

On the Throne of Grace

How often, dear reader, have you heard - or you yourself have spoken in public prayer and began, "Lord, we come before the throne of grace. . ." What is our perception of "the throne of grace?" Well might our prayer be impacted; take on a renewed strength and boldness if the eyes of our understanding were to be better focused. . . Ah, but we see through a glass darkly. Presented here are no more than abridged reflections, as one might as such, view by the light of a flickering candle. May reader and writer find the time to ponder these things: may they be a stepping stone that will lead us on to "the throne of grace."

"There is a throne of grace set up, a way of worship instituted, in which God may with honour meet poor sinners, and treat with them, and they may with hope draw nigh to Him, repenting and believing. . . The office of Christ, as being our high priest, and such a high priest, should be the ground for our confidence in all our approaches to the throne of grace. Had we not a Mediator, we could have no boldness in coming to God; for we are guilty and polluted creatures. All we do is polluted; we cannot go into the presence of God alone; we must either go in the hand of a Mediator or our hearts and our hopes will fail us. We have boldness to enter into the Holiest by the blood of Jesus. He is our Advocate, and, while He pleads for His people, he pleads with the price in His hand, by which he purchased all that our souls want or can desire."

Matthew Henry's Commentary, Vol. VI, page 909.

The Throne of Grace: the Most Holy Place.

"But Christ 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; 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" Heb. 9: 11,12. "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands [the earthly tabernacle of the Old Testament] which are the figures of the true; [types, patterns] but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:" Heb. 9: 24. "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. Heb. 4: 14.

The Throne and the Mercy Seat.

John describes the throne. "and behold a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne. And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald" Rev. 4: 2,3.

Within the Most Holy Place there was but one seat, the Mercy Seat, which was reserved for Jehovah Himself. The Mercy seat rested upon the Ark of the Covenant. It "rested" in that God would find rest and satisfaction in that One great sacrifice of Christ's redeeming blood that He as Great High Priest would offer upon it. "And thou shalt put the mercy seat above the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee. And *there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat*, from between the two cherubims, which are upon the ark of the testimony" Exodus 25: 21,22. The Mercy Seat IS the Throne of God! "Seeing then that we have a great high priest. . . Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace" ¾ "And there I will meet with thee, and will commune with thee from above the

mercy seat!” In mercy God looks upon us in compassion, not meting out what we deserve; but rather, in Christ, showing abundant grace, “unmerited favor.”

“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 a high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith. . .” Heb. 10:19-21a.

The Throne of Grace, Its Origin.

There are some who might assume that the Throne of Grace, the Mercy Seat, came into being only after Jesus ascended into heaven at the right hand of the Father. But where was He before coming to earth as the Babe in the manger? Before He left the portals of Glory was He not at the right hand of God? What of the testimony of Isaiah: “I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. . . Then said I, Woe is me! . . . for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts” Isa. 6:1,5. Isa. 44:5. “But Noah [as a sinner] found grace in the eyes of the Lord” Gen. 6:8. Looking into the eyes of the Lord, Noah found them full of grace, of unmerited favor, toward himself. And from whence came this grace? Is it not from the throne of grace? And what of Moses? “I know thee by name, and thou hast also found grace in my sight. . . if I have found grace in thy sight, show me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight” Exodus 33:12,13. “Moses. . . Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. . . he endured, as seeing him who is invisible” Heb. 11:26a, 27b.

Though not having been there, we must conclude the throne of God to have co-existed with God in eternity past (as though eternity can be said to have a past.) The rent in twain of the veil from top to bottom at the time of Jesus’ death is supposed by many to be the very first time that God would signify that any man might approach the Throne of Grace. (The rending of the veil was symbolically the acknowledgement of God that the High Priest had entered within the veil and sprinkled His blood upon the Mercy Seat, and the verification His acceptance of that offering.) The veil of the Tabernacle was an earthly symbol, representative of the ever existing and eternal person of Christ. As the veil was the only way of entrance into the Most Holy, even so is Christ the only “Way” into heaven and the Most Holy Place.

