

JUNIOR/TEEN PROGRAM HELPS

Second Quarter 1992

GOD'S SPECIAL LAW

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Contents

Materials List.....
Introduction.....
Advanced Preparation List.....
Pre-session.....
Opening Session.....	.....
Theme Time.....	.....
World Missions.....	.....
Thirteenth Sabbath Program.....	.....
Social Activities.....	.....
Program One.....	.....
Program Two.....	.....
Program Three.....	.....
Program Four.....	.....
Program Five.....	.....
Program Six.....	.....
Program Seven.....	.....
Program Eight.....	.....
Program Nine.....	.....
Program Ten.....	.....
Program Eleven.....	.....
Program Twelve.....	.....
Program Thirteen.....	.....

Materials List

[North American Adventist Book Centers, Sabbath School Evangelism Centers, and division Church Ministries directors have detailed lists of all items on the Materials List, including prices and publishers.]

Recommended Items	Programs Used
<u>Mission Time</u>	All
<u>Teen Mission</u>	All
P/J mission participation packet	All
Mission Spotlight (audio-visual) monthly	
P/J mission discovery kit	All
GC P/J mission discovery mural only	All

GC basic felt mission story set	All
Mission map, folded	All
Offering goal chart, folded	All
Inflatable globe	All

Theme Time, Pre-session, Investment

Theme device: Tabernacle in the Wilderness	All
Activity Sheets (Extra Sanctuary Illustrations)	All
Banner, with or without background	All

Introduction

Without a doubt the difference between a successful quarter and a so-so one will depend on personal relationships. The TV can entertain juniors and teens better than you ever can. But the TV can't love them, care for them, do things with them, and make them feel important. You can!

You can do those things in ways their parents can't. Adolescents are looking for role models outside their homes. They are looking for adults who are willing to know them, talk to them, and participate in part of their lives.

Speak to them outside of Sabbath School. Call them if they are absent. Send them birthday cards. Notice a new haircut, a new suit, a new dress. Think of questions you can ask them individually that will show that you have some idea of their interests, home situation, ambitions, etc.

Most important, make some time in your busy week to pray for these young people. It is at this age that so many begin to slip away from God and from the church. You will need a great deal of Heaven's help to attract them to Jesus.

Advanced Preparation List

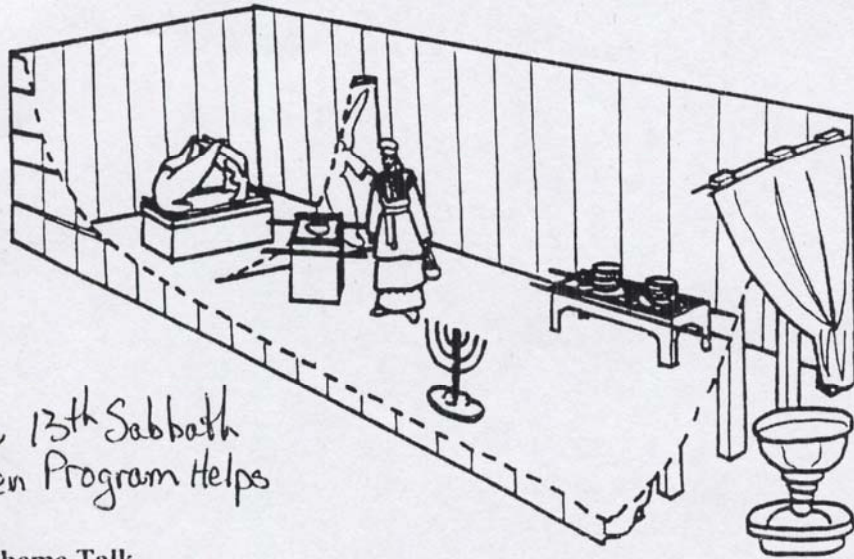
Because the theme device for this quarter is a model of the sanctuary, it will take time to cut out each piece. Allow for that in your schedule. It is important that you be familiar with the theme talk so you can personalize it rather than read it.

Becoming enthusiastic about the lessons of salvation as taught through the Old Testament sanctuary and system of worship is your primary task. If you are interested, so will your students be. Anything extra that you can add will brighten your presentation.

