

“MAN’S MISERY AND GOD’S MERCY”

or

“MAN’S NEED AND GOD’S DEED”

(Exodus 25:1-22)

Every major world religion has a “sense of sacred space,” or a sense of sacred *place*. Buddhists have their massive and beautiful temples, as do other eastern religions. Roman Catholics have the Vatican, as well as great church buildings all over the world, which they regard as sacred. Orthodox Jews look to the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem, as well as to their local synagogues. Muslims have their mosques, with some regarded as more sacred than others, but with all regarded as special places. The reason for this is territorial. The building of an Islamic mosque is a claim to the surrounding territory around the building; it says, This territory is ours. This is a great part of their strategy of advance. They build a mosque, though they may have few followers in the community. Then they invite the community to come in for an explanation of who they are and why they are there. Also, they try to purchase the land surrounding the mosque and begin immediately to rename the streets and avenues with Muslim names, thus further advertising their religion.

Only evangelical Christians do not have a strong sense of sacred place. The reason for this is Biblical. Evangelical Christians take these Scriptures seriously: I Peter 1:4, which says, “You (believers) are lively stones”—because of your association with Jesus, the Living Stone, and that association has made you like Him. Also, He wants to take the lively stones comprised of His followers, and He wants to build a House in which His Father may reside within a community. I Corinthians 3:16 says, “Know ye not that ye are the Temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?” Don’t confuse this passage with a similar-sounding (but quite different) passage in I Corinthians 6:18-20. The passage in chapter 3 has plural pronouns in it: “ye...ye...you.” The plural means “all of you.” So Paul is not talking about the individual Christian in chapter 3; he is talking about the entire church of believers in Corinth. However, in chapter 6, he does use the singular pronoun, thus speaking of the individual believer. “Know ye not that your body is the Temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you, which you have of Him, and you are not your own, for you are bought with a price. Therefore, glorify God in your body and your spirit, which are God’s.” The most important feature of these verses is the use of the word “Temple” in describing a Church and a Christian’s body. In the Greek language, there are two different words which may be translated “Temple.” One is the Greek word *hieron*, which is the word for the total property on which the church building rests. The other is the word *naos*, which is the Greek word for “the Holy of Holies” in the Jewish Temple. The word that is used in both I Corinthians 3:16 and I Corinthians 6:19 is the word for the Holy of Holies. What a wealth of insight this provides about the place of worship, the sacredness of it, the responsibility the worshipper has, etc. It means that *your body, Christian, is the most sacred spot on earth*

to God! Ephesians 2:19-22, Paul speaks of the church as “an habitation of the Spirit.” That is, every body of believers is to be a dwelling-place, a residence, for God to live in. After all, what is a temple for? It is a dwelling-place, a residence, a shrine, for a god to live in. For what purpose? To exhibit that god to the community surrounding the temple in which he dwells. This is what a Christian’s body is to God. It is a dwelling-place, a residence, a habitation, a shrine, for our God to live in so that He may publicize Himself to the surrounding community through that temple. This is the Christian teaching about sacred space, or a sacred place. *My brothers and sisters in Christ, do we not need to give much more attention to this truth, and make some radical adjustments to it?* Because many Christians are too obtuse to see such truths, or too introverted or indifferent to study the riches of God’s Word, let me be explicit at this point. One of the first needs of a temple is *maintenance*. Is the typical Christian giving adequate attention to temple maintenance with regard to the temple of his body, which is God’s Holy of Holies? I am convicted by my own words at this point.

In our text for this study, God gave instructions for the building of a sacred place in which He was to dwell among His people. In Exodus 25:8, God said, “Let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. According to all that I show you, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of the instruments thereof, even so shall you make it.” Note that God’s motivation in these instructions was *relational*—He intended to dwell among His people for the purpose of fellowship and communion with them. Note, too, that He called this building “the tabernacle,” a name which we have used for the building since His announcement. Furthermore, He mentioned “the instruments” of the building, the furniture of the building which He intended to be put to specific use for His intended purposes to be fulfilled. He spoke of that furniture as *instrumental* and not merely *decorative*. So one of the primary tasks confronting any student of the tabernacle is to discover what the furniture is and what it was to be used for.

