

A Merciful Offering - Exodus 25:1-22

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Preacher: Pastor Jared Bromka

[0 : 0 0] Good morning, everyone. Welcome to Calvary Chapel Charlotte. What a blessing. What a beautiful morning.! His mercies are new every morning. Amen? Amen. God is so good. So good.

! So you can turn your Bibles to Exodus chapter 25. We have been journeying with Moses and the children of Israel through their journey from Egypt through the Red Sea and into the wilderness surrounding Mount Sinai.

They're not yet in the wilderness wandering of 40 years because they've not yet come to their first time at the Promised Land where they will have their opportunity to go in. Unfortunately, through unbelief, we'll choose not to. But we've been with Moses and Israel at the mountain when God delivered the Ten Commandments in Exodus 20. And then we heard as God told Moses how to administrate that to the people. And then last week we were looking at where Moses was being called to come up onto the mountain after he'd been given these instructions by God. And he goes and he gives them to the people. He writes them down. And then God tells him, hey, Moses, I want you and I want your brother Aaron and his two sons. And I want the 70 elders of Israel. I want you to come up onto the mountain to meet with me. And then Moses, I'm going to call you up even higher to come into my presence. And we looked at how the Lord drew Moses.

Moses, he drew a mirror to partake of his presence, to partake of fellowship, to abide with him. But ultimately so that he could tell Moses, now Moses, go and give this. What I've just given you, go and take that to the people. It's not just for you, Moses. It was a really good time in my presence, wasn't it, Moses? Yeah, it was good. You know, we had some good fellowship, didn't we? Yeah, we did.

Good. And you got my word, didn't you? Yeah, I did. All right, now take that and go. Take that and go to the people and give it to them. And then we looked at this scripture in 1 Corinthians 10, verse 11.

[1 : 4 9] It says, all these things happened unto them, speaking of Israel, what we're reading about today, it happened unto them for an example. And they are written for our instruction, for the church's instruction, the body of Christ, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Meaning that there's not another covenant after this. There's not another process after this by which we will enter into relationship with God, where Israel was under the Mosaic covenant, and that was pointing forward, the law pointing forward to what we now abide in, a relationship with God through Jesus Christ. It's the end of the world that has come, these end days. There's nothing after this to look forward to beyond Christ. But all of these things we're reading about, they're for our example, they're for our instruction. It's not just, well, this is interesting history. No, no, no. It's through this we understand God's heart towards people. It's through this we understand his heart that he's going to display in his son Jesus to us. It's through this we see Jesus.

We saw that last week as Moses, he's told to go onto the mountain, him and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and the 70 elders. And then all of a sudden it says he goes up and Joshua, his minister's with him. He said, where did Joshua come from? Who's this guy? And Joshua was Moses' servant, and his name means Jehovah is salvation. And in the Greek, that is Jesus. Same name, Jesus. Jehovah is salvation.

And Joshua came unlooked for, unbidden and unseen, and he goes up into the mountain with Moses. And then Moses comes back down to the mountain. He's going to come back down. And when he does, after 40 days and 40 nights, he's going to come with the word of God and Joshua. And so do we look for the return of our Joshua, when Jesus will return for us. But God invited Moses into his presence, and he did so from a place of rest. He made Moses wait six days, and on the seventh day, he calls him into his presence. In a place of rest, he says, come in on the seventh day, Moses. Come into my presence. But he invited an imperfect man, didn't he? All of these men he's inviting up into his presence, none of them are perfect. They're all imperfect, and they all were going to have failure in their future. Not one of these people were going to be like, okay, well, Moses, you come into my presence, because I know you're never going to have another issue in your whole life, Moses. You're not going to fail. No, he is. He's going to, in anger, he's going to strike the rock again. Aaron's going to fail very shortly, less than a month. While Moses is on the mountain, he's going to make this golden calf. They all have failure in their future, and so do we. God calls us into his presence, even though, Lord, you know I'm going to, I'm just going to mess up again.

But we also have victory. We have victory in our future, and because of the cross, we can have victory that washes away our past and is with us in our presence. As Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 15, I thank, but thanks be to God, which gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. We don't have to earn it. We don't have to go and gain it. We don't have to fight for it. We just have to receive it. He gives it to us. Yeah, I have failure in my future. I have failure in my past, but in every single one of those moments, God says, yeah, but here's victory. I can, I'll take your failure if you want my victory. It's a pretty good exchange. Let's, let's go for that. So as we get into chapter 25 now, this is Moses on the mountain. He's going to be up there for 40 days and 40 nights, and God's going to begin to speak to him. He's, he's got a message for him, and he's going to begin to speak to him regarding a place of offering, a place where God can commune with man and man with God.

At the end of chapter 24 there in verse 18, it says, Moses went up into the midst of the cloud, and he got him up into the mountain, and Moses was in the mountain 40 days and 40 nights.

[5 : 22] And verse one begins, and the Lord spake unto Moses. Moses is in God's presence to hear God's word. And Moses is going to hear from the Lord, not just that there's an offering, but it's a merciful offering, that God has an offering of mercy. Every offering of God is given and received through mercy.