Program One

Have a large table ready on which to build the sanctuary scene. Put up the basic model sanctuary without any furniture. A lot of the basic structure will be set up for this first week when the overall plan is introduced. Follow the instructions carefully and allow plenty of time

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GC 13th Sabbath
Teen Program Helps

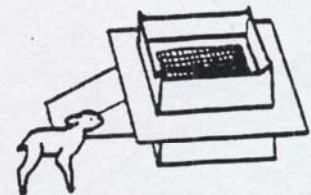
Theme Talk

History. God had just brought the Israelites out of Egypt, where they had lived for more than 400 years, most of the time as slaves. He had delivered them from Pharaoh's harsh rule, opened the waters of the Red Sea so they could cross, fed them manna, and given them water from a rock.

Now, while they camped at the base of Mount Sinai, God was going to make a permanent covenant, or promise, with Israel. He was going to give them the Ten Commandments, the great laws of His holy government. He wanted them to understand the plan of salvation, which had been put in effect right after Adam and Eve sinned.

In order to teach them that He was really with them all of the time, although unseen, and in order to help them understand the terrible results of sin, and about the Messiah who was going to come someday and die for them, God had the people build a desert church. Because they would be moving all of the time, a permanent building would not do. The first church was a movable tent. It would be His lesson. Each part was a copy of God's sanctuary in heaven. Each item of construction would symbolize some aspect of the salvation Jesus would bring. Each ritual, each part of the worship service, each feast and sacrifice, would point the people to Jesus and help them understand how God was saving them.

Israel, in turn, was to use the sanctuary to explain salvation to the people of other nations.



God gave Moses the plans for the sanctuary. God explained each tiny detail. No item was left to chance. The people brought gifts gladly—money and raw materials. Certain builders, weavers, and craftsmen received a special blessing from the Holy Spirit to make their natural talents even better.

Out in the wilderness the people of Israel built a dwelling place for God.

Physical features. Around the sanctuary was a courtyard enclosed with linen curtains hung from pillars. The courtyard was approximately 73 feet by 146 feet, about the size of a city residential lot. The people would not be able to go inside the sanctuary itself. They would come to the courtyard to worship and to bring their sacrifices.

One half of the courtyard had the altar of burnt offering and the laver for washing. On the other half sat the tabernacle, the Tent of the Presence as it was called.

The sanctuary (desert tabernacle) was a simple structure. It was about 52 feet long, 17 feet wide, and 17 feet tall. Its frame was made of acacia wood, the strongest and most enduring available. Upright boards, overlaid with gold were placed side by side in heavy silver sockets. These boards formed the north, south, and west walls of the tabernacle. The east end served as the entrance. It was covered by a veil. The ceiling was of

Pathfinder Honor : The Sanctuary

Physical characteristics. In the courtyard stood the altar of burnt offering. It was big: 7 feet 4 inches square and 4 feet 5 inches tall. That means that its top surface was 54 square feet, enough room to offer several offerings at the same time. [You might measure off a portion of the room so children can get an idea of the size.]

The altar was made of acacia boards overlaid with brass. At this time brass would have been made from a mixture of tin and copper.

A decorative horn marked each of the four corners of the altar. Horns are the main weapons and ornaments of animals that own them. So a horn often signified strength, honor, and victory.

A heavy brass grate hung halfway between the top and bottom of the altar. In addition to the altar of brass, Moses had the craftsmen make brass shovels, fire pans, basins, and meat hooks with which to care for the sacrifices, the wood, the ashes, the blood, etc.

Use, symbolism, and significance. Brass signifies strength, stability, endurance, and victory through suffering. In Zechariah 6, God is represented by four chariots coming out from between two "mountains of brass."

Each morning and each evening priests offered a perfect yearling lamb for the sins of the whole nation. A sacrifice burned constantly. Never was the altar without its symbol of death for sin. These lambs represented Jesus, who would come and die once and for all for sin. A lamb was constantly being offered because never was there a time when the people of Israel did not need to be covered by the sacrificial blood of Jesus.

In addition to the morning and evening national sacrifices, individual people brought offerings to the altar. They brought sheep, goats, calves, or doves, depending on the occasion and what they could afford. Regardless of the type of animal to be sacrificed, each must be perfect.

