

**Free Internet Sample of What The Bible Says About The Tabernacle,  
Chapter 2, The Ark**

**WHAT THE  
BIBLE SAYS... *about***

**THE  
TABERNACLE**

(ITS MESSAGE FOR TODAY)

**LEADERSHIP  
MINISTRIES  
WORLDWIDE**

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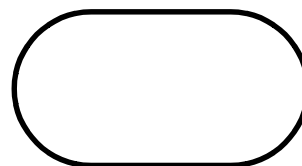
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# The Ark or Chest of God: The Symbol of the Very Throne and Presence of God (Exodus 25:10-22)

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<p><b>The Ark, the sacred throne &amp; chest of God Himself</b></p> <p>To make it of acacia wood</p> <p>To make it 3¾' x 2¼' x 2¼' (1.1 meters by .07 meters by .07 meters)</p> <p>To overlay it with pure gold (inside &amp; out) &amp; to use a pure gold molding</p> <p>To cast four gold rings &amp; attach them to the four corners of the Ark</p> <p>To make two poles of acacia wood &amp; overlay them with gold</p> <p>To insert the poles into the gold rings on the Ark for the purpose of carrying it: The poles were never to be removed</p>	<p>10 And they shall make an ark of shittim 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.</p> <p>11 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.</p> <p>12 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.</p> <p>13 And thou shalt make staves of shittim wood, and overlay them with gold.</p> <p>14 And thou shalt put the staves into the rings by the sides of the ark, that the ark may be borne with them.</p>	<p>15 The staves shall be in the rings of the ark: they shall not be taken from it.</p> <p>16 And thou shalt put into the ark the testimony which I shall give thee.</p> <p>17 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.</p> <p>18 And thou shalt make two cherubims of gold, of beaten work shalt thou make them, in the two ends of the mercy seat.</p> <p>19 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.</p> <p>20 And the cherubims shall stretch forth their wings on high, covering the mercy seat with their wings, and their faces shall</p>	<p>g. To put the Testimony of God, the Ten Commandments, into the Ark (cp. v.21)</p> <p><b>2. The Mercy Seat or Atonement Cover for the Ark</b></p> <p>To make it of pure gold</p> <p>To make it 3¾' long by 2¼' wide (1.1 meters by .07 meters)</p> <p>To make two cherubim at the two ends of the Mercy Seat</p> <p>1) To be made by hammering out the gold</p> <p>2) To hammer out one cherub at one end of the Mercy Seat &amp; the other cherub at the other end</p> <p>3) To spread the wings of the cherubim upward, overshadowing the Mercy Seat</p> <p>4) To have the cherubim facing</p>
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each other, looking toward the Mercy Seat	look one to another; toward the mercy seat shall the faces of the cherubims be.	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.	mandments) was kept, the place for special instruction
d. To place the Mercy Seat on top of the Ark	21 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.		b. To be the place where God met with His people
<b>3. The purpose for the Ark</b>	22 And there I will		c. To be the place where God's mercy was symbolized
a. To be the place where God's testimony (the 10 com-			d. To be the place where God would instruct & guide His people

Most of us have a place, or would like to have a place, where we can get all alone and be quiet, a place where we can think, work through problems, meditate, or pray. The place may be some room, an office, a corner, a porch, a backyard, an alley, a field, a forest—it does not matter where. It is hallowed, meaningful ground to us.

The Tabernacle was something like this to the Israelite believer. The Tabernacle was to be the place—the very special place—where God's people came to meet Him, seeking...

- His presence
- His forgiveness
- His guidance
- His help
- His strength

This is what this passage is all about: it spells out the most important piece of furniture in the Tabernacle, that of the Ark of God, the symbol of the very presence and throne of God (1 Sam.4:4; 2 Sam.6:2). More than anything else, the Ark of God pictured the presence of God, His glory and mercy. The Tabernacle drew people to approach God for help; but it was knowing that the Ark of God, God's holy presence, sat in the midst of the Tabernacle that especially drew them. This is the subject of this important passage: *The Ark or Chest of God: the Symbol of the Very Throne of God, Ex.25:10-22.*

- I. The Ark, the sacred throne and chest of God Himself (v.10-16).
- II. The Mercy Seat or Atonement Cover for the Ark (v.17-21).
- III. The purpose for the Ark (v.21-22).

