

HWMR - CRYSTALLIZATION STUDY OF NUMBERS, Book 2, Week 8

**God's Speaking
from between the Cherubim of Glory**

Scripture Reading: Num. 7:89; Exo. 24:15-18; 25:8, 17-22; Psa. 80:1; 99:1; Heb. 1:3; 9:4-5; 4:12, 14, 16;
2 Cor. 3:18; 4:4, 6; Rev. 21:2-3, 10-11, 16, 22-23; 22:1-5

- Numbers 7:89** And when Moses went **into** the **Tent of Meeting** to **speak** with Him, he **heard** the voice speaking to him **from above** the **expiation cover** that was **upon** the **Ark of the Testimony**, **from between** the **two cherubim**; and he **spoke** to Him.
- Exodus 24:15 And Moses went up to the **top of the mountain**, and the cloud covered the mountain.
- Exodus 24:16 And the **glory of Jehovah** settled on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days; and on the seventh day He called to Moses out of the midst of the cloud.
- Exodus 24:17 And the appearance of the **glory of Jehovah** was like consuming afire on the **top of the mountain** to the eyes of the children of Israel.
- Exodus 24:18 And Moses **entered** into the midst of the cloud and **went up** on the mountain; and Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights.
- Exodus 25: 8** And let them **make a sanctuary** for Me that I may dwell in their midst;
- Exodus 25:17** And you shall **make an expiation cover** of pure gold: two and a half cubits shall be its length, and one and a half cubits, its width.
- Exodus 25:18** And you shall **make two cherubim** of gold; of beaten work you shall make them, at the two ends of the expiation cover.
- Exodus 25:19** And **make** one cherub at one end and one cherub at the other end; **of one piece with the expiation cover** you shall make the cherubim on its two ends.
- Exodus 25:20 And the cherubim shall **spread** out their wings above the cover, **covering** the expiation cover with their wings, with their faces toward one another; the faces of the cherubim shall be **toward** the expiation cover.
- Exodus 25:21** And you shall put the **expiation cover on top of the Ark**, and **into** the Ark you shall put the Testimony that I shall give you.
- Exodus 25:22** And **there I will meet with you, and I will speak with you from above the expiation cover, from between the two cherubim** which are **upon** the **Ark of the Testimony**, of everything which I will give you in commandment to the children of Israel.
- Psalms 80: 1 O Shepherd of Israel, **give ear**, You who lead Joseph like a flock;
- Psalms 99: 1** Jehovah reigns; let the peoples tremble. He is **enthroned between the cherubim**; let the earth shake.
- Hebrews 1: 3 Who, being the **effulgence** of His **glory** and the **impress** of His **substance** and **upholding** and **bearing** all things by the word of His power, having made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;
- Hebrews 9: 4 Having a **golden altar and the ark of the covenant covered** about everywhere with gold, in which were the golden pot that had the manna and Aaron's rod that budded and the tablets of the covenant,
- Hebrews 9: 5** And **above it cherubim of glory overshadowing the propitiation place**, concerning which it is not now the time to speak in detail.
- Hebrews 10:19** Having therefore, brothers, **boldness** for entering the Holy of Holies **in the blood** of Jesus,
- Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is living and operative and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit and of joints and marrow, and able to discern the thoughts and intentions of the heart.
- Hebrews 4:14 Having therefore a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast the confession.
- Hebrews 4:16** Let us therefore **come forward** with **boldness** to the **throne of grace** that we may receive mercy and find grace for timely help.
- 2 Cor. 3:18** But we all with unveiled face, **beholding** and **reflecting** like a mirror **the glory of the Lord**, are being **transformed** into the **same image** from **glory to glory**, even as from the Lord Spirit.
- 2 Cor. 4: 4 In whom the god of this age has blinded the thoughts of the unbelievers that the **illumination** of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, might not **shine** on them.
- 2 Cor. 4: 6 Because the God who said, Out of darkness light shall shine, is the One who shined in our hearts to **illuminate** the knowledge of the **glory** of God **in the face of Jesus Christ**.
- Revelation 21: 2 And I saw the holy city, **New Jerusalem**, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
- Revelation 21: 3 And I **heard** a loud voice out of the throne, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will **tabernacle with them**, and they will be His peoples, and God Himself will be with them and be their God.
- Revelation 21:10 And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and **showed** me the **holy city, Jerusalem, coming down** out of heaven from God,

Revelation 21:11 Having the **glory of God**. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal.