The instructions for the building of the ark are found in Exodus 25:10-16. The instructions for the building of the entire building are scattered through the next chapters. I would like to state some identifications in order to understand the typology of the tabernacle. The word “typology” comes from the Greek word *tupos*, which means *an exact impress*, or a *pattern*; Old Testaments pictures of New Testament truth—such as the tabernacle—are called “types.”. You may follow these rules in studying the typology of the tabernacle:

Gold always represents Deity
Silver always represents redemption
Brass always represents (sin under) judgment
Blue always represents heaven or the heavenly
Purple always represents royalty
Scarlet always represents sacrifice
Fine linen always represents righteousness
Wood (acacia) always represents humanity
Oil always represents the Holy Spirit

To anticipate, *gold* and *wood* are often joined in the building of the tabernacle, representing the dual nature of Christ (both Divine and human). The foundational sockets on which the tabernacle rested were made of *silver* which “every man gave as a ransom for his soul unto the Lord” (Exodus 30:12). That is, silver represents redemption, the redemption of the soul unto God. *The entire economy of God is built on a foundation of redemption*—just like the tabernacle. The *brass* altar represents sin brought under God’s judgment at the Cross, and the *brass* laver represents the Christian’s daily self-judgment (and the resultant cleansing) of his own sins by examining himself in the mirror of the Word of God. The *blue* of the curtains represents the heavenly nature of Christ as the Son of God. The *purple* curtains represent Jesus as rightful King of kings, the sovereign ruler of the universe. The *scarlet* curtains represent Jesus as the Suffering Servant who shed His blood for sinners at Calvary. The appearance of *fine linen* in the instructions for the tabernacle or the priesthood represents the righteousness of Christ’s nature and the righteousness with which he “dresses” or covers sinners when they trust Him for salvation. *Wood* in the tabernacle is a picture of the human nature of Jesus. Finally, *oil* (and especially *flowing* oil, or *functioning* oil) represents (as usual in Scripture) the Person and work of God the Holy Spirit. You will find unbelievable insights and blessings if you will study the tabernacle with these clues before you, and it is a limitless and delightful study! I have periodically “dipped into” the tabernacle accounts in the Old Testament and in the book of Hebrews for over fifty years now, and I have always been unspeakably blessed by the riches of the study. I would urge every reader of this study to “begin chasing the message” of the tabernacle *today*.

It is most interesting that the piece of furniture that was actually *farthest in* the tabernacle was described *first* as God gave instructions for its building. (See the diagram of the tabernacle and this will become clear). The ark of the covenant, which was placed near the rear of the building, was actually described first. Why? Why is the *last* piece of furniture in the building dealt with *first* in the description of the building? The answer: Because it is the *most important* piece of furniture in the entire building. The importance of the ark is further emphasized by the fact that the term appears over 180 times throughout Scripture.

The instructions for the building of the ark are found in Exodus 25:10-16. Someone called the ark “God’s Treasure Chest of Blessings.” Personally, I do not believe its installation in the tabernacle was merely to picture God’s blessings; its *primary* purpose was to expose God’s controversy with man. The ark exposes *man’s mishandling and abuse* of God’s blessings. This is the reason that such a staggering transaction of grace, atonement and propitiation had to take place *above the ark*. The content of the ark exposed two things: *Christ’s human perfection* and *man’s disgrace*, and these are placed together to show the radical contrast between the two. This shows the crucial importance of the transaction that occurred on the top of the ark (the mercy-seat), a transaction which exposes *God’s amazing grace*. Let’s prayerfully examine the two pieces of furniture and the transaction of grace and mercy that occurred there.

I. Boxed In! (The Ark of the Covenant)

First, we will examine *the ark of the covenant*. The ark of the covenant and the mercy seat which was on top of it were the last two pieces of furniture in the tabernacle, placed in the compartment at the back, the “Holy of Holies.” The instructions for building the ark are specified in Exodus 25:1-16, which says,

“And they shall make an ark of acacia wood: two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof, and a cubit and a half the height thereof. And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, within and without shalt thou overlay it, and shalt make upon it a crown of gold round about. And thou shalt cast four rings of gold for it, and put them in the four corners thereof; and two rings shall be in the one side of it, and two rings in the other side of it. And thou shalt make staves of acacia wood, and overlay them with gold. And thou shalt put the staves into the rings by the sides of the ark, that the ark may be borne with them. The staves shall be in the rings of the ark: they shall not be taken from it. And thou shalt put into the ark the testimony which I shall give thee.”