The book *The Desire of Ages* gives a beautiful picture of Jesus, the perfect offering for your sins and for mine:

"Christ was treated as we deserve, that we might be treated as He deserves. He was condemned for our sins, in which He had no share, that we might be justified by His righteousness, in which we had no share. He suffered the death which was ours, that we might receive the life which was His. 'With his stripes we are healed'" (p. 25).

Each time an Israelite saw an animal lose its life in the tabernacle courtyard, he was to remember that a Saviour was coming, and that the Saviour would die for sin.

Application for the Christian. As we in imagination stand before the altar of burnt offering, let's recognize that we are partakers of Christ's sufferings. He had to die in order that we might have everlasting life. We also need the guilt of our sins paid and covered. Each morning and evening (and often in between) we need to claim the blood of Jesus, the lamb of God, as the cleanser of our sins.

LAVAR

Physical characteristics. We are not told the size and shape of the big brass water basin that stood between the altar of burnt offering and the tabernacle. We do know that it was made from the fine brass mirrors the Israelite women had brought with them from Egypt.

Here the priests washed their hands and their feet before entering upon any sacred service. They didn't wash *in* the basin but *at* it. Spigots must have released water from above to flow over their hands and feet and into a basin below. The lower part was called the foot of the laver.

It was the duty of the Levites to keep the laver filled and to dispose of the water in its foot.

Use, symbolism, and significance. This unending supply of water represents the free and unlimited supply of the cleansing power of Christ's salvation.

Failure to clean himself with water from the laver would mean death for the priest.

Pathfinder Honor : The Sanctuary

The laver mirrors revealed dirt. The water provided a way to wash the dirt away.

The sinner was forgiven at the altar when he brought his offering. But forgiveness is not enough. First John 1:9 says, "If we confess our sins, he [God] is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Application for the Christian. Two Christian ordinances symbolize the same truth as the laver. The first is baptism. When we accept Christ's death for our sins, we are baptized in water. Baptism shows we believe in Christ's death, burial, and resurrection. We symbolically participate in that experience with Him.

The second Christian water ordinance is that of foot washing, when we celebrate Communion. The ordinance provides for continual cleansing. You remember the story of the night before Jesus died. He washed each of His disciples' feet. Only Christ can truly wash us free of sin.

HOLY PLACE

Physical characteristics. The first apartment of the sanctuary was called the holy place. It was approximately 34 feet by 17 feet. Only priests, the descendants of Aaron, could enter the holy place.

Use, symbolism, and significance. The repentant sinner brought his offering to lay on the altar. The priest helped him make the sacrifice. Then the priest washed his hands, took off his sandals, washed his feet, and entered the holy place to offer prayers and incense and sprinkled a little of the blood before the veil and the presence of God (see Lev. 4:6).

The priests were symbolic of Christ, who ministers His shed blood in heaven for the forgiveness of sin. Since the death of Christ we can come directly to God in prayer. A priest is no longer a necessary go-between.

The priests had regular services to perform in the holy place. "As the priests morning and evening entered the holy place at the time of incense, the daily sacrifice was ready to be offered upon the altar in the court without. This was a time of intense interest to the worshipers who assembled at the tabernacle. Before entering into the presence of God through the ministration of the priest, they were to engage in earnest searching of heart and confession of sin. They united in silent prayer, with their faces toward the holy place. Thus their petitions ascended with the cloud of incense, while faith laid hold upon the merits of the promised Saviour prefigured by the atoning sacrifice. The hours appointed for the morning and evening sacrifice were regarded as sacred, and they came to be observed as the set time for worship throughout the Jewish nation" (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 353, 354).

Application for the Christian. The holy place is symbolic of the Christian experience today, as well. We come to Christ with sin that needs to be forgiven. We lay it on the altar, in a spiritual way, giving it completely to Him. We ask Him to utterly consume that sin, and He does. Then, again in a spiritual sense, we go to the laver and are washed clean once by baptism and often by the ordinance of humility. We follow Christ into the holy place of the heavenly sanctuary, where we are anointed and filled with the Holy Spirit.

In a sense, after we become Christians, the rest of our lives should be spent in the holy place, lighted by God's eternal light, fed by the Bread of heaven, always in an attitude of prayer. What a picture of peace! How few Christians take advantage of the wonderful meeting place with God.

