

THERE I WILL MEET YOU

Exodus 25: 1-40
Key verse 25: 22

„There, above the cover between the two cherubim that are over the ark of the covenant law, I will meet with you and give you all my commands for the Israelites.”

We thank God for several lessons at the beginning of the year through which we could prepare this year to build a spiritual unity and to serve the work of spiritual revival with the victorious faith that overcomes the world. Let us also thank God for the mission journey of M. Peter and M. Pauline and that God uses them preciously as blessing and encouragement for our brethren in faith in America. Today we want to continue our Exodus Bible study by studying the 25th chapter. God had delivered the Israelites with a mighty hand from bondage of Egypt, led them through the Red Sea as if on dry land, and given them spiritual training in the desert. He endured all their grumbling and forgetfulness of grace. On Mount Sinai, God made a covenant with them, gave them the Ten Commandments, and made them His people. When Moses was on Mount Sinai, God also showed him the temple of God in heaven and gave him the order to make an image of it on earth: the tabernacle - the tent of meeting where God wanted to meet his people and to speak to them. Let us come today through faith to the throne of God's grace, where God wants to meet us and speak all His words to us. May God raise us as his holy people and use us preciously in his salvation history.

1. Raise an offering for me (1-9)

Let's look at verses 1,2: "The Lord said to Moses, 'Tell the Israelites to bring me an offering. You are to receive the offering for me from everyone whose heart prompts them to give.'" When God gave his promises to Abraham, the patriarch of Israel, he also foretold the 400-year bondage of Israel in Egypt saying in Genesis 15:14, "But I will punish the nation they serve as slaves, and afterwards they will come out with great possessions." In fulfillment of this promise, the Israelites took with them numerous treasures of the Egyptians as plunder when they left Egypt. Thus, God made it possible for them to offer a voluntary sacrifice for the building of the tabernacle. What a great change we see here in the people of Israel. In Egypt they had been a slave people that only moved when driven by the merciless Egyptian overseers. At that time they had no deep relationship with God. They had to serve the cruel Pharaoh as slave people. But God took care of their lamentation.

Through his servant Moses God saved them from cruel slavery. In the desert God endured all their rebellion and had mercy on them. giving them his word, the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai and promising them: "Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites." (Ex 19:5,6) Finally, God made the Israelites his people through the Covenant at Mount Sinai in blood (Ex 24:8b): "This is the blood of the covenant that the Lord has made with you in accordance with all these words."

We also used to live in the slavery of sin: in selfishness, desires, arrogance and rebellion

against God. But when God became flesh in Jesus Christ and gave his life as a ransom on the cross, we were saved by the blood of Jesus and reconciled with God. Whoever accepts this salvation work of God in Jesus Christ by faith and acknowledges his sins before God, he will become a new creature in Jesus. This grace of God is the reason for our thankfulness. Our thankfulness can be expressed practically when we give a sacrifice to our Lord. Because Jesus has saved us from the slavery of sin and given a new life in him, we come with our thankfulness to God. Our new life is, like Apostle Paul says in Romans 12:1 a living sacrifice: „Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship..“

Look at verses 3-7 together: “These are the offerings you are to receive from them: gold, silver and bronze; blue, purple and scarlet yarn and fine linen; goat hair; ram skins dyed red and another type of durable leather; acacia wood; olive oil for the light; spices for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense; and onyx stones and other gems to be mounted on the ephod and breastpiece.”

All these things are very precious. God wanted to use them for building of his tabernacle. We learn that we are to give our best to God with thankfulness. Like the Israelites we also should always remember what God has done for us, most of all: how he has loved us in Jesus without any conditions and gave us forgiveness of sins and a new life in Jesus. 2 Corinthians 9:7 says: “Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”

A small girl saw how her father became very ill and how many nursing staffs cared for her father wholeheartedly. In this way the heart of the girl was moved. While she could not do anything for her ill father, she experienced how devotedly the nursing staff took care for her father. She became so thankful for that, that she took all her money and gave it to the nursing staff, next time, when she visited them, out of thankfulness.