Revelation 21:16 And the city lies square, and its length is as great as the breadth. And he measured the city with the reed to a length of twelve thousand stadia; the length and the breadth and the height of it are equal.

Revelation 21:22 And I saw **no temple** in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.

Revelation 21:23 And the city has **no need of** the sun or of the moon that they should **shine in it**, for the glory of God **illuminated it**, and its lamp is the Lamb.

Revelation 22: 1 And he showed me a river of **water of life**, bright as crystal, **proceeding** out of the throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its street.

Revelation 22: 2 And on this side and on that side of the river was the **tree of life**, **producing** twelve fruits, yielding its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

Revelation 22: 3 And there will no longer be a curse. And **the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it**, and His slaves will serve Him;

Revelation 22: 4 And they will **see His face**, and His name will be on their foreheads.

Revelation 22: 5 And night will be no more; and they have **no need of the light** of a lamp and of the light of the sun, for **the Lord God will shine upon them; and they will reign forever and ever.**

MORE THAN A FRIEND

At this juncture the Bible recognizes that Moses was a **companion** of God. Exodus 33:11 says, “*And Jehovah would speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his companion.*” The Hebrew word rendered “**companion**” here is different from the word for “**friend**” used with respect to **Abraham** in 2 Chronicles 20:7 and Isaiah 41:8. As a friend of God, Abraham had been **separated** from idolatrous people (Josh. 24:2-3), and he interceded for Lot (Gen. 18:16-33). The apostle James also tells us that Abraham was God's friend (James 2:23). Not only was Abraham justified by God, but he also **became a friend of God**. God regarded Abraham as **a beloved one**, a person held in affection. However, **Moses** was not only a friend of God like Abraham; he was also **a companion of God**.

The word “**companion**” **includes** the elements of **friendship**, but it goes much further to include the thought of **intimate** association. One meaning of the Hebrew word for companion is associate. **A companion is an associate**. If you and someone else are associates, you have a **common interest**, a common enterprise, in a common career. I do not wish to imply that there was no common interest between Abraham and God. They did share a common interest, but it was not of the same **degree** as that between Moses and God. To the uttermost, God and Moses were partners in a great enterprise. They were both involved in the same “career.” Moses and the Lord were not only intimate friends; they were associates, partners, companions.

DAY 1

I. The Lord spoke to Moses face to face, just as a man speaks to his companion — Exo. 33:11; Num. 12:7-8:

- A. God and Moses were **companions**, associates, partners, **involved** in the same career and having a **common interest** in a great enterprise.
- B. Because Moses was **intimate** with God, he was a person who **knew** God's heart, who was according to God's heart, and who **could touch** God's heart; thus, he had God's presence to a full extent—Exo. 33:14.

The point we are making here is that with the Lord and Moses there was something more than friendship. The **conversation** between them was not only that between friends but that between **companions**, partners. God and Moses were both concerned with their “corporation,” with their “enterprise” and “career.” Both parties had the wisdom not to speak about the situation in an altogether direct and detailed way. First **the Lord spoke to Moses** concerning the people and the golden calf. Then **He left it up to Moses to deal with the situation**. The Lord seemed to be saying to him, “*Moses, I give this matter to you. Go down to the foot of the mountain and see what can be worked out.*” Contrary to what we would expect, the Lord did not give Moses detailed requirements about **grinding** the calf to powder, **scattering** the powder on water, and **forcing** the idolaters to drink this water. Neither did the Lord tell Moses to call for the overcomers to slay the idolaters and, after that, to speak to the people in behalf of the Lord and then to return to the Lord again on the mountaintop. The Lord **simply pointed out to Moses** what the people were doing. But because Moses **knew what was on God's heart**, everything he did concerning the worship of the golden calf was pleasing to God. For example, it was a very serious matter to **cast away the tablets** on which were engraved the commandments carved by God's hand. But not even that act offended God, for it was **done according to God's heart**. Moses realized that it was according to God's heart to break those tablets. As a **companion** of God, Moses had an **intimate relationship with Him** and knew what was on His heart. Therefore, everything Moses did was according to the heart of God. (Life-Study of Exodus, Chapter 176, Section 4)