## I. There Were the Instructions to Build the Ark of God, the Sacred Throne and Chest of God Himself (v.10-16).

The Ark was the most important piece of furniture in the Tabernacle. The Ark was to represent...

- the throne and presence of God Himself (1 Sam.4:4; 2 Sam.6:2)
- the Mercy Seat of God
- the place where the testimony of God, the Ten Commandments, was kept

Nothing could be any more important to the people than the Ark of God. Why? Because it was to be the very place where God Himself was to meet with them. God would rule and instruct them, have mercy and forgive them, guide and help them—all from the Ark. As they walked day by day through the *wilderness journey*, He would take care of them as they marched toward the promised land of God. The Ark of God was to become the most precious meeting place between God and His dear people. It was to be hallowed and holy ground, a very special place. This was to be especially true to the believer who loved God and was faithful in his worship of God.

The Ark was the centerpiece of the Tabernacle. Every part of the Tabernacle and every piece of furniture pointed toward and focused attention upon the Ark of God, the very place where God focused His presence. As long as the Tabernacle existed—in fact, up until Solomon's temple—God focused His presence upon the Ark of the Covenant. This is the reason the room where it was kept is called the *Holy of Holies* or *The Most Holy Place*.

Historically, the Ark of God was the most important piece of furniture to the Israelites. Its significance is emphasized in that it is mentioned over 200 times in the Bible. The Ark is called different names throughout Scripture:

- ⇒ The Ark (Ex.25:14)
- ⇒ The Ark of the LORD (1 Sam.4:6)
- ⇒ The Ark of God (1 Sam.4:18)
- ⇒ The Ark of the Testimony (referring to the great testimony of God given to man, the Ten Commandments) (Ex.25:22)
- ⇒ The Ark of the Covenant of God (referring to the great covenant of God made with man, the Ten Commandments) (Judg.20:27)
- ⇒ The Ark of the LORD God (1 Ki.2:26)

Now note the instructions for building the Ark, how detailed they are. The plan and design were exact, precise.

1. The Ark was to be made of acacia wood (v.10): a hard, durable wood, resistant to weather and insects.
2. The Ark was to be a box-like or chest-like structure: 3¾' long x 2¼' wide x 2¼' high (1.1 meters by .07 meters by .07 meters) (v.10).
3. The Ark was to be overlaid with pure gold both inside and out, and it was to have a gold molding around the rim (v.11).
4. The Ark was to have four gold rings attached to its four lower corners at the base of the ark (v.12).
5. The Ark was to have two strong poles made of acacia wood overlaid with gold (v.13).
6. The poles were to be slid into the gold rings on the Ark for the purpose of carrying it (v.14). And note: once inserted, the poles were never to be removed. They were a permanent part of the Ark of God.
7. The *Testimony of God*, the stone tablets of God's covenant (the Ten Commandments), was to be placed into the Ark.

### **Thought 1.**

The one thing we need throughout life is the presence of God. We need:

- ⇒ God's care and love
- ⇒ God's guidance and help
- ⇒ God's mercy and forgiveness
- ⇒ God's rule and instructions

**“And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of” (Gen.28:15; cp. Ex.33:14; Josh.1:5).**

**“When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee” (Is.43:2).**

**“Lo, I am with you alway, [even] unto the end of the world. Amen” (Mt.28:20; cp. Jn.14:18; Heb.13:5).**

### **Thought 2.**

There are three arks mentioned in Scripture, and all three were used by God to save His people.

- a) There was *Noah's ark*, the ark that God used to save Noah and his family from the terrible judgment of the flood. (See Gen.7:1-9.)
- b) There was *Moses' ark*, the ark that God used to save baby Moses from the holocaust launched by Pharaoh against the newborn babies of the Israelites. (See Ex.2:1-10.)
- c) There was the Ark of God, the Ark of the Covenant, that had the Mercy Seat sitting on top of it. The mercy of God was pictured (symbolized) as flowing out upon God's people, flowing out from the Mercy Seat. Salvation flowed out to the people from the presence and mercy of God, from the Mercy Seat and Ark of God.

**“And thou shalt put the mercy seat above upon the ark...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” (Ex.25:21-22).**

**“And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Acts 2:21).**

**“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Ro.10:13; cp. Tit.2:11-13).**

**“The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (2 Pt.3:9).**

## **II. There Was the Mercy Seat or Atonement Cover for the Ark (v.17-21).**

The Hebrew word for “Mercy Seat” (kapporeth) means *covering* or *atonement*. The idea is that of the covering of sins, of atonement or reconciliation being made possible by the mercy of God. Forgiveness and reconciliation were made possible because the blood of the sacrifice (propitiation) was sprinkled upon the Mercy Seat once a year on the Day of Atonement.