The ark of the covenant was little more than an elaborate small box or container. Hebrews 9:5 summarizes the content of the ark with these words: “The Holiest of all...had the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron’s rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant.” Note the three things that were in the ark.

Let’s begin our study of the ark of the covenant by examining its *construction*. *The ark was the focal point of the entire tabernacle*, and we must be very careful as we examine it. After all, God had again and again (and again) told Moses to make every piece of furniture in the tabernacle exactly according to the specifications He gave. For example, in Exodus 25:40, God said, “And look that you make them after their pattern, which was showed you in the mount.” So what were the specifications for the ark?

The first specification was this: “You shall make an ark of acacia wood” (Exodus 25:10). If you will glance back up the pages of this study and look at the clues I stated for studying the materials of the tabernacle, you will see that wood represents the humanity of Christ. So the ark represents *the human life of Jesus on earth*. What is contained in this ark was perfectly exemplified in the Life of Christ on earth. He lived by the Provision of God (represented by the golden pot of manna) and the Power of God (represented by Aaron’s rod that budded), and fulfilled the Prescriptions of the total law of God (represented by the tables of the Law). We will explain each of these articles shortly; it is enough to know just now that they were enclosed in a box of wood which represents the pure humanity of Jesus Christ. It also allows us to see *the failure of our own humanity* as we study the three things in the ark.

Then, there was a second specification for building the ark, and it is absolutely overwhelming in its meaning. Exodus 25:11 says, “And you shall overlay it (the ark)

with pure gold, within and without shall you overlay it.” The wood of the ark was completely covered up—before and behind, front and back, “within and without,” with gold. *There was no wood showing.* What is the meaning of this? Though Jesus was perfectly human (and humanly perfect), His humanity was overlaid here by His Deity so that His humanity is not displayed so much as His Deity! How stimulating this should be to the mind of the spiritual Christian! The ark and mercy seat picture something so Divine that it is the *Divine* act that is clearly visible here (though His humanity is totally and fully involved). The transaction that took place here shows the Lord Jesus in a different way from all that has been previously seen in the outer furniture of the tabernacle. We will try to look at the other pictures in another study. The presence of the acacia wood in the construction of the ark is an admission that His humanity was involved (it was the human Jesus who lived and died) in the transaction, but the hiding of the wood under a full covering of gold clearly calls attention to His Deity and to the Divine nature of the things that are pictured here. No wonder God told Moses again and again (and again) to “build the tabernacle exactly according to the pattern that I will show you.” Even the slightest error at any point would have violated the meaning God intended to show to us in His portable tent. This is the way the ark was constructed.

Now we will examine the *contents* of the ark of the covenant. According to Scripture, there were three smaller articles in the box which was called the ark of the covenant.

The first article mentioned was “the golden pot of manna.” Note that the container was made of gold. This pictures the *Divine* provision made in the manna. Read Exodus 16 for the explanation of the manna, and then read John 6 to see Jesus’ further explanation of *Himself* as “the Bread of God sent down from heaven to give life to the world.” The manna is a type of Christ as God’s Provision of Sustenance for every person on earth. I will show the importance of this and its relation to the other two articles in the ark in a chart which will be presented later in this study.

The second article mentioned was “Aaron’s rod that budded.” The background for this article may be seen by studying Numbers 16 and 17. Those chapters record the power-struggle between tribal leaders in the nation of Israel to control the priestly office (thus supposedly controlling man’s approach to God!). In Numbers 16, three leaders, Korah, Dathan and Abiram led a rebellion against Moses and against God to gain the power of the priesthood. God answered with a strategy to settle the struggle once and for all. Moses was to receive a rod (representing leadership) from a leader of each of the tribes of Israel, and the name of the tribe was to be written on each rod. The labeled rods were then placed in the Tabernacle before the ark for an overnight test. God then said to Moses, “And it will come to pass that the rod of the leader whom I choose will sprout or bud. In this manner, I will end the grumbings of the tribal leaders of Israel, who are grumbling against you.” The next morning, this startling discovery was made: “Behold, the rod of Aaron of the house of Levi had sprouted and put forth buds and produced blossoms, and it bore ripe almonds” (Numbers 17:8). Then, in Numbers 17:10, Moses was commanded to “put back the rod of Aaron before the testimony to be kept,” and that is the reason for its placement in the ark of the covenant in the tabernacle. What a world