So as we jump into verse one, it says, and the Lord spake unto Moses. So God is speaking to Moses from a place of glory, of rest, and of holiness. He's been called into God's presence, and the glory of the Lord is on top of the mountain, and God is speaking to Moses from this place. He's coming to God's presence as a place of glory, but it's a place of rest and a place of holiness, the fire of God on the mountain representing holiness. What is Moses to do then? What is the point of all this? Well, Moses then is to receive from God, and he's to go and speak to the people. The people he speaks to are people that are under covenant, they're set apart, and they're in belief and obedience. It's the same way we approach God. We approach God from a place of glory, of rest, and of holiness as we come into his presence.

Who are you? Who are we? We're people under covenant. We're under God's covenant, not the Mosaic covenant, but the new covenant, the covenant that, the unilateral covenant made through Christ, written upon our hearts. We're set apart then. Man, we're not the same as this world, and you know it, don't you? You know it when you're out there, and you're in the world, but you're like, I'm not of this. I mean, it's a good place. This world's not all bad. There's stuff in it that I enjoy greatly, but it's like, but I'm not of it. It's like going on vacation. I like going on vacation.

I don't want to live on vacation. After about a week's vacation, you're like, man, oh, home is so wonderful. Oh, I can't. Then you get back home. After about a week home, you're like, man, vacation was good, but I don't want to live there. We're set apart, but Moses is going to speak to his people under covenant, set apart, but in belief and obedience, right? Now, Israel's, they're about to totally pull a flop here as they say to Aaron, hey, make us gods, because we don't know what happened to Moses, but for all intents and purposes, there are people that have said, yeah, God, we're going to follow you, and belief and obedience, we're not going to do this perfect, but we're going to follow, and Moses is to speak to them. He's to speak to them God's heart, and what is God's heart? God's heart is a desire for communion, relationship, and for blessing. God's heart is not to give them a law to make them work hard, or to prove themselves, or to be really, really good and obtain some righteousness. No, God's heart is, he wants communion. That koinonia, he wants that fellowship. He wants a relationship, not just, oh, I'm glad you guys are doing well.

Good, I'll move on to something else. No, he wants a relationship that abides continually with us, and ultimately for a blessing. He wants us to live a blessed life. That is found only in his presence.

[8 : 23] God desired man to come into his presence. The issue is, man's current condition would not allow him to come into his presence. Man is in a state of spiritual and moral decay, so that kept him from God's presence. It keeps us from God's presence. So why can't God just overlook that? Well, maybe you have somebody in your life. Maybe you love them greatly, but maybe they're in a state of spiritual and moral decay. And you didn't choose that. And it's not that you don't love them, but to bring them into your life is to bring into your life spiritual and moral decay. To bring that toxicity back into your life is to bring the negativity. You're like, it's not that I don't love you. I'd love to bring you into my presence, but I can't because of the state you're in. So just because Adam fell and chose to sin, God didn't go, well, I guess we're all in this now. I guess I'll give up this whole holiness thing too and dive right in with Adam. No, God is still in a state of holiness because Adam is in a state of moral and spiritual decay and now keeps him from God. So God is going to set up a system.

The system we're going to look at today or begin to look at, we're not going to get through this whole chapter. The system he's going to begin to look at is a temporary system of approach by which man could approach God, but it points to an eternal system of approach by which man could approach the heavenlies. God is going to enact the tabernacle. He's going to tell you to Moses, hey, here's what this tabernacle is. Tabernacle just means dwelling place, habitation. We'd call it a tent. You know, it's, it's not a permanent thing. Again, you're going vacation. If you go camping, you know, you take your tent. You go camping, you don't usually pour a foundation and build four walls and set up a, it's not really camping, is it? It's a tabernacle. It's meant to be mobile. It's temporary.

We're not going to look at the whole tabernacle today. God's going to give a very, up through verse nine, verses three through nine, God kind of gives like this quick snapshot. It's really cool. And then he's going to, from there, look at the Ark of the Covenant. He's going to go into the altar of incense and he's going to go into the candlestick and all this stuff. We're going to get through hopefully the Ark of the Covenant today, but I wanted to give you a quick overview, a brief overview. And so you'd go through and you'd enter into the courtyard and that would be the brazen altar with the four horns. We will eventually see that detailed out to Moses. Before you get up to the tabernacle, you then have the brazen laver, which would be full of water where the priests would wash the bronze laver before they're allowed to enter into the tabernacle.

On the right is the showbread, the table of showbread. And on the left will be the golden candlestick with its seven lampstands burning. And then will be the altar of incense burning night and day before the Lord. The curtain, the veil, as the veil is parted, boom, you enter into the Holy of Holies and there will be the Ark of the Covenant with the mercy seat on top of it. And yes, as we're going to see today, the four staves are in it at all times. And in the Ark would be the Ten Commandments will go in there. This is actually in Israel. They have a park over there where they have a recreation of the tabernacle. Not much to look at on the outside.

Once you get on the inside, it's beautiful. There was no former comeliness that we should desire him when Jesus came. But man, once you got on the inside, once you realized what was in there, it was a beautiful thing. And so God would make this tabernacle. The purpose was what? To dwell among men. God wants to dwell with man. He doesn't want to keep them away. We're in a state of spiritual and moral decay and God's like, I'm going to bring you near, but I'm going to do this in such a way that it's going to point to something that's so beyond this world. It's not just about your life now.