The root word for “Mercy Seat” or “Atonement Cover” (kapporeth) comes from *kaphar* which means...

- to cover
- to make atonement, to reconcile
- to appease, placate, cancel, annul
- to cleanse, forgive, pardon, purge away, put off

This root word has a rich meaning in relation to the Mercy Seat.<sup>1</sup> It is at the Mercy Seat...

- that God covers man's sin
- that God cleanses, forgives, pardons, purges away, and puts off man's sin
- that God makes atonement and reconciles man to Himself
- that God's wrath is appeased, placated, canceled, annulled

The importance of the Mercy Seat in picturing the mercy of God cannot be overstressed. Various commentators say this:

The Pulpit Commentary says:

“The truth is that *kapporeth*...never [has] any other sense than that of covering, or forgiving sins.”<sup>2</sup>

The Expositor's Bible Commentary says:

“The verb that lies behind the noun ‘atonement’ in the expression ‘atonement cover’ (v.17) means ‘to ransom or deliver by means of a substitute....The LXX [Greek Septuagint Version] has ‘propitiatory covering’ or ‘Mercy Seat,’ as does Hebrews 9:5 (NIV mg.). This place of expiating the sins of mankind is an adumbration [sketchy picture] of Christ's propitiatory work...and is at the heart of our worship of the one who died for us.”<sup>3</sup>

The NIV Study Bible says:

“*atonement*. Reconciliation, the divine act of grace whereby God draws to himself and makes ‘at one’ with him those who were once alienated from him. In the OT, the shed blood of sacrificial offerings effected atonement (see Lev 17:11 and note); in the NT, the blood of Jesus, shed once for all time, does the same (see Ro 3:25; 1Jn 2:2). *atonement cover*. See NIV text note; see also Lev 16:2 and note. That God's symbolic throne was capped with an atonement cover signified his great mercy toward his people—only such a God can be revered (see Ps 130:3-4).”<sup>4</sup>

F.B. Huey, Jr. says:

“‘Mercy seat’ comes from a word that means ‘to cover,’ hence ‘to provide reconciliation, atonement’.”<sup>5</sup>

Matthew Henry says:

“The mercy seat was the covering of the ark or chest, made of solid gold, exactly to fit the dimensions of the ark, v.17, 21. This *propitiatory covering*, as it might well be translated, was a type of Christ, the great propitiation, whose satisfaction fully answers the demands of the law, covers our transgressions, and comes between us and the curse we deserve. Thus he is the *end of the law for righteousness*.”<sup>6</sup>

Maxie Dunnam says:

“The rendered ‘mercy seat’ really means ‘a covering.’ This makes special reference to the forgiveness and covering of transgression and sin by the slain blood of the lamb. The same word occurs in the Greek in the New Testament, where we are told by the apostle Paul that the Father sent Christ to be a propitiation through faith, by His blood and in the passing over of sin.

“But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed....” *Rom. 3:21-25*

<sup>1</sup> James Strong. *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*. (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 1990), #3722, 3727.

<sup>2</sup> *Pulpit Commentary, Vol.1, Exodus*. Edited by H.D.M. Spence & Joseph S. Exell. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1950), p.249.

<sup>3</sup> Frank E. Gaebelin. *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, Vol. 2, p.455.

<sup>4</sup> *The NIV Study Bible*. (Grand Rapids, MI: The Zondervan Corporation, 1985), p.123.

<sup>5</sup> F.B. Huey, Jr. *A Study Guide Commentary, Exodus*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1977), p.107.

<sup>6</sup> Matthew Henry, *Matthew Henry's Commentary*, Vol. 1. (Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Co., No date given), p.383-384.

“We might translate that 25th verse in this fashion: ‘The redemption that is in Christ Jesus whom God set forth to be a mercy seat.’

“Isn’t that a beautiful term? A seat of mercy. Is there a more beautiful term in our language? Let it hang on your lip—mercy—mercy—mercy. More than that, be immersed in the meaning of it, for that is the constant stream of love flowing from God—abundant mercy. Not wrath, not judgment, not indignation, but mercy is pouring forth from the eternal fountain in the heart of God.