of instruction is here! The almond tree was known as “the awakening tree,” because it was the first tree to put out its blooms in the early spring. And here, the buds and blossoms and ripe fruit come overnight out of a dead rod, *a picture of the power of God in resurrection*. The lessons here are many, and one of them is that this is a clear type of the resurrection of Jesus Christ (remember that it is contained in the symbol of His Divine-human nature)! And just as God authorized His chosen leader among the tribes of Israel for the priesthood (Aaron of the tribe of Levi) by the rod that budded, so God authorized Jesus by raising Him alone from the dead. What a picture this is! But let’s stay with the story. This is the second article mentioned as present in the ark of the covenant.

The final article of furniture mentioned in the ark of the covenant was “the tables of the testimony,” that is, the Ten Commandments. This was the most important of the three articles in the ark of the covenant. This was actually the *second* tablet of the Ten Commandments, rewritten by the finger of God after Moses had dashed the first tablet to the ground and broken it in disgust over the people’s sins. This is the Law of God which James later called “the perfect law” (James 1:25). Paul agreed when he wrote, “The law is holy, and the commandment is hold and righteous and good” (Romans 7:12). The law is simply the transcript of God’s holy character. But we must keep in mind that, though man flatters himself to think that he more or less keeps the law and that God will probably “grade on the curve” and let him off, the truth is that “the law came in that the transgression might increase” (Romans 5:20). It is God’s perfect standard expressed in the law that reveals our sin and our guilt. James 2:10 says, “For whosoever shall keep the whole law and yet offend (stumbles) in just one point, he has become guilty of all.” Ponder this verse carefully. The law is one unit, and if you break any part of it, you have fractured the entire law and have become a lawbreaker, guilty of breaking all of it. This is extremely serious reality! And remember again that these tablets of the perfect law were contained in the box that represents the Divine-human nature of Jesus, thus suggesting that He perfectly kept the law of God.

Now let me show you the problem for man that is presented in this entire picture of the ark of the covenant. Here is a chart that will help us to see the problem:

<u>The Golden Pot of Manna</u>		<u>Aaron’s Rod that Budded</u>		<u>The Tables of the Law</u>
The Provision of God	--	The Power of Life out of Death	--	The Rules for Living, and the Penalty for Sin if they are Broken
God’s Resources	--	God’s Rule	--	God’s Regulations
The Supply of Christ	--	The Sovereignty of Christ	--	The Sinlessness of Christ
Man <i>rejected</i> it	--	Man <i>refused</i> it	--	Man <i>rebelled</i> against the Law

Let me try to explain the chart. First, the three pieces of furniture in the ark reveal God’s resources made available to man, God’s right to rule over man (authorized by the

resurrection of Christ), and God's necessary reprisal against man's failure to keep His law. In each case, we see a type of Christ. He *is* God's sustenance for spiritually starving man. His Lordship is the only issue of God's rule among men, again validated by His resurrection from the dead. He alone has perfectly kept all the requirements of God's law, and thus in His sinless character, is qualified to be man's redeemer. *Ah, but notice man's response to each of these blessings from God. Man has categorically failed on every front, rejecting and abusing God's blessings!* Think of the way Israel sinfully rejected the manna, murmuring and complaining that they should have a better diet! Think of the way man has refused even the risen Saviour, as if a resurrection from the dead makes no difference at all! Think of the way man has rebelled against the absolutes of God's Holy Law, favoring instead the relativity of his own chosen course. Thus, he has derailed the very train which he has chosen to ride to his hoped-for destination, and now his destination is proving to be beyond his reach and the wreckage is beginning to pile up everywhere!