How much reason do we have to say "Thank you" to God! Our missionaries devoted their life security and career in Korea and came to Germany and Europe to serve young men on campus through Bible study. God's servant offered his doctoral degree to serve the ministry full time. Our shepherds gave up their worldly career to live as full-time shepherds for the ministry. After their hard work in their job, they did not have a comfortable evening after work but dedicated themselves to Bible study and serving sheep and the next generation. We are also encouraged by the example of M. Peter Kim in New Jersey, who decided to give his life as a full-time shepherd to God for the ministry in New Jersey.

We were spiritually dead and lost in sin. However, God came to us and served us in Jesus. He placed us alongside shepherds and Bible teachers who selflessly served us with the prayer and word of God. That is why, as one song says, we have 10,000 reasons to thank God and to devote our lives to him as a voluntary offering. Our early morning prayer may be a voluntary offering for the Lord. Our working together to form 10,000 1:1 Bible study teams may be a voluntary offering for the Lord. Our serving for one sheep and for the next generation may be a voluntary offering. Let us offer our voluntary offering to God this year out of love and gratitude, so that through our offering God's spiritual house may be built at the 1,700 universities in Germany and Europe and into the Muslim world.

Let's look at verse 8: " Then have them make a sanctuary for me, and I will dwell among them." Here we find God's heart's desire to dwell among his people. God is the holy God who cannot have fellowship with sinners. But God wants to dwell among the sinful people.

This reveals God's great grace of Immanuel, that he wants to be with us, even though we are impure sinners. Neither the Israelites then nor we today deserved this. But this reveals God's heart. that he wants to reveal himself to men, to be with them and to meet them in his sanctuary.

Let us look at verse 9: "Make this tabernacle and all its furnishings exactly like the pattern I will show you." We can find the meaning in the word "exactly". Moses was to build the tabernacle exactly, that is, according to the pattern that God had shown him on the mountain. We must serve God in God's way. If someone does not come to worship service with the argument that he could worship God outdoors in nature; or does not participate in early morning prayer and yet claims to cowork for the spiritual revival, he must learn that we serve God in God's way and cowork by forming spiritual unity. This year, let us serve God in God's way by serving our next generation and sheep through Bible study and GLE follow-up, so that they may grow to excellent Bible teachers and spiritual leaders who serve God in God's way.

2. There I will meet you (10-40)

In this part, God begins by describing the objects in the tabernacle. The description begins with the center of the tabernacle, the ark of the covenant, which stood in the most holy place of the tent. Let's look at verse 10: "Have them make an ark of acacia wood—two and a half cubits long, a cubit and a half wide, and a cubit and a half high." The ark of the covenant was to be about 1.25 m long, 75 cm wide and 75 cm high, made of acacia wood and covered with pure gold. Acacia wood is a particularly hard wood and largely resistant to pests. That is why acacia wood is also called "unbreakable wood". The ark of the covenant was to contain the two tablets of the covenant law that Moses had received from God. Just as the ark of the covenant was the center of the sanctuary, the word of God should also be the center of our spiritual life for us. We can grow spiritually if God's Word dwells at the center of our lives. We also write personal testimonies to the Sunday message so that we receive one word of God and so that it dwells at the center of our spiritual life.

Let's look at verse 17: "Make an atonement cover of pure gold—two and a half cubits long and a cubit and a half wide." The atonement cover was a golden plate that covered the ark of the covenant from above. On the atonement cover, there were two cherubim, which spread out their wings toward one another and covered the atonement cover. The presence of the cherubim indicates God's holiness. The atonement cover above the ark of the covenant conveys that no man can enter into the holiness of God without the grace of God. The grace of God covers all our transgressions, purifies and sanctifies our lives.

In the Old Testament, once a year the atonement cover in the most holy place was sprinkled with the blood of a sacrificial animal. The high priest brought about the forgiveness of sins. But this animal sacrifice had to be repeated again and again. Through the coming of Jesus Christ, God began a whole new epoch. Hebrews 9:13-14 says: „The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on those who are ceremonially unclean sanctify them so that they are outwardly clean. How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!“

God has placed the atonement cover on the ark of the covenant law so that we can fulfill God's laws, live as God's people, and receive forgiveness for our sins from God. Ultimately, God sent Jesus into the world to redeem us once and for all through his death

on the cross as the true sacrificial lamb through his holy blood. When Jesus died on the cross, the curtain in the most holy place was torn. This testified that the way to God had become free for all men. By the grace of Jesus, we are allowed to enter the most holy place and have deep fellowship with God at the atonement cover.