“I’m not saying that there’s not judgment. I’m not saying that God does not get indignant with our sloppy response to His call. I’m not saying that there isn’t the demand of holiness and the expression of wrath in the character of God. I’m saying what the Bible says, that even before we reach that pinnacle of revelation as to who God is—Jesus Christ hanging on a cross—we have the eternal mercy seat to show us God’s nature.”<sup>7</sup>

Paul the apostle says this:

**“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” (Ro.3:25).**

John the apostle says:

**“Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation [atonement] for our sins” (1 Jn.4:10).**

Note the plan and design for constructing the Mercy Seat or Atonement Cover. Keep in mind that it was to be placed on top of the Ark, that it was to serve both as a *lid* to the Ark or Chest and as the Mercy Seat for God’s Holy Presence.

1. The Mercy Seat was to be made of pure gold (v.17).
2. The Mercy Seat was to be oblong: the very same size as the Ark itself: 3¾' long x 2¼' wide (v.17).
3. There were to be two cherubim at the two ends of the Mercy Seat (v.18-20). The cherubim symbolized God’s justice. Stephen F. Olford says this: “We meet them first in the very early chapters of the Bible, placed at the east of the Garden of Eden with a ‘flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life’ (Genesis 3:24). It is true that the progressive revelation gives us more light on them, as we see them appearing again in such books as the prophecy of Ezekiel, and later the Revelation, but essentially they are messengers of judgment. Here on the mercy seat they stand poised to strike, were it not for the blood-sprinkled mercy seat.”<sup>8</sup>

Note how the Mercy Seat was to be made:

- ⇒ To make it of pure gold
- ⇒ To make it 3¾' long by 2¼' wide (1.1 meters by .07 meters)
- ⇒ To make two cherubim at the two ends of the Mercy Seat
- ⇒ To be made by hammering out the gold
- ⇒ To hammer out one cherub at one end of the Mercy Seat and the other cherub at the other end
- ⇒ To spread the wings of the cherubim upward overshadowing the Mercy Seat
- ⇒ To have the cherubim facing each other, looking toward the Mercy Seat

4. The Mercy Seat was to be placed on top of the Ark (v.21).

### **Thought**

Our sin has separated us from God. There is a great gulf between God and man, a gulf so vast that it keeps us from reaching God. That gulf is sin. And sin condemns us to death. But there is hope, one hope: the *mercy of God*. This is the very reason God designed the Mercy Seat of the Ark, to proclaim the great *mercy of God*. Scripture says:

- a) The mercy of God saves us.

**“Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life” (Tit.3:5-7).**

**“But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are**

<sup>7</sup> Maxie Dunnam. *Mastering The Old Testament, Volume 2: Exodus*. (Dallas, TX: Word Publishing, 1987), p.314.

<sup>8</sup> Stephen F. Olford. *The Tabernacle, Camping with God*, p.139.

saved)...For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph.2:4-5, 8-9).

- b) The mercy of God demands repentance for salvation.

**"And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil" (Joel 2:13).**

- c) The mercy of God is poured out upon those who fear Him.

**"But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children" (Ps.103:17).**

**"I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts. The earth, O Lord, is full of thy mercy: teach me thy statutes" (Ps.119:63-64).**

- d) The mercy of God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to become the merciful and faithful High Priest, to make atonement for sin, and to deliver us from death.

**"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people" (Heb.2:14-17).**

- e) The mercy of God forgives our sin.

**"Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy" (Mic.7:18).**

- f) The mercy of God delivers us from the consuming trials of life day by day.

**"It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness" (Lam.3:22-23).**

- g) The mercy of God invites us to approach God in order to receive mercy and find help in time of need.

**"Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb.4:16).**

- h) The mercy of God has no end; it reaches above the heavens.

**"For thy mercy is great above the heavens: and thy truth reacheth unto the clouds" (Ps.108:4).**

### **III. There Were Four Purposes for the Ark of God (v.21-22).**

Note how clearly God spelled out why He had planned and designed the Ark of the Covenant.

1. The Ark of God was to hold God's testimony, the two tablets of the covenant, that is, the Ten Commandments (v.21). The Ten Commandments are a very special covenant between God and man, the basic laws that are to govern man's life and society. So far as laws are concerned, above all man is to keep the Ten Commandments. Therefore, they were to be preserved and secured, contained in the very throne of God Himself. They were to be under His watchful care.