- C. In Exodus 24:15-18 Moses was in the Holy of Holies, where the **shekinah glory** was:
 1. There were at least **three classes** of people at **different distances** in relation to Mount Horeb:
 - a. The majority of the children of Israel were **at the bottom of the mountain** standing at a distance and trembling—20:18.
 - b. Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and the seventy elders were **on the mountain** worshipping at a distance and watching—24:1, 9.

- c. Moses was **on the mountaintop** being infused with God under His glory and receiving the vision of the tabernacle as God's dwelling place on earth—vv. 13, 16a; 25:1, 8-9.
2. These **three locations**—**corresponding** to the **three parts of the tabernacle** (the outer court, the Holy Place, and the Holy of Holies)—**illustrate** the fact that among God's people there are **different degrees of fellowship with Him**.
3. The principle in Exodus 24 with Moses on the mountaintop under God's glory receiving commandments from God is **the same as** that in Numbers 7:89, which concerns Moses speaking with God in the Tent of Meeting.

DAY 2

II. When Moses went into the Tent of Meeting to speak with God, he heard the voice speaking to him from **above the expiation cover** that was upon the Ark of the Testimony, from **between the two cherubim**—v. 89; Exo. 25:17-22: 37

- A. The **expiation cover** signifies Christ as **the place** where God **meets** with His redeemed people and **speaks** to them in grace— v. 22; Num. 7:89.
- B. The **cherubim on the expiation cover** signify God's **glory** (Ezek. 10:18) and are called "cherubim of glory" (Heb. 9:5); thus, the cherubim on the expiation cover **indicate** that Christ expresses God's glory (John 1:14):
 1. The **two cherubim were one piece with the expiation cover**; this **indicates** that God's glory shines **out from** Christ and **upon** Christ as the expiation cover to be a testimony—Exo. 25:19; cf. John 1:14; 2 Cor. 4:4, 6:
 - a. This manifestation of God, this glory of God, is the testimony of God—Exo. 37:7-8.
 - b. Two is the number of testimony; the glory of God becomes the testimony of God.
 - c. **Upon** Christ and **with** Christ, there is the **manifestation of God**, which is the glory of God, and this manifestation as the glory of God is the testimony of God.

THE COVER OF THE ARK

Exodus 37:6-9 tells us that **upon the Ark** there **was a cover**, which was called the **mercy seat**, the **expiation cover**. It was the **cover**, but it was also a **seat**. This seat, **this cover, was the very spot where man could meet God, and God could meet man**. God and man met together at this seat as the cover of the Ark.

..., what is depicted in these verses is **not an open Ark**. All the **commandments** were **covered** by the **expiation cover**, and this cover became the seat where God could meet man, and man could meet God. The **blood** of the sin offering was brought into the Holy of Holies to be **sprinkled** on the expiation cover (Lev. 16:14, 15). **Without the covering and without the shedding of blood to redeem us from our sins, the testimony of God, which is Christ Himself to testify what God is and to show us what we are, would be a condemnation to us**. But, praise the Lord, there is a **covering**, there is a **redemption**. He died on the cross, shedding His blood to redeem us and to provide a cover. By this cover we could meet God, and God could meet us, with all the problems between man and God having been resolved. With this cover, with this seat of mercy, there is the **reconciliation** between God and man.