Pathfinder Honor : The Sanctuary

TABLE of SHEWBREAD

Physical characteristics. If you had entered the sanctuary in the wilderness, you would have gone through the beautiful curtain of entry held up by five gold-covered pillars. To your right would have been a small golden table. It was almost three feet long, a foot and a half wide, and a little more than two feet tall. It was made of acacia wood covered with gold. Around its top was a crown of gold molding.

On the table you would have seen two golden dishes, each at all times holding six round, flat loaves of bread—one for each tribe of Israel. Also on the table were pitchers for drink offerings and bowls for incense.

Each Sabbath the bread was changed. It was an impressive ceremony. Three priests entered empty-handed. Three others brought fresh bread. The old bread was removed loaf by loaf as the new was put in place. Never was the table empty of bread.

Each loaf of bread was made with about four quarts of finely ground wheat flour—the best that could be found. The bread of the common people was usually made of barley, but that of the sanctuary was higher quality, made from wheat. The bread also contained oil, symbolic of the Holy Spirit; salt, representing purification; and water, symbolizing God's cleansing. [You might bring pita bread from the grocery store to give the students an idea of what the round loaves might have looked like.]

Use, symbolism, and significance. The bread removed from the table became food for the priests, and the grape juice became their drink. During the week they ate and drank it with their meals in the courtyard. Their being supplied with this food was a beautiful illustration of the truth that God cares for all our food needs throughout the week.

The table of showbread pointed to the coming of Jesus, the bread of life. Jesus claimed this symbol for Himself when He said, "For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. . . . I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst" (John 6:33-35).

Application for the Christian. The bread and wine of the table of showbread also suggests to us the Communion service. Right after the washing of feet, we partake of unleavened bread and grape juice, remembering the body and blood of Jesus.

When we pray as Jesus taught, "Give us this day our daily bread," we are asking for spiritual food as well as physical food. Spiritual food comes from the study of the Scriptures along with prayer. That prayerful attitude was symbolized on the ancient table of showbread by the offering of frankincense.

We should never let a day of our lives go by without consuming some of the spiritual bread God has made available for us.

LAMPSTAND

Physical characteristics. On the left, or south, as the priest entered the holy place, stood the candlestick. Actually, lampstand is a better word for this piece of furniture because it held cups of olive oil, not candles, that burned to light the sanctuary.

The Bible does not tell us about the size of the lampstand, but it does give some important details. It was made of pure gold beaten into intricate designs of almond flowers. A talent of gold was required. That is about 75 pounds. In present-day terms, with gold selling for about \$400 a tray ounce, the lampstand would be worth about \$360,000.

Use, symbolism, and significance. The almond decorations were symbolic. The almond tree blossoms very early in the season. It was regarded by the Jews as a welcome sign that the new life of another spring had come, a striking picture of resurrection. Thus the almond ornaments are an emblem of Christ, who is "the resurrection and the life."

The lampstand held seven lights. In the Bible the number seven represents completeness and perfection.

Fuel for the lampstand was pure olive oil. Oil is a symbol of the Holy Spirit in Scripture. The Holy Spirit's power and blessing must be combined with the life of Christ in order to make it shine out to the world.

Pathfinder Honor : The Sanctuary

The lamps were to burn continually. When the priests burned incense in the holy place morning and evening, they also trimmed the lamps and filled the bowls with new oil. Just as the showbread was continually on the table, representing the constant care of God, so also the lamps burned continually, acknowledging God's steady light on our path.

Application for the Christian. Jesus is the true light for the world (see John 1:9). His life made God's way plain and visible. Christ's followers are also to be light bearers. The candlestick had 70 ornaments, and the Lord sent out 70 to preach (Luke 10:1). The Jewish Sanhedrin was also composed of 70 leaders of Israel. The gold used to make the candlestick was beaten down, possibly to show that Christ (and His followers) must suffer persecution.

Without daily spiritual light provided by the "oil" of the Holy Spirit, which makes Jesus shine in us, we would walk in spiritual darkness. Maybe you've been in a dark cave and sensed the power of just a single light.

The world is a dark and gloomy place, with much pain and sorrow. But the light of God shows us the way to heaven and helps us not to stumble while we live our lives on earth.