[12 : 13] God bless my life now. Draw near to me now. Make things good now. And God says there's something so much more important than just the temporary. Verse two, he says to Moses now on the mountain, as Moses is up there for 40 days and 40 nights in the midst of God's glory with the fire swirling around. He's not eating or drinking. He's not living by bread alone. And the Lord says, speak unto the children of Israel that they bring me an offering. Offering literally means that which is contributed. Amazing that God would allow us, desire us to contribute to his work. An offering, it's not demanded. It's not taxing or taking from the people. It's an offering. What they would contribute. They bring me an offering of every man that gives it willingly with his heart. You shall take my offering. God has no need to use man. God doesn't need to do this. He'd be like, boom, I built a tabernacle, Moses. What do you think? Does it need to do this? This is the God who's come down by fire on the mountain, the God who split the Red Sea. Water came out of the rock in the middle of the desert. And he says, I don't need to use you,

Moses. I don't need to use man. But do you know he chooses to only move forward his plans in this world through men? God's plans and purposes in this world are moving forward only through men.

You remove man from the equation and God's not working. I got a cat at home. God is not working in and through my cat. The purposes of God aren't being done, right? Nature's a beautiful thing, but God is not working. His will and purpose isn't planned through nature. He chooses to use us. But he will only use that which is given willingly. He only receives that which we give willingly. The scripture here, the wording where it says gives willingly is to impel, not to compel. To compel under compulsion is an external source, something that's compelling you. Something that impels is something that's internal. It's innate, internally motivated. But God says, hey, whoever's internally motivated in their hearts to contribute to this work, let them bring it. God doesn't tax or take from his people. In Hebrews chapter 10, Hebrews has a lot to say about the tabernacle. It says, in burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin, you have no pleasure. Then said I, speaking of Jesus, looking forward as prophecy of the Messiah, I come. In the volume of the book, it is written of me.

Aren't we finding that so true? We've gone through Genesis and Exodus. Man, this whole book, it just points to Jesus. But what does he come to do? To do thy will, O God. Whatever was to be received must first be given willingly, for God to then receive it. And behind every accepted sacrifice is a heart of sacrifice, right? I can give a sacrifice, but God looks at the heart. He doesn't look at the outward.

You see, God has no need to receive. God's not like, oh, I can't, what are they going to bring me today? He has no need to receive. He owns the cattle on a thousand hill. But we have a great need to give. We have a great need to give. In 2 Corinthians chapter 9, you don't need to turn there if you want to, if you have your Bibles. I'll be getting in, picking up in verse 6 and read a few verses. In 2 Corinthians 9 verse 6, Paul says, but this I say, he which sows sparingly shall reap also sparingly. He which sows bountifully shall reap bountifully. Like we don't, I don't know how many of us have farms here or agriculturalists. The only thing I sow is grass in my yard. I overseed my yard.

[15 : 43] That's expensive. Man, grass seeding, you got, you know, the bigger your yard. But if I do it sparingly, I don't get that great of a result. But if I overseed that sucker, man, you can get a pretty good result.

And you see all the new grass coming up. It's just a common principle. If you sow bountifully, you'll receive bountifully. Every man then, according as he has purposed in his heart, just as we read about in the Old Testament, so let him give and not grudgingly or of necessity. For God loves a cheerful giver.

Not of necessity. God's not looking for you to say, you've got to give because I have a need. And if you don't, no. God loves a cheerful giver, hilarious giver, one who gives not because they have to.

And God is able, it's one of my favorite scriptures, God is able to make all grace abound to you, that you always having all sufficiency in all things may abound to every good work. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, that you have all sufficiency in all works. That's true. But he's specifically talking here about giving. He's saying, God will bountifully give you so that you can give.

He has dispersed abroad. He has given to the poor. His righteousness remains forever. Now he that ministers seed to the sower, both minister bread for your food and multiply your seed sown. He's saying, hey, the one who gives the seed. I'm just a sower. You and I, that's all we are. We're just sowers. We're just used by God.

[17 : 08] And it's a blessing to give, whether it's to give his word or to give into his kingdom. But he's the one who gives the seed. I didn't make the seed. I can't make seed. All I can do is receive seed and then sow seed. God is the one who gives the seed. And he says, hey, the one who gives the seed, well, may he also minister seed for your food and so that you have enough to give.

And multiply your seeds sown. Increase the fruits of your righteousness. Being enriched in everything to all bountifulness. The world says to give is to lose. Man, you give, you lost. You got less. God's word says give is gain. You only gain when you give because God gives more. He gives more for your need and he gives more that you can then give more.

Being enriched in everything to all bountifulness, which causes through us thanksgiving to God. Ultimately, our giving causes thanksgiving to God. It's not about someone saying to me, thank you, Jared. I'm so glad you gave to me. What a nice person. No. They say, well, praise God.

He supplied my need. And I get to walk away going, God, I can't believe you used me. I don't even know where that came from, Lord, to even give that. He's like, don't worry. I got some more here. The world says it's a loss to give. Don't give that. You need that. God says, no, you need to give.