Upon the **expiation cover** there were **two cherubim** (Exo. 37:7-9), **signifying** the **glory of God** (Heb. 9:5). **The glory of God is the manifestation of God**. God manifested is glory. We may compare glory to the shining of electrical lights, which is the glory of the electricity. When God shines Himself out, He becomes the glory. **God is manifested in Christ**, so upon Christ you can see the glory of God. (Spiritual Applications of the Tabernacle, Chapter 10, Section 2)

THE BLOOD ON THE EXPIATION COVER

The content of the church life is Christ, and this Christ is filled with all that God is. **Upon Him** there is the **manifestation** of God as the glory, continually **testifying, watching, and finding** our **shortages** according to the inner testimony. The **two cherubim are upon the Ark** watching according to the testimony (the law) within the Ark. When we come to contact the Lord, these two cherubim look at us and check us according to the Ten Commandments. Immediately, we are found short. **We cannot stand before the Ten Commandments with the watching eyes of the two cherubim**. But thank the Lord! Under the watching eyes of the cherubim, **upon the expiation cover** is the **sprinkling** of the **blood**. This **sprinkled blood covers the Ten Commandments**. When we plead the blood, it speaks for us. (The Priesthood, Chapter 11, Section 3)

2. The **cherubim and the expiation cover were made of pure gold**; this **signifies** that the shining of Christ as the **effulgence of God's glory** is divine—25:17-18; Heb. 1:3.
- C. Jehovah, the Shepherd of Israel, was enthroned between the cherubim, and from there He shined forth—Psa. 80:1; 99:1; 1 Sam. 4:4; 2 Sam. 6:2.
- D. **From above** the expiation cover, **from between** the two cherubim which were upon the Ark of the Testimony, **God met with Moses and spoke with him**—Exo. 25:22:

DAY 3

1. The fact that God met with His people and spoke to them from above the expiation cover and between the cherubim **signifies that God meets with us and speaks to us in the propitiating Christ and in the glory expressed in the propitiating Christ as His testimony**—cf. 2 Cor. 3:8-11, 18.
2. For God to speak to His people from between the cherubim **means that He speaks to us in the midst of His glory**—Num. 7:89; Exo. 25:22; Psa. 80:1, 3; 99:1.
3. The glory in which God meets with us and speaks to us is **the shining of Christ**—2 Cor. 4:4, 6, 38

DAY 4

4. **The place of propitiation**, the expiation cover, with the cherubim **is nothing less than our dear Lord Jesus Himself**—Rom. 3:25:
 - a. Whenever God meets with us and speaks with us, this precious Christ is present.
 - b. Actually, it is in this shining Christ that God meets with us and speaks with us—Heb. 1:3.
5. **The expiation cover with the blood** of the sacrifices sprinkled on it **portrays the redeeming Christ in His humanity** (with His judicial redemption) and the **shining Christ in His divinity** (with His organic salvation) as the place where fallen sinners can meet with the righteous, holy, and glorious God and hear His word—Lev. 16:14-15, 29-30:
 - a. **The cherubim on the expiation cover signify** Christ's shining with His divinity, and the blood sprinkled on the cover signifies His humanity for redeeming; now we and God can **meet together** and **talk together** in the redeeming and shining Christ.

The Propitiation Place

Christ is the One who **makes propitiation** to God for us, He is the **propitiatory sacrifice**, and He is also the **propitiation place** where God can meet with His redeemed people. The **propitiation place** is **typified** in Exodus 25:17 by the **sin-covering lid on the Ark**. The Ark was the place where God met with people. **Underneath the lid of the Ark** was the **law of the Ten Commandments exposing** the sinfulness of the people and condemning them; **above the lid of the Ark** were the **two cherubim representing** God's glory and **observing** every action of the people. The exposing and condemning **law signifies** the **requirements** of God's **holiness** and His **righteousness according** to the law, and the observing **cherubim signify** the **requirements** of God's **glory according** to the expression of God. Unless these requirements were fulfilled and God was satisfied, there was no way for sinners to contact God and for God to communicate with them. However, by the lid of the Ark with the propitiating blood sprinkled on it on the Day of Expiation, the entire situation on the sinner's side was fully covered. **The propitiating blood sprinkled upon the propitiation cover met the requirements of the righteous law and of God's glory**. Therefore, upon this sin-covering lid **God could meet with the people** who broke His righteous law, and He could do this governmentally without any contradiction to His righteousness, even under the **observing** of the cherubim that bore His glory and overshadowed the lid of the Ark. Thus, the problem between man and God was appeased, enabling God to forgive and be merciful to man and thereby to give His grace to man. This is a **prefigure of Christ as the Lamb of God** taking away the sin that caused man to have a problem with God (John 1:29), thus **satisfying** all the requirements of God's holiness, righteousness, and glory and **appeasing** the relationship between man and God. Hence, God could pass over the people's sins that had previously occurred. Furthermore, in order to show forth His righteousness, God had to do this. This is what is referred to in Romans 3:25. (Conclusion of the New Testament, The (Msgs. 295-305), Chapter 2, Section 2)