So what is the meaning of this ark of the covenant? It represents God's conditional covenant with man—and man has failed to meet the conditions in every category! *So that little compartment is there to show that **God has boxed man in.*** That box will prove to be *man's casket* unless something happens to rescue him. But there is Good News! Here is the Gospel: God has made full and perfect provision to rescue man from his horrible and deadly failure! ***This is the reason that the transaction that occurred above the ark is the clear picture and perfect illustration of the most important transaction that has ever occurred.*** Let's look now at the piece of furniture that was fitted on top of the ark of the covenant, and the incredible and marvelous Divine act that occurred there.

II. Blood-covered! (The Mercy Seat)

Above the ark of the covenant and attached firmly to it was a solid gold lid called the "mercy seat." The instructions for building it were stated in these words in Exodus 25:17-22:

"And thou shalt make a mercy seat of pure gold: two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof. And thou shalt make two cherubims of gold, of beaten work shalt thou make them, in the two ends of the mercy seat. And make one cherub on the one end, and the other cherub on the other end: even of the mercy seat shall ye make the cherubims on the two ends thereof. And the cherubims shall stretch forth their wings on high, covering the mercy seat with their wings, and their faces shall look one to another; toward the mercy seat shall the faces of the cherubims be. And thou shalt put the mercy seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee. And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel."

“There I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat.” So the mercy seat could be called the throne of God in the tabernacle, the place where the God of glory met with His people. The mercy seat was a slab of solid gold, which fitted exactly inside the crown which rimmed the top of the ark of the covenant. The figures of two cherubim (an order of angels) were placed at the two ends of the mercy seat, extensions of the same slab of gold that formed the mercy seat. The figures of the two cherubim were facing each other, their wingtips touching at the top as they leaned over the mercy seat, their faces and eyes looking down upon the mercy seat. They represented heaven’s surveillance of the scene that took place below.

The mercy seat was made of pure gold. Remember that gold represents Deity. The mercy seat represents the Divine provision which God made in the Divine Christ for our salvation. The Greek word translated “mercy seat” means “satisfaction” or “propitiation.” There is no more important word in the economy of God and of grace than the word “propitiation.” This word is prominent in one of the greatest passages in the Bible, Romans 3:23-26, which says, “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.” A great Bible scholar called this “the Acropolis of the Bible.” In a passage replete with great words, there is none greater than the word “propitiation.” While most of the words of the Bible which refer to the work accomplished on the Cross refer to *manward* works, this word refers to a *Godward* work accomplished by the Death of Christ on the Cross. The Greek word is *hilasterion*, which can be translated either “mercy-seat” or “propitiation.” The word “propitiate” means to “pacify” or “appease.” You see, when man sinned, something was aroused within the character of God against sin and sinners that could never have been pacified or appeased except by the death of those who had sinned or by the death of Jesus on the Cross as a substitute for those who had sinned.

Let me explore the meaning of this word by a series of propositions: (1) A very serious *offence* has been committed against the God of heaven by man’s sin. An infinite crime has been committed against an infinitely Holy God by man’s sin. (2) The serious *offender* is each human being—and each offender is fully identified with his sin. Thus, each sinner has made himself to be God’s antagonist, God’s opponent, God’s enemy. There is no neutral human being on earth. Every human being, because he is a sinner, is at war with God. This is the meaning of Romans 3:23, “For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.” (3) The seriously *Offended One* (God) has seriously reacted against the offence committed against Him. Just as no man is neutral toward God, God is not neutral toward sin. God is the most morally committed Person in the universe, and God has a grievance against sinners because of their sins. If He did not have such a reaction, He simply would not be Holy, and if He were not Holy, He would not be God. God’s reaction against sin is described in such passages as these: “The *wrath of God* is (stands) revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness” (Romans 1:18). The word “wrath” is the most