Why do we need to give? To experience and express God's grace. That all grace may abound to us in every situation. We need to experience God's grace freely given. And then I need to freely give God's grace so I can experience what it is to give it. And so Moses is receiving from God's commands of God and the heart of God, which is be a part of this work. Be a part willingly. In verse three, this is the offering which you shall take of them, gold, silver, and brass. Moses was to initiate, not enforce. All right. Hand me your gold, guys. Give me your silver. Give me your brass. You know, we're going to check you at the door and make, no. Moses was just to initiate and say, hey, he made what? The need known. He made God's heart known. He was just a representative.

[19:12] Okay. It was up to the work of God in the hearts of the people responding to the word of God to determine what they're willing to give. God is able to make all grace abound. Listen, when we started this church a little over two years ago, every place God's led us to in every step of the way, he's just been like, I got this. You know, we've never had to ask for money. We've never, he's got it. Whether we have many or few, he's the one who makes all grace abound. What do we have to, what's our part? Man, we just want to express grace to one another. Just let's express grace to one another. So Moses' part here is to be a representative for God. But here we see the tabernacle, the offering, he says, and we're going to give this short synopsis of all the material that will make up the tabernacle. And the first thing he says is gold, silver, and brass. Well, gold represents that which is royal, what is a divine. There's also pure, something very pure. Silver also in scripture represents purity, redemption, the refining process of silver, and brass, judgment, and strength. And as we just read, speaking of that scripture where Jesus, we read that says, in the volume of the book it is written of me, this so clearly is going to begin to just point to Jesus as our tabernacle by which we come to God. The royalty, the purity, the redemption, and yet he is the judge. He is strong. Verse four, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goat's hair, you know, and ram skins dyed red, and badger skins, and shittim wood, or the old King James, or it's acacia wood, is what we would call it today. So here we see that which is used for covering.

So the gold, silver, and brass would be that which is for adorning. And this is for that which is covering. He starts out with the purple, and the blue, and the scarlet. The blue would represent heaven. The purple would be royalty, and the scarlet, the scarlet, the crimson that washes, the blood that washes away our sin. It's a covering. But then it's also goat's hair. Anybody wore goat's hair today?

Left that at home, huh? Maybe this winter. But here we see the contrast between the two, that because of a willing offering given on our behalf, we can exchange our go-tear of sin for the fine linen of redemption because of this tabernacle. Acacia wood is resistant to decay. It resists infestation from insects, that which will not decay. And oil, verse six, for light, spices for anointing oil, and for sweet incense. Oil for anointing, for illumination, and for intercession. They would use the incense for in the altar of incense. Christ, Messiah, literally means the anointed one. Not only that, but he brings illumination, doesn't he? Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world.

He that follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. Verse seven, the Lord says, and they shall bring onyx stones, and stones to be set in the ephod, and the breastplate. And you say, what's that? Well, that would be the breastplate that the priest wore with all the stones in it. It's a symbol of authority and of ministry. They would use the ephod to determine, or the stones to determine God's will. And let them make me a sanctuary, he says in verse eight, that I may dwell among them. Sanctuary is a sacred place. Let them make a sacred place of fellowship. I want to dwell among them. God desired a sacred space of meeting where the holiness of God and the sinfulness of man could meet together. God's place of meeting could be a place of adornment, of covering, of anointing, illumination, and intercession, authority, and ministry, and a sacred fellowship. And there is only one man who ever met those requirements. Jesus alone meets the requirements for the place of meeting. He is our tabernacle.

He is that place. This temporary tabernacle Moses is going to set up. And God's going to say to Moses, hey, Mo, make sure you do this exactly, exactly as I told you. Don't do it. Well, you know what?

[23 : 25] Why is the table of showbread on the right? Why is the lampstand on the left? What if we get it wrong once? Is that such a big deal? Because Jesus is going to come. He's going to perfectly fit the pattern. And so often we don't know what God's doing within our life. And he says, do it this way.

And we say, well, why can't I do it another way? This is because I've got something I'm pointing to. Jesus meets that requirement. Where do we meet with the Lord? Remarkably now, in Ephesians 2 20, we read, we are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom all the building fitly framed together grows into a holy temple in the Lord.

What is the purpose of a temple? As that man might meet with their God and God with man, in whom also you are built together for inhabitation of God through the spirit. Where does the sinfulness of man and the holiness of God, where does it meet? Here. It doesn't meet here, right? We've been, we've been here. We've been in someone's house. We've been in a church that we rented in the afternoon and we've been in a city hall. We've been all over the place.

Isn't that because, well, I think God's in the city hall in Mount Holly. We should probably go there. He was when we were there, right? But God's here. This is where God meets with us. He tabernacles with us.

Because God's place of meeting was adorned, covered, anointed, illuminated. He intercedes for us, one of authority and ministry and sacred fellowship. But that place was also freely given.

[24 : 57] As Jesus took upon himself no reputation, but he took upon him the form of a servant and made in the likeness of sinful men. Being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and willingly became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. God values the offering not based upon what's given.