ALTAR OF INCENSE

Physical characteristics. Inside the sanctuary, right in front of the veil that separated the holy place from the Most Holy, was a second altar. This one was gold-covered, however, instead of being made of brass like the one in the courtyard. No animals were offered on this altar, only sweet incense.

The golden altar, also called the prayer altar, was small. It was about a foot and a half square and about three feet tall.

Each morning and evening as the priests outside offered the daily sacrifices for the people, another priest would take coals from the outside altar and use them to burn incense on the golden altar. [If possible, burn some incense as you continue the Theme Talk so the children will have some idea of the smell.]

Then a little of the blood of the sacrificial lamb would be sprinkled before the golden altar and the veil.

The incense was made of four sweet spices: stacte, galbanum, frankincense (all gum resins of plants), and onycha (from a shell mollusk).

Use, symbolism, and significance. The rising smoke of incense represented the prayers of the people ascending to God. It is important that this ceremony was connected to the sacrifice. The two must go together. At the sacrifice altar, the people confessed their sins and made their hearts ready to commune with God. Sin blocks the path to God. He cannot respond to the prayers of a person still cherishing and clinging to sin. David said, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me" (Ps. 66:18).

Only the priest was to burn incense before God in the holy place. Once more, this golden altar represented the work of Christ. The brass altar in the courtyard represented Christ and His work for us on earth. Because of the golden altar, we can see His work for us in heaven, where "he ever liveth to make intercession" for us (Heb. 7:25). By blood and by incense the people could approach God. Through the death of Jesus and His intercession for us in heaven, we also are free to come to God.

Application for the Christian. Prayer, represented by the incense, is a wonderful privilege. Israel had special times for group prayer each morning and evening. What a special blessing it would bring if our individual families would also begin and end the day with prayers together.

Pathfinder Honor : The Sanctuary

The incense also stands for our personal prayers. If we have confessed our sins, if we pray in a spirit of thankfulness and submission to God's will, if we ask in the name of Jesus, we can be sure our prayer rises to heaven and is given individual attention by the Father, who loves us perfectly.

We never need to be separated from God. He can hear a prayer any hour of the day or night. But regular times for prayer help us to remember and to discipline our lives in a spiritual way.

The Holy Spirit takes the prayers we offer and makes them acceptable to Heaven. That's why we ask for things according to God's will.

HIGH PRIEST

Theme Talk

The clothes of the high priest were very special. God gave detailed instructions about how the high priest was to dress. We will consider the items piece by piece:

1. First, like all the priests, he wore linen breeches as an undergarment. The garments of the priests were woven of one piece, spotless, without any blemish. As the undergarment was to cover their nakedness, so Jesus says, "I counsel thee to buy of me . . . white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear" (Rev. 3:18).

2. The embroidered coat. Next to the undergarment, the high priest wore a fine linen coat, again woven of one piece of fabric. The coat was decorated with embroidery. Each item of the high priest's clothing was to be beautiful, giving glory and honor to God. The coat was tied with an embroidered girdle.

3. Over the coat the high priest wore a solid blue robe. Blue is always a symbol of heavenly truth and obedience. It also was of one piece, but it had no sleeves, just slits for the arms. On the hem of this beautiful blue robe hung tinkling little golden bells and bright pomegranates. The golden bells were to remind the people of the ministry of Christ and their ringing in the heavenly sanctuary. ~~On the Day of Atonement the people listened carefully for the tinkle of the bells while the high priest was in the Most Holy Place because the sound told them that he was alive and that God was accepting their sacrifice.~~ He wore the plain white robe

The pomegranates with their rich, meaty seeds represented the fruitfulness of a life lived in God's service.

4. The ephod, worn outside the blue robe, was the official garment of the high priest. It was the most costly and the most magnificent of all his clothes, being made entirely "of gold, blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen" (Ex. 39:2). Every thread represented the perfect character of Christ. The material was richly embroidered with real gold thread. The ephod was fastened at the shoulders with two onyx stones, on each were engraved the names of six of the tribes of Israel.

5. On the ephod the high priest wore a breastplate made of two pieces of fabric fastened together. In the breastplate, next to the heart of the high priest, were two onyx stones called the Urim and the Thummim (Lev. 8:8). "Through these two stones God made known His will. A halo of light encircling the Urim was a token of the divine approval on matters brought before Him, and a cloud shadowing the Thummim was evidence of disapproval" (*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 649).