The Throne of Grace and Adam. “So He drove out the man; and He placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to *keep the way* of the tree of life” Notice, the Cherubims were just as responsible as the flaming sword to “keep the way.” *Shamar*, Heb., to hedge about, to guard, protect, attend.

Even in those early days might man “come. . . to the throne of grace” that he might “obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need” Heb. 4:16. But he must approach the throne with blood, for “without shedding of blood is no remission” [of sin]. Heb. 9:22.

Understand, it is not that the “Way” was closed *against* man; rather that a Way was *opened* in his *stead*; a Way that would provide redemption and reconciliation! Is it any wonder then that in this one verse we find “the Way,” the flaming sword “Truth,” and the tree of “Life!” Herein do we find Old Testament design, a portrayal of what God would do because He “so loved the world.” “To “keep the way of the tree of life.” Christ *is* the *only* WAY, He *is* the *only* LIFE. There is *no other way* to enter the Presence of God. Jesus made it quite clear in His discourse of the Good Shepherd. He alone is the Door (Way). It is He who the inner “veil” of the O.T. Tabernacle symbolized. The “Way” is protected that man may come, *but only God’s Way*, and that “Way” is by the shedding of blood, and that being consummated in the offering of the blood of His

Lamb.

If God made coats of skins to clothe Adam and Eve, then He must needs have *shed the first blood* that man's sin might be atoned for. He again shed the *last blood* to redeem man, and that being the precious blood of His own Son. If there is a sacrifice to be offered, there must needs be an *altar* upon which it is made. At the east of the Garden we are shown the two Cherubims; the Sword of Truth; the Way of the Tree of Life. In the Tabernacle in the wilderness, within the veil, was the Most Holy Place. There we find *two Cherubims* "protecting," "overshadowing" the altar or Mercy Seat. "And over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercyseat." Heb. 9:5. Above was the Presence of The Most Holy God. Shall any deny the parallel of this picture with that to be found east of the Garden? That there was an *altar* established at that place there can be no doubt: a Place where Adam might offer sacrifices unto the Lord; where his sons might come to make offerings unto Him. And they did. Certainly Abel knew this: "For the shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. . . For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats [nor lambs] should take away sins" "We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" Heb. 9: 1,4,10. Even as Abraham, Abel believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. To Abel was imputed the righteousness of Christ; and it was by faith. Abel shed the blood of the sacrifice; he presented the offering before the Lord God upon the altar, which was overshadowed, protected by the two Cherubim: the same picture found in the Most Holy Place. (For further material on this subject, please visit "The Gospel According to Abel.")

"Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving" Psalm 95: 2. "Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing" Psalm 100:2. Let the Old Testament believer "come boldly to the throne of grace!" True, it is symbolic: but nevertheless *reality!* It is a way for our Lord to communicate and give knowledge of eternal things; to reveal the Gospel of Christ!

Surely He Hath Born Our Grievs and Carried Our Sorrows.

"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" vs.15. "Who [Christ] can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity." "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered" Heb. 5:2,8.

When Satan tempts he places an allurements before us with the object of encompassing our downfall; but when God tempts or tests us, He has our welfare at heart. Every trial is thus a temptation, for it serves to make manifest the prevailing disposition of the heart - whether it be holy or unholy. Christ was "in all points tempted like as we are, sin (indwelling) excepted" Heb. 4:15. His temptation was real, yet there was no conflict within him (as in us) between good and evil - His inherent holiness repelled Satan's impious suggestions as water does fire. We are to "count it all joy when we fall into divers temptations" or "manifest trials," since they are means of mortifying our lusts, tests of our obedience, opportunities to prove the sufficiency of God's grace.

Interpretation of the Scriptures, Arthur W. Pink

The Throne of Grace - a Refuge for the Weary.

"There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. Let us labour therefore to enter into

that [His] rest” Heb. 4:9,11. “Where can I find that rest?” “Come unto me [to the throne of grace] all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you [my] rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I AM meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls” Matt. 11:28,29.