It's not the amount. Lord, I only have one onyx stone. It's all I got. And my neighbor brought like, you know, three truckloads of acacia wood. Well, I got an onyx stone. Lord's like, hey, the value God places is on willingness, not the amount. In Mark chapter 12, Jesus is in the temple and he's watching with the disciples and all the people are coming in and they're throwing their money, giving their money, their offerings. And at the time, what it was would be a big, I think it was bronze, I think, or copper, a trumpet, like a cornucopia almost. And they would throw their money in and it would make a clanging clang, clang, clang, clang. And you could throw your money in. So you're like, you know, you're going to give 20 bucks. Well, 20 bucks and two tens or one 20 doesn't sound as cool as pennies. So they're coming in to throw in their money. And Jesus is watching with the disciples and maybe like, oh my word, look how much he gave. And Jesus calls to him his disciples. Because he saw one, he saw a widow put in one little penny.

Bing, bing, bing, bing, bing, bing, bing, bing, bing, bing. Remember those things when you're kids in the mall, when we used to go to malls and you could put the coin in and it would go around and around and around. We used to do that and we'd stop it and grab it before it went down and do it again and again. But you'd hear one clink. And he called to him his disciples and he said to them, truly I say unto you that this poor widow has put in more than all they which cast into the treasury for all they did cast into their abundance. But she with her two pennies that cast in all she had, even all her living. Is the principle I have to give everything that I have to Jesus for him to value it? No. Principle was her heart. He said all of these, it was just, they didn't even need it. It was their abundance. Does God look down on me when I take of my abundance and give it to him? No, if it's from a willing heart. God values willingness, not the amount.

The second Corinthians, speaking of giving again, chapter eight, verse 12, Paul says, for if there be first a willing mind is accepted according to the man that a man has, not according to he has not. I love that scripture. It's so freeing. Hey, God doesn't look at what I give and go, well, I wish he had more because this guy has. No, he says you only got a dollar? Praise God.

You only have your time. My life has mostly been giving of my time. I've never been in a place where I've been able to financially just be like, man, I wish I could just, you know, even when I've tried, the Lord through funny circumstances, just like, no, that's not what I'm calling you to do.

[27 : 41] Just serve me. But it's according to what we have. God knows what we have. And even what we have comes from him. For who makes you to differ from another? And what do you have that you've not received?

Well, I worked hard. Yeah, but who gave you the breath in your lungs? Who gave you the skill and ability and the desire? Now, if you received it, why do you glory as if you'd not received it? As if somehow it was your own. So then he says here in verse nine, according to all that I show you after the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so you shall you make it. Moses don't differ in one bit from this. Why?

Because this is going to be a pattern. The word pattern there means plan, form, and figure. This is going to be specifically designed to point to the person, the figure of Jesus. What are God's plans and patterns look like? They look like him. They look like God. What are God's people supposed to look like? Supposed to look like him. Supposed to represent him. Because it all points to him.

Philippians 2 verse 10, that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow of things in heaven and things under the earth and things in the earth, that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

The glory of God the Father all ends there. It all points there. It all goes there. And our lives are meant to reflect that or to point in that direction, just as the tabernacle. But it's on his terms. And it's according to his plan. I don't get to make this up and just decide, well, I'm going to do it a little different. I'm going to make my own tabernacle. And it'll lead to God too. I'm going to have my own walk, however I feel like doing it. Leviticus 26, God is reiterating about the tabernacle to Moses. He said, I will set my tabernacle among you and my soul shall not abhor you.

[29 : 33] It's an old King James word, just meaning it will not be held at a distance from you. Because I will walk among you and I'll be your God. You shall be my people. Because of the tabernacle, God can dwell among his people.

God initiated the way by which man's soul could return to fellowship with his creator. Hebrews 12, 2, that we are to look unto Jesus, the author, the initiator, and the finisher, the one who completes the process of our faith. And they shall make an ark. Now we will move.

That was really quick. Verses three to nine is kind of like the Lord telling Moses, here's all the material we're going to use to build the ark. I mean, to build the tabernacle and all of the various accoutrements, and we'll spell out what that's all supposed to go to later. Let's start now with the ark. God's going to start inward. He's going to work outward. We just saw in that rendering, the ark is in there and he's going to work outward later, much later when he talks about how to set up the tabernacle, it starts inward. He says, set up the tent and then the ark and then work outward from there, the altar of incense and working out. 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 if you don't do your measurements in cubits today, that's three and three quarters feet long, two and a quarter wide, and two and a quarter tall.

So it's like a little coffin, almost. A cubit and a half the height thereof, the ark of the covenant. Remember when we looked at the scripture before where Jesus is on the road to Emmaus talking with the two disciples after the resurrection? He says, oh, you're so slow and foolish to not understand all that God has spoken through his scriptures. And then he began to expound to them the scripture and he opened their minds to understand. And it says, he expounded to them all things concerning himself that are found in the scripture. And I can't help but as we go through all of this, think, I wonder if you went back and said, do you remember the rock? The rock that water came out of?

Oh, Jesus, that was you. I wonder if he went back and said, do you remember the ark of the covenant? The mercy seat. Oh, Lord, that was you. The ark literally means a Chester box. It is designed not for itself, but for what it contains. The ark wasn't built because they wanted to just make something really fancy, but it was for what it contained. It was meant to hold something. There are three arks in scripture. Three times it's used. Noah's ark, Genesis 6, 14, God tells him to build an ark.

[32 : 04] Moses' ark, that would be when his mother built the ark and pitched it within and without and put him in the bulrushes. And then the ark of the covenant. Three arks of scripture. They're each made for the purpose of deliverance. They each will contain God's word. Noah's ark will contain God's word.