forceful word used in the Bible to picture God's attitude toward sin. Note that every sinner "suppresses" ("holds down" and stifles) the truth with every sin he commits. Note, too, that the wrath of God is His fixed and unchanging reaction to every sin. *God always hates sin, and His reaction to it has never varied. His wrath is expressed constantly and continually against (against) sin.* In John 3:36, Jesus said, "He who believes on the Son has everlasting life, but he who believes not the Son shall not see life, but *the wrath of God abides on him.*" "***The wrath of God ABIDES on him.***" This is the fixed and unchanging state of every sinner—100% of the time! If He refuses to be saved, God simply progressively withdraws from him (the ultimate token of His wrath) and leaves him to continue on to eternal doom. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God"! These truths could easily lead sinful human beings to despair, but that is to stop without hearing "the rest of the story." (4) A serious *offering* has been made *by God Himself* to absorb and divert His own wrath so that it will not reach the sinner. Instead, the wrath is turned aside to fall upon an Innocent Substitute who takes the sinner's place. The Substitute takes the sinner's sin and receives the full and just wrath of God against that sin. This indicates that God has dealt with His own wrath. He gave His dear Son to die, and Christ's death has averted the just judgment of God that should have fallen upon us as sinners. This is the meaning of propitiation. The Holiness and Justice of God are pacified, and the wrath of God is exhausted upon the substitute. When this occurs, three things have happened:

Justice is totally exacted upon the Substitute
Wrath is fully exhausted upon the Substitute
Mercy is justly extended to the guilty sinner

What a Gospel! Just today, I read this great paragraph concerning the substitutionary work of my Savior: "Christ's saving work is not really like the prison chaplain stepping up to go to the electric chair so that the prisoner can go free. For the prisoner may not have to die. The law could be changed, or the governor could pardon the prisoner, if he were merciful enough. God, the governor of the universe, is more merciful than any. *But justice demands payment—and will have it.* Christ's salvation is more like someone interposing himself between a speeding bullet and its intended victim. The only way to *save* the victim is to *be* the victim. Christ interposes Himself between us and the Divine lightning of justice. The lightning strikes Him instead of us. It's either us or Him, and the Good News is that it's *Him*. But the Good News, the Gospel, makes no sense without justice, without somebody having to endure it. Once the lightning bolt of truth and justice is shot out from heaven, there's no stopping it. We decided to build our house of wood and hay and stubble, but lightning will destroy such a house. The lightning has been loosed and it will strike the house! The only way to save us is for Christ to lash Himself to our house as a lightning rod and take the lightning bolt Himself. The incarnation is His tying Himself to our humanity; His death is His taking the bolt of justice. The bolt is unstoppable. So we can see both the good news and the bad news of the Gospel of Christ. The bad news is that 'all have sinned' and 'the wages of sin is death.' That is simply the justice and holiness of God in inevitable action. You may be a scoffing sinner, but you will realize all too soon that you have made a tragic and eternal miscalculation about the Holiness, justice and wrath of God, as well as about His Love,

Mercy and Grace. The Good News is that ‘the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.’ That is simply the Love and Grace of God providing God’s Mercy to overmatch man’s misery!”

Now, back to the mercy seat which rests on the top of the ark of the covenant in the tabernacle. How is propitiation pictured there? One time every year, the appointed high priest of Israel laid his hands on the hands of an innocent bull and confessed the sins of the entire nation of Israel. This symbolically pictured the transfer of the sins of Israel to this innocent animal so that the animal could die for the nation’s sins. Then Aaron killed the bull on the brazen altar inside the east gate of the tabernacle. (Remember that brass represents sin under judgment). The bull was offered as a substitutionary sacrifice for the entire nation of Israel. Then the high priest gathered some of the bull’s blood in a basin and went to the Holy of Holies (the compartment at the back of the tabernacle where the ark of the covenant and the mercy seat waited). Entering beside the veil which separated the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies, he “entered into the Presence of God” to present the blood of atonement for sinners. This was the most serious moment in Israel’s annual history; life, death and eternity were at stake, and eternal destinies were decided here. When he reached the ark and the mercy seat, he sprinkled the blood on the golden mercy seat, *interposing the blood* over the symbols of fallen and failing man (the golden pot of manna, Aaron’s rod that budded, and *especially the tables containing the Ten Commandments, which man has shattered by his sins*). So the wrath which man’s sin deserves is diverted to the innocent sacrifice and the covering blood is placed over the sinner. ***The Substitute justly dies as He takes man’s sins upon Himself, and man is justly forgiven because of his place under the sheltering blood. Hallelujah! What a Gospel! Praise God for Jesus! What a Savior!***