On the outside of the breastplate were 12 precious stones, each sparkling and distinct. They were arranged in one row under another in four rows of three. Their sequence, from left to right and from top

on this day while in the Most Holy.

Pathfinder Honor : The Sanctuary

to bottom were: sardis (brownish red), topaz (yellow to yellowish red), carbuncle (red), emerald (clear green), sapphire (deep blue), diamond (sparkling clear), jacinth (bright yellow), agate (delicate blue), amethyst (violet), beryl (green-yellow), onyx (bright yellow), jasper (red, brown, or yellow).

6. A mitre or crown. "The mitre, like the other garments, was made of fine linen, thus forming a triple crown. . . . It was a symbol of the triple crown of Christ. Fastened to the forefront of it with a ribbon of blue, was a plate of pure gold on which was engraved the inscription 'HOLINESS TO THE LORD'" Sarah Elizabeth Peck. (*Path to the Throne of God*, [Angwin, Calif.: Little Folk Visuals, n.d.] p. 76).

Application for the Christian. Aaron and the high priests who followed him were a symbol of Jesus. Jesus is not only our lamb sacrifice, He is also our high priest, who makes intercession in heaven for us.

After His resurrection Jesus entered into the holy place of heaven. Then, when the investigative judgment began in 1844 (according to the prophecy of Daniel), He entered into the Most Holy Place, just as the Jewish high priest did once each year.

The book of Hebrews tells us that Jesus, our High Priest, understands us. He understands what we need and how we feel because He too experienced being human.

The earthly high priests, Aaron and the others, were sinners. You remember how Aaron helped the people make a golden calf to worship less than a month after they had received God's law? Jesus, however, is completely sinless. His ministry for us is perfect.

By learning what Israel's priests did, we can better understand what Jesus is doing right now in heaven.

MOST HOLY PLACE

The Most Holy Place was the small second apartment of the sanctuary. From it shined the Shekinah, the visible presence of God. It represented the very dwelling place of God.

Physical features. The Most Holy Place was the most sacred part of the sanctuary, the throne room of the Most Holy God. This room was about 15 feet square. One item of furniture, the ark, held three items that were unseen—the two tables of stone with the Ten Commandments, a golden bowl of manna, and Aaron's shepherd rod that budded with almond flowers. Above the ark was the mercy seat and above the mercy seat two golden angels. The Most Holy Place was filled with the brilliant light of God's actual presence called the Shekinah.

Use, symbolism, and significance. Only once a year, on the great Day of Atonement (the tenth day of the seventh month) did the high priest enter the Most Holy Place of the sanctuary.

On the Day of Atonement the same ceremony was carried out year after year. First, Aaron, then the high priests who followed him, performed this extremely holy service.

Aaron washed himself with water and put aside his ornate high priest's robes. He dressed in pure white linen. Then he had to slaughter a number of special animals. For himself and his family he was to bring a young bull as a sin offering and a ram as a peace offering. It was important that his own sins be atoned for before he began the ministry for the people.

Then Aaron took a pan full of burning coals from the brazen altar where the eternal fire burned. Upon the burning coals he laid two handfuls of sweet-smelling, pulverized incense, which was quickly burned up. He was almost concealed in a fragrant cloud of incense all the while he was in the Most Holy Place.

Pathfinder Honor : The Sanctuary

Aaron approached the ark of the covenant carrying in his hands a golden bowl full of the blood of the sacrifice. He dipped his finger into the blood and sprinkled it upon the front of the mercy seat, between the two covering angels.

A second sacrifice followed the personal cleansing of Aaron. Two perfect goats were brought to the door of the sanctuary. Lots were cast, and one of the goats was chosen for the atoning sacrifice. The goat was slaughtered, and again Aaron approached the Most Holy Place and its ark with the blood. He sprinkled this blood before the mercy seat seven times.

Symbolically the blood of this goat cleansed the Most Holy Place, the holy place, and the altar of burnt offering from a whole year of accumulated sins. In a spiritual sense the individual sins had been forgiven, but the record was still there. The Day of Atonement was a symbol of the day of final judgment, when all forgiven sins will be completely wiped away.