Let's look at verse 22: „There, above the cover between the two cherubim that are over the ark of the covenant law, I will meet with you and give you all my commands for the Israelites.“

This verse reveals God's heart for his people. God is a holy God. How can we encounter this holy God? God himself says: „I want!“ It is God's heart's desire, to be with his people. Through the atonement cover God has opened a way and an opportunity for this encounter to happen. The Israelites had quarreled and sinned against God again and again. We too in our pride sin against God and draw his wrath upon us. But the atonement cover is a clear sign for the coming Saviour Messiah. Jesus became our mediator through which we can come to God John 1:14 says: „The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.“ Hebrews 4:16 says: „Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.“ Without grace we cannot stand before God. Without grace we can't fulfill God's laws and standards. Without grace we are helpless sinners that have to be judged and condemned. Let's thank God that through Jesus' incarnation God's justice and grace came together to open the way for us to be with God. By faith we can come to God with our sins and confess them; God will embrace us. Instead of banishing us as we deserve, he wants to talk with us. Praise be to God! We couldn't come to God by ourselves. But repentance is the way that God prepared for us. 1 John 1: 8,9 say: „If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.“

At the atonement cover God wants to speak to us. He gives us a clear direction. We can hear God's word from Ezekiel 37:10: „So I prophesied as he commanded me, and breath entered them; they came to life and stood up on their feet—a vast army.“ We can hear the words of life. „This is what the Lord says: “In the time of my favor I will answer you, and in the day of salvation I will help you; I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people, to restore the land and to reassign its desolate inheritances, to say to the captives, ‘Come out,’ and to those in darkness, ‘Be free!’ “They will feed beside the roads and find pasture on every barren hill. They will neither hunger nor thirst, nor will the desert heat or the sun beat down on them. He who has compassion on them will guide them and lead them beside springs of water.“ (Isaiah 49: 8-10).

God invites us to come to him as we are. Our sin separates us from God and we have to perish in his Holiness. But because Jesus has made a way for us, we can stand before God. Our own pride and human justice separate us from God and hinder us from receiving his grace. But Jesus speaks to us and invites us (Matthew 11:28): „Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.“ The tabernacle shows God's love for the fallen people because it opened a way for encounter. Let's come to the atonement cover today. Let's renew his salvation grace in our hearts and our relationship to him. Nowadays people try to find happiness on their own measures, through meditation or psychology. Many think that they can live the life they want and that the loving God will forgive them in the end. Today's passage teaches us that we can come to the atonement cover through Christ alone and stand before God.

Let's look at verse 23: „Make a table of acacia wood—two cubits long, a cubit wide and a cubit and a half high.“ In verses 23-30 the table on the north side of the tabernacle is described. On this table there were bowls, other items and bread, symbolizing the 12 tribes of Israel. Only the priests could eat from that bread once a week. Following that, the bread had to be replaced. This table represents God's caring love. It is a symbol and sign for Jesus, who said that he is the bread of life. Whoever comes to him and believes will not hunger.

Verses 31-39 describe the lampstand, which was built out of one talent of pure gold and had seven branches. It should shine day and night. It was the only source of light in the holy place. The lampstand shows men the way to the holy of holies. It refers to Jesus who said in John 8:12: “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”

Today we have learned the love of God to the sinful men. The holy God wants to be in the midst of his sinful people! What a privilege and grace! It shows us God's heart for sinners. Because of his heart for us, he sent his one and only son Jesus to the world, who became ransom sacrifice for us on the cross. And who became our way to the cover and to the eternal communion with God. God invites us today, to come to Jesus by faith and accept his blood for our salvation at the atonement cover. God will speak the words of life to us. Let's build 10.000 1:1 Bible study teams, so that young students come to the atonement cover, where God speaks with them and they become alive again, according to Ezekiel 37:10. May they be awakened and changed to a vast army of shepherds and bible teachers and as God's holy people for the awakening of Germany, Europe and of the Muslim world.

Let's read the key verse 22: “There, above the cover between the two cherubim that are
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