The man that God has given his word to, Noah, passing through that judgment to start again afresh, repopulate the earth. Moses, the little baby in the bulrushes, containing in essence the law, God's commands. And the ark of the covenant will have the words of God put in it. Each one contained God's word. Each was made for deliverance and each was a part of God's plan of redemption.

These three arks. This ark would be common. It would be made of acacia wood, but it would also be a glorious and a regal thing. Verse 11, and you shall overlay it with pure gold. Within and without, you shall overlay it. You shall make upon it a crown of gold round about. Gold, Job tells us in Job 23, verse 10, he says, but he knows the way that I take and when he's tried me, I shall come forth as gold.

Gold is something that's purified through trial. Gold is something that retains its value. As it's being refined. Peter tells us about Jesus in 1 Peter chapter 2, that he didn't sin and neither was any guile found in his mouth. He was pure. He was refined. He had gone through that process and he was found without sin. And then the crown, Revelation chapter 19, Jesus, it says he will return riding upon a white horse. His eyes were as a flame of fire and on his head were many crowns and a name written. And so here we see this, this arch will be overlaid with pure gold within and without. You shall make upon it a crown of gold round about. In verse 12, you shall cast four rings of gold for it and put them in the four corners thereof. Two rings shall be on one side and two rings on the other side. And you shall make staves of acacia wood and overlay them with gold.

And you shall put the staves into the rings. That's the means by which they are to carry this thing. You shall put the staves into the rings by the sides of the ark, that the ark may be born with them. And then he says this in verse 15, I thought it was really interesting. The staves shall be in the rings of the ark and they shall not be taken from it. So when they go and set it down and that rendering had it right, they go and put it down and there's the ark. You weren't to take the staves out. You were to leave them in at all times. This actually isn't correct because they should have been overlaid with gold. The means by which God would travel with man were never to be removed. The means by which God would be moving with man as he moved with his people in their journeys, you were never to remove that. It was never to be taken away. Matthew 28 20, I am with you always, even under the end of the world. Jesus said, I'll pray the father and he'll give you another comforter that he may abide with you forever. The means by which God would travel with man is never to be removed. And under the new covenant, how much greater the means by which God travels and dwells with us is never to be removed. And you shall put into the ark, the testimony, which I give you. He hadn't given it to him yet.

[35 : 24] The ark was prepared for the arrival of the word, specifically made to embody the word. Speaking of Jesus in Hebrews 10 verse 5 says, wherefore, when he comes into the world, he says, sacrifice an offering you would not, but a body you've prepared for me. A place prepared to receive the word. In the beginning was the word, word was with God, and the word was God.

The ark was to contain the word. There was to be nothing in this ark that was not of God. Think when Jesus, in John chapter 12, speaking of the words that he speaks, he says, I have not spoken of myself, but the father which sent me, he's given me a commandment, what I should say and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting. Whatsoever therefore I speak, therefore, even as the father said unto me, so I speak, there is nothing in Jesus that was not of God. There's nothing to be in the ark that's not of God. It contained the word. And you shall make a mercy seat of pure gold. Two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof. So it's gonna be the same length as the ark, three and three quarters feet, but it's only a cubit and a half, the breadth. So this actually isn't correct either. The ark seems kind of went up and then came in, and then there was this cap on it, this mercy seat. Literally, the word for mercy seat in the Hebrew is propitiation.

And there shall be a seat of propitiation. There shall be a propitiation of mercy. Atonement. It means to mend, to take that which has been rent and to mend it.

And you shall make a mending of pure gold. Paul uses this exact same word in the Greek in Romans 3.25. He says, It's right there.

It's all right there. In the volume of the book, it is written of him. And you shall make this mercy seat, verse 18. You shall make it of two cherubs of gold.

[37 : 53] And of beaten work, you shall make them. The two ends of the mercy seat. You can kind of see somewhat what it'd be like. And make one cherub on the one end and the other cherub on the other end. Even of the mercy seat, shall you make the cherubs on the two ends thereof. And they 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 cherubim be. God's chosen cherubim were to adorn mercy. They were for the adornment of mercy. Unfortunately, one of those cherubs chose to despise mercy instead of value mercy.

Ezekiel 28. God, through the prophet Ezekiel, is speaking of one of these cherubs. Speaking of Lucifer. He says, You are the anointed cherub that covers.

Well, that puts it in context now, does it? With what we've just looked at, with the ark of the covering, the cherubs that cover. And we know that what God is building on earth, here telling Moses to, is a shadow, a pattern of what is in heaven.

He said, You are the anointed cherub that covers. And I have set you so. That was upon the holy mountain of God. That was walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. That was perfect in your ways from the day you were created till iniquity was found in you.

[39 : 13] Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty. You have corrupted your wisdom by reason of your brightness. I will cast you to the ground. I will lay you before kings that they may behold you.

Unfortunately, that cherub chose to despise mercy and despise the God of mercy. But the cherubim were to always keep mercy in view. Their view is always to be towards the seat of mercy.

In Revelation chapter four, John is called up into the throne room of heaven and he's given the vision of the end. And he sees there are four living creatures and those are cherubim. And it says about them that they have eyes before and behind and within and without.