There were several other items kept in the Ark as well. These are not covered in this particular passage of Scripture, but they are noted here because this is the most complete and detailed coverage of the Ark of God.

- a. There was the golden pot of the Manna.

**"Which had the golden censer, and 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" (Heb.9:4).**

**“And Moses said unto Aaron, Take a pot, and put an omer full of manna therein, and lay it up before the Lord, to be kept for your generations. As the Lord commanded Moses, so Aaron laid it up before the Testimony, to be kept” (Ex.16:33-34; cp. Ex.16:11-31; Num.11:1-9).**

- b. There was Aaron’s rod or staff that budded.

**“Which had the golden censer, and 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” (Heb.9:4; cp. Num. Chapters 16 and 17).**

- c. There was the Book of the Covenant (most likely the civil law of God).

**“And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient” (Ex.24:7).**

**“That Moses commanded the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, saying, Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee” (Dt.31:25-26).**

2. The Ark was to be the place—the very special place—where God met with His people (v.22). In a very special way, God’s presence dwelt above the Ark of the Covenant. The people knew this. Therefore, when they needed a special sense of God’s presence—when they needed to feel a special closeness to God—they knew where to go. They could go to the Tabernacle, the ground surrounding the Tabernacle, to worship and seek forgiveness by offering sacrifice to the Lord.

Keep in mind that only the High Priest could enter the Holy of Holies and actually stand before the Ark of God. Moreover, he could only do this once a year on the Day of Atonement, when he offered the sacrifice for sins on behalf of all the people. However, the people did have access to God—access to a deep sense of God’s presence—by coming to the ground surrounding the Tabernacle and offering a sacrifice or giving an offering to God.

The Tabernacle presented a graphic, vivid picture of God’s Holy presence and, no doubt, aroused a deep, deep sense of God’s presence within the believers who truly believed and loved God. Genuine believers would have visited the holy, hallowed ground often in order to meet God: to experience a deep sense of His holy presence and to seek His guidance and help.

3. The Ark was to be the place of mercy, the place where God’s mercy was clearly pictured (v.22). Once a year on the Day of Atonement, the High Priest was to offer sacrifice and sprinkle the blood of the victim upon the Mercy Seat. The people were to learn this: they were to learn all about the Mercy Seat and the blood sprinkled upon it. They were to learn that the blood made atonement for their sins, reconciled them to God. They were to learn that the mercy of God was to be showered upon them because of the blood, because they believed and trusted the blood of the sacrifice to cover their sins. This was one of the great lessons to be learned, one of the purposes for the Ark of God.

### **Thought**

There are two meaningful pictures seen in the Mercy Seat that covered the Ark of God.

- a) There is the picture that points toward the finished work of Christ. The High Priest was never allowed to sit on the Mercy Seat, no matter how tired or weary he became. In fact, the priests were always working when in the Tabernacle. Their priestly work was never finished: they were continually offering sacrifice and ministering. But this was not true with Jesus Christ. When Jesus Christ offered Himself as the Perfect Sacrifice to God, His work was finished. His sacrifice for the sins of people was perfect: no other sacrifice was ever needed. Therefore, Christ was able to sit down on the right hand of God’s throne. This is exactly what Scripture says:

**“And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God” (Heb.10:11-12; cp. Ro.6:10).**

**“Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places” (Eph.1:20).**

**“And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth” (Ph.2:8-10; cp. Rev.5:12-13).**

- b) There is the picture that points toward God’s mercy covering the law. No person can keep the law, not perfectly. And perfection is required in order to live in God’s holy presence. How then can we ever become acceptable to God, be allowed to live in heaven with Him? By His mercy. God’s mer-

cy has been given us through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. God gave His Son to be the *Perfect Sacrifice* for our sins. The mercy of God shown us in Jesus Christ covers the law, that is, covers our sin, our failure to keep the law. When we trust Jesus Christ as our Savior, the mercy of God covers all the law—all the accusations of the law against us, all our failure to keep the law, all the guilt that gnaws at our hearts and convicts us.

**“Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference” (Ro.3:20-22; cp. Ro.3:23-25; 5:20-21).**

**“But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons” (Gal.4:4-5; cp. Gal.3:22-26; Col.2:13-14).**

4. The Ark was to be the place where God would instruct and guide His people (v.22). The Ark was to be the symbol of the throne of God. His divine presence was apparently to be manifested in a very special way right above the empty space of the Mercy Seat, right between the cherubim. From that position, God promised to speak to His people, to give them His commandments, instructions, and guidance.

