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THE MERCY SEAT

In the Old Testament God gave Moses the pattern for “covering” the sins of the Hebrew children. God would meet Moses there and speak to him. It was the holiest of holy places for the Hebrew children. No one could enter in this place that was not a high priest.

Once a year the high priest would go into the holy of holies where the mercy seat dwelt. [Exodus 30] On the mercy seat were two Cherubim with wings outstretched covering the entire structure of the mercy seat. The blood of animals was sprinkled on the mercy seat as a sacrifice to “cover” sins for a year. This was done once a year, year after year. When the temple was destroyed and the mercy seat was gone, there was no place to make atonement for their sins.

In the New Testament in Hebrews 9:9 it says that the mercy seat and the blood applied, ***“...was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices...”***

In Hebrews 9:11-12 it says, ***“But Christ [Jesus] being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; 12 Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.”***

Jesus went into the heavenly holy of holies and placed his blood on the heavenly mercy seat. This became a permanent payment for sin. There would be no need for any other priest to go into the earthly mercy seat to do atonement once a year.

Because of God’s mercy, our sins were placed on Jesus and his one-time sacrifice became our eternal reward. We can thank God that it was done when Jesus said, ***“It is finished”*** [John 19:30] while dying on the cross. He looked beyond the pain of the crucifixion to the glory placed before him in the heavenlies.

We too can look beyond our sin, knowing we have a redemption that only sinless blood could make a reality. We can walk in the freedom of our redemption, because of God’s mercy. We accept this by faith, and not by works like they did in the Old Testament because we have a better covenant (Hebrews 8:6). Jesus’ blood remains on the mercy seat in heaven to remind us of his finished work and his mercy. Let us also be merciful to others.