY COVERING

Let us consider the significance of the word "**mercy**."

The basic meaning of the words "**mercy seat**" is "*propitiatory covering*." [87]

Since this is a big word but very necessary to help you understand the meaning of the Mercy Seat, it would be well for you to write it on the margin of your Bible opposite Exodus 25:17.

This propitiatory covering (Mercy Seat) covered the law, or the Ten Commandments, which were written on two tables of stone and placed inside the Ark of the Covenant.

Now GOD's wrath "**is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men**" (Romans 1:18). GOD has wrath against sinful men because they have transgressed His law, which is the revelation of His standard of righteousness. Since we are children of wrath by nature (Ephesians 2:3), there would be no hope for us if the way of salvation consisted in living up to GOD's standard of righteousness as given in the law. Were there no propitiatory covering for our sins, we would all fall immediately into the hands of the Almighty GOD of wrath.

A good illustration of this truth is to be found in I Samuel, chapter 6. We read that the Philistines had captured the Ark of the Covenant and had carried it away from the children of Israel. Then verse 19 says, " . . . **He [GOD] smote the men of Bethshemesh because they had looked into the ark of the Lord, even He smote of the people fifty thousand and threescore and ten men** . . . "

Why had GOD slain over fifty thousand men? Because some of their number had had the audacity to peer into the Ark and behold the law without the protection of the intervening propitiatory covering!

And the same fate will befall you, my friend, if you try to save yourself by living according to the law, without trusting completely and solely in CHRIST Who alone kept the law perfectly and Whose shed blood is that which propitiates the wrath of Almighty GOD. [88]

To everyone who seeks to be saved by keeping the law GOD says, " . . . **Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.**" (Galatians 3:10) Likewise in James 2:10 he says, "**For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.**"

If you try to save yourself by living according to the law now, you must someday face the GOD of wrath who will judge you on the basis of that law, and you will be punished by eternal separation.

CHRIST IS OUR PROPITIATORY COVERING

But there is no need for you to make futile efforts to save yourself by the law.

It is not necessary that you stand before GOD as judge and be sentenced to an eternal hell.

For we read in Romans 3:25 that "**God set forth Christ to be a propitiation for our sins.**"

CHRIST is the propitiatory covering so that no man needs to face the wrath of Almighty GOD.

Again in I John 4:10 we read, ". . . **God . . . loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.**" Also in I John 2:2, we read that CHRIST is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

Now you remember the publican's prayer recorded in Luke 18:13. [89]

In contrast with the self-righteous Pharisee who had the audacity to think that he had lived up to GOD's righteous standard of the law, the poor publican with deep humility would not so much as lift up his eyes to Heaven but smote his breast saying, "**God be merciful to me a sinner.**"

That word "**merciful**" comes from the same word that signifies "**Mercy Seat,**" or "*propitiatory covering.*"

Hence what the publican really meant when he said this was, "GOD be a propitiatory covering for me who is a sinner."

Our own righteousness is as filthy rags, but if we take CHRIST to be our propitiatory covering we will be clothed in the bridal dress of His righteousness. (Isaiah 61:10).

So kneel down by your radio there, sinning friend of mine, and pray the publican's prayer in faith believing: "GOD, I accept JESUS CHRIST as my propitiatory covering."

Yes, "**God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.**"

There is no need for you to face the wrath of GOD at the judgment of the great white throne, for GOD has provided a propitiatory covering for your sins in the person of His Son JESUS CHRIST. The door of salvation is still open; why will you wait, dear brother? Now is the day of salvation, now is the accepted time! So come and accept GOD's merciful provision for you! [90]

~ end of chapter 10 ~

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