When God’s people needed help or guidance, they were to come to the Tabernacle. The Tabernacle was to become very, very special to God’s people. Special because it was where God’s presence was manifested in a very significant way. It was the place where they would be able to seek God’s special care and help, His direction and guidance. No matter what the pain or suffering was—no matter how terrible the trial—God was ready and able to help His dear believer.

**“For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need” (Heb.4:15-16).**

**“But if from thence thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul” (Dt.4:29; cp. 2 Chron.7:14).**

**“For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death” (Ps.48:14).**

**“Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory” (Ps.73:24; cp. Ps.105:4; Is.55:6).**

### TYPES, SYMBOLS, AND PICTURES (Exodus 25:10-22)

Historical Term	Type or Picture (Scriptural Basis)	Life Application for Today’s Believer	Biblical Application for Today’s Believer
Acacia wood (Ex.25:10)	Acacia wood was a hard, durable wood that was resistant to insects and harsh weather. Acacia flourished in the wilderness and speaks of the incorruptibility and perfection of Jesus Christ.  <b>“And they shall make an ark of shit-tim [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” (Ex.25:10).</b>	⇒ In a world filled with corruption, Jesus Christ is the One who is the perfect picture of durability and strength, the only One who is incorruptible. Therefore, the believer should build his life upon Jesus Christ, the only foundation that will stand the test of time.  ⇒ The believer should call upon Christ for help in time of need and for strength in time of temptation.	<b>“For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ” (1 Cor.3:11).</b> <b>“Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord” (Eph.2:19-21).</b> <b>“For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in</b>

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			<i>all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15).</i>
<p><i>The Ark or Chest</i> (Ex.25:10-22; 40:20) See also Ex.35:12; 37:1-5; 39:35; 40:3, 20-21</p>	<p><i>The Ark was the very special place where God's Holy presence was manifested.</i></p> <p>a. <i>The Ark was the symbol of God's presence. A very special manifestation of God's presence dwelt right above the Ark, right between the two cherubim.</i></p> <p>b. <i>The Mercy Seat sat on top of the Ark; therefore, the Ark was a symbol of God's mercy.</i></p> <p>c. <i>The Ark was the symbol of the very throne of God. It was the place where the people sought the guidance and instruction of God.</i></p>	<p>What the Ark of the Covenant taught:</p> <p>a. God reveals His presence to believers in a very special way: When people need a special sense of God's presence — when they need to feel a special closeness to God — they can go directly into the presence of God. How is this possible? Because of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ opened the way into God's presence through His great sacrifice.</p> <p>b. God covers our lives with His mercy: • Believers are to understand that the blood shed upon the cross makes atonement for their sins, that the blood reconciles them to God. Believers are to learn that the mercy of God is to be showered upon them because of the blood, because they believe and trust the blood of the sacrifice (Jesus Christ) to cover their sins.</p> <p>c. God instructs and guides His people from His heavenly throne. From that position, God speaks to His people, gives them His commandments,</p>	<p><i>"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having an high priest over the house of God" (Heb.10:19-22).</i></p> <p><i>"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pt.3:18).</i></p> <p><i>"I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me" (Pr.8:17).</i></p> <p><i>"But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children" (Ps.103:17).</i></p> <p><i>"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Eph.2:4-6).</i></p> <p><i>"I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye" (Ps.32:8; cp. Ps.25:9).</i></p> <p><i>"For we have not an high priest which</i></p>