“But what did God mean by calling it *His* rest? Not they enter into *their* rest, but His own. Does God give us righteousness? He Himself *is* our righteousness, Jehovah-Tsidkenu. Does God give us peace? Christ *is* our peace. Does God give us light? He *is* our light. Does God give us bread? He *is* the bread we eat. God Himself is our strength. God is ours, and in all gifts and blessings He gives Himself. By the Holy Spirit we are one with Christ, and Christ the Son of God is our righteousness, nay our life. What more real presence and indwelling, awful and blessed, can we have than that which the apostle described when he said: ‘I live; yet not I, But Christ liveth in me?’ Thus God gives us *His* rest as our rest” (Saphir)

We insert here a segment from our article, “Christ, Our Refuge.” It deals with the Old Testament “cities of refuge” and the “avenger of blood.”

“The little word *ga'al* has yet another meaning in its definition and operation. It is *Redeemer*. And what is the business of the Redeemer? To die in the stead of the guilty sinner; for him that is worthy of death; who has no city of refuge to which he can flee. To buy back, to ransom, to deliver the guilty from the avenger of blood: to set him *free indeed!* [John 8:36] Look at the definition: *avenger* [or *revenger*, used interchangeably]. It is also the same word used for Boaz, the *kinsman/redeemer* in the book of Ruth! *Ga'al*, to redeem (according to the oriental law of kinship), i.e. to be the next of kin (and as such to *buy back* a relative’s property, marry his widow, etc., deliver, purchase, ransom, redeemer, revenger.

Christ is *ga'al*. He is both the Avenger of blood *and* Redeemer of blood. Those who refuse Him, who despise His invitation will find Him to be the Avenger of blood, while those who fall before Him in repentance and faith, will find Him the Redeemer of Blood.

“This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses” Acts 2:32. He is a “strong consolation” to whom we can *flee for refuge* to lay hold upon the hope set before us. . .an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast. . .even Jesus!” Heb. 6:18-20.”

“Come Boldly Unto the Throne of Grace.”

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also [Christ] we *have access* by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God” Rom. 5:1,2.

How shall I, a sinful creature, approach the throne of grace? “I am too sinful to approach the throne of grace.” No, I am too sinful *not* to approach the throne of grace. “The Lord may chasten me if I approach the throne of grace.” No, the Lord may chasten me if I *do not* approach the throne of grace.

Shall I follow the folly of Adam, who “hid himself” from God among the trees? “Neither is there any *creature* [Adam!] that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are *naked* [Adam!] and opened unto the eyes of him with who we have to do. vs.13. For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart” vs. 12. We might call that Godly Insight!

“Boldly is not contrasted with reverently and tremblingly. It means literally ‘saying all,’ with that confidence which begets thorough honesty, frankness, full and open speech. ‘Pour out your heart before Him.’ Come as you are, say what you feel, ask what you need. Confess your sins, your fears, your wandering thoughts and affections. . . We need only understand that we are sinners, and that He is High Priest. The law was given that every mouth may be shut, for we are guilty. The High Priest is given that every mouth may be opened. . . We come in faith as sinners. Then shall we obtain mercy; and we always need mercy, to wash our feet: to restore to us the joy of salvation, to heal our backslidings, and bind up our wounds. . . “We should come therefore with boldness to the throne of grace” (Bagster). Then let us do so, in the full confidence of our acceptance before God in the person of His Beloved. . . Let us ‘come’ constantly, continually.

Exposition of Hebrews, A. W. Pink

Just as I am, without one plea, But that thy blood was shed for me,

And that thou bidd'st me come to Thee, O Lamb of God, I come! I come!

“That We May Obtain Mercy and Find Grace to Help in Time of Need.”

“They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick” Matt. 9:12, Mark 2:17, Luke 5:31.

“Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered” Rom. 8:26. And he [Christ, our great high priest] that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God” Rom. 8:27. The Spirit maketh intercession for us; Christ maketh intercession for the saints - and it's all done according to the will of God!

“Blessed Assurance, Jesus is Mine!”

“Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us” Rom. 8:34. Christ, our intercessor, at the right hand of God? The blood of the everlasting covenant upon the mercy seat before the Eternal God? The indwelling Spirit of Christ, “not I, but Christ liveth in me?” The sure Word of Truth, forever settled in heaven, yet hid within our earthen vessels?

“If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him” John 15:23. “For he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee” Heb. 13:5.

Is not this the God who would bid us “come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need?”

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