DAY 5

- b. Upon the expiation cover and **in the midst** of the shining of His glory, we can **hear** God's voice, **learn** the desire of His heart, and **receive** vision, revelation, and instruction from Him.
- c. When we meet with the Lord in the Holy of Holies, we are infused by Him with all that He is—2 Cor. 3:18.

III. The expiation cover on the Ark in the Holy of Holies equals the throne of grace in Hebrews 4:16:

- A. As believers in Christ, we have **"boldness for entering the Holy of Holies in the blood of Jesus"**—10:19:
 1. It is a great matter **to enter into the Holy of Holies**, for there God in Christ is sitting on the throne of grace—4:16.
 2. In order to enter into such a place, **we must have boldness**, and we have it **by Christ's death and by His blood**.
 3. **By the blood** of Jesus **we have the boldness** to enter into the Holy of Holies at any time.
- B. The Holy of Holies today is in heaven, where the Lord Jesus is (9:12, 24), but even though we are still on earth, **we can enter into the Holy of Holies**:
 1. The secret is our spirit; **the Christ who is in heaven is also in our spirit**—2 Tim. 4:22.
 2. As the **heavenly ladder** (Gen. 28:12; John 1:51), He joins our spirit to heaven and brings heaven into our spirit.
 3. Whenever we **turn to our spirit**, we enter into the Holy of Holies, where we meet with God who is on the throne of grace.
- C. Whenever **we enter** into the **Holy of Holies** by the blood of Jesus, **we come** to the **throne of grace** within the veil to receive mercy and find grace from the ascended Christ in the heavens—Heb. 4:14, 16; 6:19-20:

1. The throne of grace is undoubtedly the throne of God, the **throne of authority** to all the universe, but to us, the believers, it is the **throne of grace**, **signified** by the **expiation cover over** the Ark of the Testimony in the Holy of Holies sprinkled **with the blood of Christ**—Exo. 25:17; Rom. 3:25; Lev. 16:15; Heb. 9:3, 5, 12.

DAY 6

2. The **covering of the Ark, the expiation cover**, **signifies** the throne of grace; **the expiation cover is the throne of grace where God meets with us and speaks with us**—Num. 7:89; Exo. 25:17-22:
 - a. Here God **meets** with His people and **communes** with them—vv. 21-22; Num. 7:89.
 - b. When we come to the throne of grace through the blood of Christ, we meet with God and commune with Him— Heb. 4:16; 10:19.
 - c. God speaks from the throne of grace, and at the throne of grace, the oracle in the Holy of Holies, we hear God's voice, see His countenance, enjoy His presence, and are one with Him in His economy.
 - d. At the throne of grace we look to the One on the throne, thanking Him and praising Him.
3. The throne of grace, **the reality of the expiation cover, is in our spirit**; whenever **we turn to our spirit and come to the throne of grace**, we correspond to Christ's heavenly ministry—4:12, 16; 7:25-26; 8:1; 13:20-21.
- D. When we are at the throne of grace in the Holy of Holies, we behold the glory of the Lord and are transformed into the image of the resurrected and glorified Christ from glory to glory, for we see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ— 2 Cor. 3:18; 4:4, 6.
- E. In the new heaven and new earth, **the entire city of New Jerusalem will be the Holy of Holies** filled with the glory of God, the light, shining in the Lamb as the lamp, and we will enjoy the throne of God and of the Lamb with the river of water of life, serve Him, see His face, live under His shining, and reign forever and ever—Rev. 21:2-3, 10-11, 16, 22-23; 22:1-5.