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	<p>d. <i>The Ark was the symbol of God's Law, holding the Ten Commandments.</i></p> <p>e. <i>The Ark was the symbol of Christ, of the very presence of God's personally fulfilling every picture of the Ark. Remember, the word "tabernacle" means to dwell, to abide in the midst of.</i></p> <p><b>"And they shall make an ark of shittim 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" (Ex.25:10).</b></p> <p><b>"And he took and put the testimony into the ark, and set the staves on the ark, and put the mercy seat above upon the ark" (Ex.40:20).</b></p>	<p>instructions, and guidance; therefore, when God's people need help or guidance, they are to come directly to the throne of mercy, to come and find grace to help in time of need.</p> <p>d. God gave the Ten Commandments so we would know how to live and relate to God and to one another—so we would know how to build a just and peaceful society.</p> <p>e. How Christ fulfilled the symbolism of the Ark of God:  ⇒ Jesus Christ promises to be with His people always.</p> <p>⇒ Jesus Christ sacrificed Himself, shed His blood in order to have mercy upon us and to cleanse us from our sins.</p> <p>⇒ Jesus Christ kept the Law of the covenant that was kept in the Ark, kept the Law perfectly, without sin.</p>	<p><i>cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb.4:15-16).</i></p> <p><i>"For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous" (1 Jn.5:3).</i></p> <p><i>"Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people" (Pr.14:34).</i></p> <p><i>"Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen" (Mt.28:20; cp. Mt.18:20).</i></p> <p><i>"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt. 2:24; cp. 1 Pt.3:18; Rev.1:5).</i></p> <p><i>"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb.4:15; cp. Heb.7:26).</i></p>
Gold (Ex.25:17)	<p><i>A symbol of value, of the greatest worth there is: A symbol of the LORD Himself, of His deity and righteousness.</i></p> <p><b>"And thou shalt make a mercy seat of pure gold: two cubits and a half shall be</b></p>	<p>⇒ Jesus Christ is the greatest and most precious value that can be possessed. He is more precious and more valuable than gold. Above all else, a person should strive to have Jesus Christ</p>	<p><i>"For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mt.16:26).</i></p> <p><i>"Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift" (2 Cor.9:15).</i></p>

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	<p><b>the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof” (Ex.25:17).</b></p>	<p>in his life.</p>	
<p>The Mercy Seat (Ex.25:17-21; 25:22) See also Ex.; 35:12; 37:6-9; 39:35; 40:3, 20</p>	<p><i>The Mercy Seat covered the Ark and symbolized at least three things:</i></p> <p><i>a. The Mercy Seat symbolized the very mercy of God Himself.</i></p> <p><i>b. The Mercy Seat symbolized that God covered the Law with His mercy: Remember, the law (the Ten Commandments) was kept in the Ark under the Mercy Seat. The mercy of God covers the law and its charges against people, covers the transgressions of every person who trusts in Jesus Christ.</i></p>	<p>What the Mercy Seat taught:</p> <p>a. God is not only holy and righteous, He is also merciful. God is the Sovereign Creator and Majesty who rules in mercy as well as in righteousness and holiness. The Mercy Seat symbolized that God has mercy upon all who truly come to Him, who truly believe and follow Him.</p> <p>b. There was the picture that pointed to God's mercy covering the law. No person can keep the law, not perfectly. And perfection is required in order to live in God's holy presence. How then can we ever become acceptable to God, be allowed to live in heaven with Him? By His mercy. God's mercy has been given us through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. God gave His Son to be the <i>Perfect Sacrifice</i> for our sins. The mercy of God shown us in Jesus Christ covers the law, covers our sin, our failure to keep the law. When we trust Jesus Christ as our Savior, the mercy of God covers all the law—all the accusations of the law against us, all our failure to keep the law, all the guilt that gnaws at our hearts and convicts us.</p> <p>c. When Jesus Christ</p>	<p><i>“Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy” (Mic.7:18; cp. Joel 2:13).</i></p> <p><i>“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead” (1 Pt. 1:3).</i></p> <p><i>“For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree” (Gal.3:10-13).</i></p>

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	<p><i>c. The Mercy Seat symbolized the finished work of Christ. The High Priest was never allowed to sit on the Mercy Seat, no matter how tired or weary he became. In fact, the priests were always working when in the Tabernacle. Their priestly work was never finished: they were continually offering sacrifice and ministering.</i></p> <p><b>“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” (Ex.25:17).</b></p> <p><b>“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” (Ex.25:22).</b></p>	<p>offered Himself as the Perfect Sacrifice to God, His work was finished. His sacrifice for the sins of people was perfect: no other sacrifice was ever needed. Therefore, Christ was able to sit down on the right hand of God's throne.</p> <p>Believers no longer have to offer sacrifices to God to atone for their sins. Christ has already satisfied God's requirement. It is because of the mercy of God in the sacrifice of His Son that we are cleansed once and for all from our sins.</p>	<p><i>“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 [covering, sacrifice] through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God” (Ro.3:23-25).</i></p> <p><i>“And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God” (Heb.10:11-12).</i></p> <p><i>“And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth” (Ph.2:8-10).</i></p>