What's that mean? It means they always have an eye to the throne. No matter where they go, they always have an eye to the throne. And it is a throne of mercy. Now, if these cherubim were to honor God, or who honored God, were to look towards mercy day and night, but never experienced mercy.

They were to worship and look to the God of mercy, but they never experienced God's mercy. How much more should we, how much more should man honor and look to the God of mercy when we have experienced his mercy?

[40 : 18] What a privilege these cherubim have to be worshiping God and to be there before God, worshiping a God of mercy. But we've experienced his mercy. Verse 21, you shall put the mercy seat above, upon the ark.

And in the ark, you shall put the testimony that I shall give you. The ark was to be a place where both mercy and truth met together. You shall place the mercy seat upon the ark and within the ark is the testimony, is the word of God, is the truth.

This place was to be the place where mercy and truth would come together, where man would come to meet with God. John 117 says, the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

The ark is to be the place where mercy and truth meet together. Psalm 85 10 says, mercy and truth are met together. Righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

They've made up. They can coexist. Because of the ark, our ark of the covenant, the new covenant, because of Jesus, mercy and truth meet together and man can meet with God there.

[41 : 30] Because of that, righteousness and peace in our lives are now joined together. Before it was righteousness and judgment. Right before Christ. My sin is righteousness and judgment.

There's no peace there. It's just a fearful looking forward to a judgment. Knowing that I am morally and spiritually corrupt. Knowing that I am decaying in my sin. But God became our refuge.

He became our tabernacle. He chose to tabernacle among us. God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. That's God's heart for us this morning. As he says in verse 22 to Moses, Moses, there I will meet with you.

To meet means an appointed place, a fixed place, a defined place. This is not left in doubt. There's no question to this. Moses, there I will meet with you.

Moses, I might meet with you. Depends on how I feel. You know, there's a lot going on in the world, Moses. I'm glad you came to the tabernacle, you know. But I got things I need to do.

[42 : 36] No, there I will meet with you. At an appointed place, a fixed place, a defined place. And I will commune with you. I will speak with you. I will declare to you. I will command.

I will promise in this place of appointment from between the two cherubims, which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things, which I will give you in commandment unto the children of Israel.

What does God do when he meets with Moses at this place? He gives him his word. God meets with us through his word. And then to give us his word. The word meet has another meaning to it, which is just, you know, sometimes you're studying, your mind just goes, this is one of those.

It has the word espousal. It means espousal. The word meet. So when two people come together and they are espoused to be married, they meet together. So he says, there I will espouse you and I will promise you.

I'll command you. I'll speak to you from above the mercy seat. At the seat of mercy and the tabernacle of meeting, Jesus meets with us, espouses us, and then commands us a promise.

[43 : 47] Amazingly, God would go to all this trouble to meet with the people in moral and spiritual decay. So now Moses, I've got a plan, but you got to follow it. You got to choose to follow this.

It's the same for us. Jesus, who would meet us at the seat of mercy, the tabernacle of meeting, he wants us to espouse us to himself, to take us to himself as a bride, to say, you are mine forever and to command us a promise, but we have to come by his way.

We can't come some other way. And it starts on the inside. It starts in the heart. We don't start on the outside and work in. He says, no, we're going to start with the ark. We're going to start.

And in the ark is what? The word of God. And the word of God is made flesh and he dwelt among us. We beheld his glory, the glory of the only begotten son of God. But men love darkness instead of the light because their deeds were evil and they would not come to the light.

Turn to John chapter 20. We're going to end over there. In John chapter 20, the disciples have just received news from Mary Magdalene that Jesus is risen.

[44 : 56] The women on the early in the morning, they go to the tomb and they find the stone rolled away and a whole lot of events happen. Mary turns and hightails it back into Jerusalem and she goes and she tells them and says, he's gone.

We don't know where they've taken him. Peter and John then run back to the tomb and it says that John outruns him and gets there first, but then Peter goes down in first and he looks and they see no one's there and then they turn and they leave.

Mary still is coming back with them but they're running faster than her so she gets there after they've left and that's where we pick up in John chapter 20, verse 10. And then the disciples went away again unto their home but Mary stood without at the sepulcher, weeping.

And as she wept, she stooped down and looked into the sepulcher, into the tomb and she saw two angels in white sitting and where were they sitting? One at the head and the other at the feet where the body of Jesus had lain.

They're sitting at the mercy seat. They're sitting one at the head and one at the feet at the mercy seat at the place where we meet with God. And they said unto her, Woman, why are you weeping?

[46 : 06] And she said unto them, Because they've taken away my Lord and I don't know where they've laid him. And when she has thus said, she turned herself back. She came out of the tomb and walks out weeping and she sees Jesus standing and she knew not that it was Jesus.

Well, one, after Jesus' resurrection and his resurrected body, he did appear different. But two, how easy is it to see someone you've been weeping and your eyes are red and you're just all tears and you just, you don't expect it to be Jesus.

And she turns and she sees Jesus standing and she didn't know it was him and he said unto her, Woman, why are you weeping? Whom seekest thou? Woman, why are you weeping? Whom do you seek?

And she's supposing him to be the gardener or the caretaker there just said to him, Sir, if you have borne him hence, tell me where they've laid him and I will take him away. And Jesus said unto her, Mary, who are you seeking today?