THE THRONE OF GOD, SIGNIFIED BY THE PROPITIATION COVER

After the unveiling of our High Priest, the writer encourages us to *“come forward with boldness to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace for timely help”* (4:16). The **throne of grace** is undoubtedly the **throne of God** which is in heaven (Rev. 4:2). The throne of God is the **throne of authority** to all the universe (Dan. 7:9; Rev. 5:1) on which God sits to control and rule over the universe. It is the throne of God's administration. But to us, the believers, it is the **throne of grace**, **signified** by the **propitiation cover** (the mercy seat) **over** the ark of testimony (Exo. 25:17-21; Rom. 3:25) **in** the Holy of Holies (Heb. 9:3, 5) sprinkled with the blood of Christ (Lev. 16:15; Heb. 9:12). It is here that God meets and communes with His people (Exo. 25:21-22). **When we come to the throne of grace through the blood of Christ, we meet with God and commune with Him.**

GOD'S HABITATION IN OUR SPIRIT

Hebrews 4:16 tells us to *“come forward with boldness to the throne of grace.”* Since the throne of grace is in the heavens, how can we come forward to it? According to fundamental teaching, we must wait until we die and go to heaven. But how can we come forward to it while we are still on earth? The secret is in verse 12 of the same chapter which speaks of the dividing of the soul and spirit by the living and operative word of God. As we have seen, **the very Christ who is sitting on the throne of grace in heaven** (Rom. 8:34) **is also now in us** (Rom. 8:10), that is, **in our spirit** (2 Tim. 4:22), where the habitation of God is (Eph. 2:22—“through the Spirit” should be rendered “in spirit”). As Christ is in our spirit, both the Father and the Spirit are also in our spirit (John 14:20, 23; Rom. 8:16). **The Triune God is here in our spirit.** At Bethel, the house of God, the habitation of God, which is the gate of heaven, Christ is the **ladder** who joins earth to heaven and brings heaven to earth (Gen. 28:12-17; John 1:51). **Although the throne of grace is in the heavens, our wonderful Christ has brought the third heaven into our spirit, the very place where God's habitation on earth is today.** Our spirit may be called today's Bethel. According to Genesis 28, **Bethel** is firstly a **place** and secondly God's **habitation**. Both the **place** and the **stone** were called Bethel. According to principle, **where God's habitation is, there is the heavenly ladder and the gate of heaven.** Christ, the wonderful One who came to us from God, who has accomplished and attained so much, and who is our Captain, Apostle, and High Priest, **has come into our spirit, making it the gate of heaven.** Now it is easy for us to come forward to the throne of grace, for it is right within the gate. While the throne of grace is in the heavens, by and through Christ it has been joined to our spirit.

Coming forward to the throne of grace is absolutely a **matter in our spirit**. If we are in the mind, it will be difficult for us to enter into the Holy of Holies. If we are a soulish person staggering in the wilderness of our soul, we shall be far away from the Holy of Holies. Since our spirit is the place of God's habitation today, it is the gate of heaven where Christ is the ladder that joins us, the people on earth, to heaven, and brings heaven to us. **Whenever we turn to our spirit, we enter into the gate of heaven and touch the throne of grace in heaven through Christ as the heavenly ladder.** For this, we need the living **word of God** to **pierce** into the depths of our being and **separate** our spirit from our wandering mind. As long as we are in our spirit, we have the gate of heaven. Within the gate is the throne of grace. It takes no time whatever to enter into the Holy of Holies, because there is no distance between it and our spirit. Whenever we say from the depths of our being, “O Lord Jesus,” we are immediately in the Holy of Holies, touching the throne of grace. How we need to touch the throne of grace! (Life-Study of Hebrews, Chapter 27, Section 3)