

Numbers 7:89

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And when Moses was gone into the tabernacle of the congregation to speak with him, then he heard the voice of one speaking unto him from off the mercy seat that was upon the ark of testimony, from between the two cherubims: and he spake unto him.

Analysis

When Moses entered the tabernacle, he heard 'the voice of one speaking unto him from off the mercy seat that was upon the ark of testimony, from between the two cherubims.' The mercy seat (kapporeth), where atoning blood was sprinkled, became the meeting place between holy God and sinful humanity. God spoke 'from between the cherubims' - guardians of divine holiness. This illustrates that God communicates through atonement. Christ is our mercy seat (Rom 3:25, 'propitiation' translates the same Greek word as 'mercy seat' in Heb 9:5). We hear God's voice through Christ's atoning work, not our own merit. The cherubim's wings overshadowed the mercy seat, picturing how God's holiness and mercy meet at the cross.

Historical Context

This verse concludes the dedication offerings chapter, showing that lavish worship enables communion with God. The specific location - between the cherubim on the mercy seat - recalls God's promise to meet Moses there (Ex 25:22). Unlike pagan shrines where priests spoke for supposedly silent gods, Israel's God actively spoke to His people through His appointed mediator. Moses alone entered the holy place to hear God; others accessed divine communication through Moses. This pattern

foreshadows Christ, the unique Mediator through whom God speaks in these last days (Heb 1:1-2).

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. Are you listening for God's voice through His revealed Word and His Son, or seeking mystical experiences apart from scriptural revelation?
2. How does understanding that God speaks through atonement affect your confidence in approaching Him in prayer?

Interlinear Text

מָעוֹד אֲלֵל אֲלֵי מִשְׁנֶה וְבֵבָב
And when Moses went into the tabernacle of the congregation
was gone H413 into the tabernacle of the congregation H4150

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהִי רָאשׁוֹ אֶת־עַשְׂמָן אֶת־בְּקָרְבָּן וְיֹאמֶר
and he spake H1696 with him then he heard H8085 the voice and he spake H1696

עַל אֲשֶׁר בְּכָפְרַת מֵעַל אֶל־י
unto him from off the mercy seat H3727

בְּכָרְבֵי מִשְׁבֵּן אֶת־קָדְשָׁן
that was upon the ark of testimony H5715 from between the two H8147 cherubims H3742

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהִי אֶל־י
and he spake H1696 H413

Additional Cross-References

Hebrews 4:16 (Grace): Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

Psalms 99:1 (Kingdom): The LORD reigneth; let the people tremble: he sitteth between the cherubims; let the earth be moved.

Psalms 80:1 (Parallel theme): Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a flock; thou that dwellest between the cherubims, shine forth.

1 Kings 6:23 (Parallel theme): And within the oracle he made two cherubims of olive tree, each ten cubits high.

Leviticus 1:1 (Temple): And the LORD called unto Moses, and spake unto him out of the tabernacle of the congregation, saying,

Numbers 1:1 (Temple): And the LORD spake unto Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the tabernacle of the congregation, on the first day of the second month, in the second year after they were come out of the land of Egypt, saying,

Numbers 12:8 (References Moses): With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?

1 Samuel 4:4 (Parallel theme): So the people sent to Shiloh, that they might bring from thence the ark of the covenant of the LORD of hosts, which dwelleth between the cherubims: and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were there with the ark of the covenant of God.

1 Peter 1:12 (Parallel theme): Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.

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