

# Warfare and the Mercy Seat

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"My weapon is the mercy seat." What? I was getting ready for work with a worship station playing on Pandora. Someone was singing and I thought that was the lyric I had just heard. In a flash of insight – with the laborious part my attempt here to write it out in a cohesive manner – I 'understood' a correlation between spiritual warfare and the mercy seat in a way I haven't heard it taught or preached before. If you have, I bless you with the 'more power to you' right elbow bump of fellowship.

At the office I did an internet search for the lyric since I did not know the title of the song, but I didn't find it. There were worship choruses about the mercy seat, but the line I heard was not to be found. Unless one of you reading this knows otherwise, I believe my ears heard something Holy Spirit was appointed to deliver to me in that moment. Just to be clear about whose weapon the mercy seat is, I understood with that way of *knowing*, that it is a true (ie. *working and effective*) divine spiritual weapon, *mighty* before God. When employed, **God's mercy seat is my (and your) choicest weapon.**

## **The Weapons of our Warfare**

"...although of course we lead normal human lives, the battle we are fighting is on the spiritual level.

The very weapons we use are not those of human warfare but powerful in God's warfare for the destruction of the enemy's strongholds. Our battle is to bring down every deceptive fantasy and every imposing defense that men erect against the true knowledge of God.

We even fight to capture every thought until it acknowledges the authority of Christ."

*II Corinthians 10:3-5 (Phillips)*

The above excerpt is from the apostle Paul's second letter to God's church in Corinth. Chapter ten was penned in defense of his ministry since many 'mutterings' were being indulged about him when he was not with them in person. While he had enemies in the church who assigned to him ungodly motives, he entreated them to listen so he need not be as bold as when away from them, he knew he could be! There were some who judged that Paul and those with him walked and lived according to the flesh. He challenged anyone who was confident they belonged to Christ *to reckon* that they too were Christ's (v 7).

He then distinguished between the weapons of human warfare used in the natural and the spiritual weapons God has made available to every believer. The best known and oft preached is [the full armor of God in Ephesians 6](#). When I heard the mysterious 'lyric', **warfare** and **the mercy seat as a weapon** magnified my grasp of the Divine arsenal at our disposal; strong and powerful for destroying Satan's strongholds (*mental fortresses, whereby he influences deceptive speculations and imposing arguments against God*).

## **"My weapon is the Mercy Seat"**

The mercy seat in the Tabernacle of the Old Testament was the solid gold covering (lid) over the Ark of the Covenant. The word for "mercy seat" is the same root for the word "atonement". It means *to cover, cancel, appease, or cleanse*. Two gold cherubim were hammered out in one piece with the mercy seat, poised on either side facing each other. Touching their arched wings and gazing down at the lid, they formed an encircled area above the mercy seat that served as God's throne. After meeting with Moses on Mt. Sinai, God told Moses He would still meet and speak with him down among the people – *at the mercy seat*.

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Later in Jerusalem, the pattern of the Tabernacle was followed in the building of the Temple. Once a year\*, the High Priest would enter the Holy of Holies and sprinkle the mercy seat with the blood of a sacrificial bull to atone for the sins of the people. The ritual was engaged annually to fulfill Jewish Law.

**Then Came Jesus.** In the flesh of humanity, he journeyed to the Cross to become **once for all**, the needful sacrifice (*propitiation* – Greek ‘*hilasterion*’) to put away the sin of the human race. It was Paul who, in Romans 3:25 said, *literally*, that God the Father put forth Jesus - in public - as *the mercy seat*.

Unlike the high priest hidden behind the veil with a never-lasting satisfied judgment, Jesus was lifted high, as God in Christ was actively reconciling the world back to Himself, *not reckoning men’s*<sup>1</sup> sins against them.

II Corinthians 5:21 tells us that *Jesus, who knew no sin, was made by the Father to be sin for us*. As His life-giving blood flowed (where before the blood of bulls was required), *the Cross became the eternal monument of mercy that triumphed over judgment*. Penalty satisfied, finished. Mercy set triumphantly in place!<sup>2</sup>

In the Eternals and on earth, Christ wielded His most powerful weapon against Satan – **the Mercy Seat**.

### ***Mercy Triumphs over Judgment***

Today, [we have the grace-privilege of approaching Christ](#), our Mercy Seat ‘place of satisfaction’ for everything and everyone in our life and relationships we are tempted to judge and withhold mercy. It is up to each of us to employ this choicest of spiritual weapons.

What broke over my understanding that ‘lyric’ day had a cascading effect. One gem I’ll share here now is that for many, me included, the message of grace has long been heralded. And well it should be. We have had the message of reconciliation (*exchange* through what Jesus did for us on the Cross, *restoration to God’s divine favor*) placed within us who have received His free gift and believe He is Christ our Savior.

The *concept* of mercy runs a close second behind grace. But that day, **warfare** and **the mercy seat as a weapon**, gave language to something we both experience *and* witness across the battling sea of humanity.

James, the brother of Jesus, living the rest of his life on *this side of the Cross*, understood by past ritual and present faith, the power of the mercy seat. He articulated it without shadow in his epistle:

So we must both speak and act in every respect like those who are destined to be tried by the perfect law of liberty, and remember that judgment is merciless for the one who judges others without mercy. So by showing mercy you take dominion over judgment!<sup>[a]</sup>

*James 2:12-13 (TPT)*

[a] **James 2:13** As translated from the Aramaic. The Greek is “Mercy triumphs over judgment.”

### ***The redemptive Gift of Mercy***

In the redemptive gifts study, Mercy, whose principle is fulfillment (and whose battlefield is futility), stands as the seventh grace gift and portion of our human spirit. I hope you’ll join me as I overview Mercy next rather than proceeding in order (*as I had planned*) to Teacher, the third gift. There is so much more to share about the Mercy portion *filling up its share*<sup>3</sup> of Christ’s *it is finished*. No weapon formed against mercy will prosper.

~ Nancy      \*Day of Atonement / Jewish Yom Kippur – the annual 25-hour period of atonement and repentance

<sup>1</sup> all people’s: II Corinthians 5:18-19 (in whole of chapter 5 for context)    <sup>2</sup> Hebrews 10:12-18    <sup>3</sup> Colossians 1:24-29    -2-