Who are you seeking at the place of mercy? Why are you weeping today at the place of mercy? Jesus would say that to you. Just insert your name there.

[47 : 16] Mary. Mary, come to the place of mercy. Do you know where you are, Mary? You are at the mercy seat. You are at the place of propitiation. You are where all things that have been rent are made whole.

Who are you seeking at the place of mercy? What are you seeking? Are you seeking something else? Man, God, I wish you'd give me lots of stuff. Oh, God, I wish you'd make this relationship better.

Lord, I wish you would do this in my life. I'm at the seat of mercy begging you. Whom are you seeking? What are you seeking at the place of mercy? And why are you weeping at the place of mercy? He said unto her, Mary.

And she turned herself and said unto him, Master. And he said unto her, Touch me not. In other words, don't hold me. I have to go. I'm not yet ascended to my Father.

But go to my brethren and say unto them, I ascended to my Father and Mary, I ascend to your Father because of the mercy seat and to my God and to your God. This morning, I guess the question is, have we come to the place of mercy?

[48 : 22] And what are we seeking there? Have we found atonement? Have we found peace? Have we found rest? Have we come into the presence of God looking for something other than his word, other than his way, and other than the life he gives?

Thinking, man, God, if I could just get things right with you, I'm sure you'd do great things. Well, yes, God will do great things in our lives. But we have to come by way of mercy. We have to come according to the pattern and plan that he gives us.

And how often we find ourselves now in this wonderful, beautiful covenant, this new covenant in Christ, and at the place of mercy, I'm weeping over the things that Jesus gave his life for.

I'm seeking things that are not part of God's plan of mercy for my life. And God's saying to me, will you give that to me? Will you contribute that to me? Will you offer that?

And I look at that and say, God, what can you do with this? This is something hard and horrible and dark in my life. This is a frustration. This is a failure. This is a weakness. What are you going to do with this, God? Did you just offer it to me?

[49 : 25] And we say to him, God has no value. Lord, I don't even have any value. God says, you just offer it to me because God never asks us to give anything that's not for our blessing.

You see, when we give, we give into our blessing. The world says, no, no, no, no, that you're going to lose. And Jesus says, no, you're not going to lose. And today at the place of mercy, at the seat of mercy, Jesus would say to us, as he said to his disciples in John 14 in the upper room, let not your heart be troubled.

I don't know what it is you're weeping over and I don't know who you are seeking, but at the place of mercy with one cherubim here and another here, the Ark of the Covenant has satisfied everything for us to commune with God.

Do not let your heart be troubled. Believe in God. Believe also in me, Jesus would say. And he goes on to say, in my Father's house are many dwelling places.

There's many tabernacles. There's one for all of us. If it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself.

[50 : 41] Why? Because he wants us to be really, really good and really, really happy that where I am, there you may be also. Because I want you to be with me. I want you to come and dwell with me and tabernacle with me.

And where I go, you know. And the way you know. And remarkably, in this moment, at that place of mercy, there he is, the Ark of the Covenant himself, the Word made flesh. Thomas turns to him and says, well, we don't know where you're going and we don't know what you're talking about.

How can we know the way? Guys, we do the same thing. As God draws us near, we go, I don't really know what you're talking about, Lord. What do you mean you want to fix in my life?

And Jesus said unto him, Thomas, I am the way, the truth, and the life, and no man comes to the Father but by me. Today we can come to the Father because of Jesus. And I would like to say today we will go to the Father because of Jesus.

If you don't yet know him as your Lord and Savior, if you've not entered into a covenant because of the work that Jesus did on the cross to mend what was rent, today's that day.

[51 : 47] Just put your faith in him. And he'll say, come on in. Come and meet at the place of mercy. Lord, as we're going to praise you now, Lord, and we're going to worship you, and we're going to end in a song, Lord.

Lord, there is joy in the house of the Lord today because we've been brought into a place of mercy, covenant, and relationship with you. Buried here in the Old Testament, Lord.

Why should we read Exodus? Why go line by line and verse by verse through the scripture? Because in the volume of the book, it speaks of the greatest blessing, the greatest hope that man could ever have in our relationship with you.

Lord, you know our hearts. Lord, it's not about what we give to you. Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 13, he says, if I give my body to be burned, if I give everything I have and I don't have love, well, then it's accounted as nothing.

Lord, it's willingness that you're looking for, a willing heart. And remarkably, God, the willingness that you're looking for is not for me to say, okay, I'll be good. It's a willingness to say, God, I'm not good, but I'm willing for you to make me so.

[53 : 03] I'm willing to receive the life that you give. And Lord, those of us who've entered into that life, how often we come back to the mercy seat. How wonderful, Lord, to daily, to moment by moment know that you are dwelling with us.

The means by which God would progress with man through this world will never be taken away. We have the abiding presence of your Holy Spirit. We can come to the seat of mercy. We can come and we can weep there and you'll say to us, why are you weeping?

We'll come seeking and you'll say, who are you seeking? And all you do, Lord, is just say our names. Thank you, Jesus. Thank you that you know our names. We love you, Lord.

We worship you. We praise you, Lord. We shout your name out because you are the God who saved us. You've given us love and life and hope. Meet with us now as we end in this song.

In Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.