

Exodus 39:35

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The ark of the testimony, and the staves thereof, and the mercy seat,

Analysis

The ark of the testimony (ארון הַעֲדָה, aron ha'edut) with its staves (בָּדָב, badav) and mercy seat (כָּפֹת, kaporet) represents God's throne. The 'testimony' (עֲדָה, edut, i.e., the Ten Commandments) inside the ark taught that God's law stands at the center of His covenant. The mercy seat atop the law showed that mercy covers justice through atoning blood sprinkled there (Leviticus 16:14-15). This furniture prefigures Christ, who perfectly kept the law (Matthew 5:17) and became mercy for lawbreakers (Romans 3:25, hilasterion, propitiation/mercy seat).

Historical Context

The ark, most holy object in the tabernacle, resided in the Most Holy Place accessible only to the high priest once yearly (Yom Kippur). The staves, permanently inserted (Exodus 25:15), kept the ark ready for transport, teaching that God's presence accompanied Israel on their journey.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does the mercy seat covering the law teach that grace doesn't abolish but fulfills God's righteous requirements?
2. What does Christ being both lawkeeper and mercy seat reveal about His unique qualification as Mediator?

Interlinear Text

תְּהִלָּתְךָ תְּהִלָּתְךָ תְּהִלָּתְךָ תְּהִלָּתְךָ

H853 The ark of the testimony H853 and the staves H853

H727

H5715

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הַכְּפָרָתָה

thereof and the mercy seat

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