The other goat, called the scapegoat, stood tied near the altar in the courtyard. When Aaron came out of the sanctuary, he carried on his own person the sins that the sanctuary had accumulated. He laid his hands on the second goat, transferring all those sins to its head. The scapegoat was led away to the desert to die.

Application for the Christian. The Day of Atonement was an action story of Christ's saving work. First, He was the Lamb of sacrifice, offered to cover each of our sins. After His death He ascended to heaven to serve as our High Priest. There He applies the blood He has already shed to cover our sins.

According to Bible prophecy, in 1844 the cleansing of the sanctuary in heaven (like the Day of Atonement for Israel) began. Christ is going through the process of judgment on an individual basis. When He is finished, the fate of every person will have been decided. The sins of the righteous will have been forgiven. The sins of the wicked will be transferred back to them and to

Satan to pay the penalty. It is fair. Everyone will have had a chance to let Jesus be his or her Lamb and pay the price for sin. People who reject this free gift that God urges toward them must bear their own sin.

Every year the people of Israel saw enacted the whole plan of salvation and judgment. Many understood the meaning. To some, however, it was just a pageant or meaningless process.

What Jesus is doing today in the Most Holy Place in heaven can be real to you. You can claim Him as both your sin sacrifice and your priest. Or you can pay no attention, give it no thought, receive no salvation. The choice is up to you.

THE ARK

Physical characteristics. The ark was a box of acacia wood covered inside and out with pure gold. It was about three feet eight inches long; two feet three inches wide; and two feet three inches tall. A crown of pure gold ran around its upper border. On its sides were golden rings and gold-covered wooden staves to carry it. No one, under any circumstances, was ever to touch the sacred ark. When the priests moved the ark from place to place, they always covered it with a veil. The ark represented the sinless God. Human hands that have known sin (and all have) were never to touch it. The ark of the covenant is mentioned more than 180 times in the Bible. Without doubt, it was the most important single physical item ever to exist.

Use, symbolism, and significance. In the heart of the ark rested the tables of stone with the Ten Commandments. We shall discuss the law in more detail next week. Needless to say, the law, representing God's covenant with Israel, was the centerpiece of all their worship and all their other laws.

Pathfinder Honor : The Sanctuary

In addition to the tables of the law, the ark contained a golden pot of manna. God purposed to preserve for many years a sample of this food, which otherwise spoiled overnight. He wanted to give His people for generations to come actual physical evidence of His care for them. He wanted the people to know that the stories were true—how He fed their great-grandparents in the wilderness and how He taught them about the Sabbath for 40 years by giving no manna on that day.

Also in the ark was Aaron's rod. Once some leaders had rebelled and claimed to be just as chosen to serve as priests as Aaron. God was displeased. He had them, along with Aaron, bring their dead, dry walking sticks to the sanctuary. The next day the others were still dry and bare. Aaron's stick, however, was like a branch of an almond tree with blooms, buds, and nuts all over it.

Along with making it quite clear that Aaron was special, the miracle of the rod showed God's power of resurrection. He could make a dead stick alive. Even more, He would be able at the end of time to make dead people live again.

Just prior to the overthrow of Jerusalem by the Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar, the ark of the covenant was secretly taken to a cave to be hidden there. This was done by believers in God so that unbelievers would not misuse it. No one has seen it since. (*Prophets and Kings*, p. 453.)

Application for the Christian. The ark represented the person of God. It was to be treated with awe and respect and reverence. Through Jesus, we can come into the presence of God at any time. We do not need a human priest to intercede and offer sacrifices for us. Jesus was the sacrifice, and He is always interceding for us. But when we approach God in prayer, in church worship, or for any reason, we should remember His holiness. We should have a sense of great awe and respect.

In your daily lessons you have been studying about the Ten Commandments—the concise summary of the will of God for people. First, you remember, God spoke the law to the people at Mount Sinai. Afterward He wrote them on two tables of stone.

Stone represents permanence. People live and die, and their lifespans are brief. Some trees have lived for several thousand years, but gradually they also die. A stone is permanent. The stony hills that Israel saw in the wilderness probably are still there, providing shelter for desert nomads today.

People make laws. Then if they don't like the law, they simply change it. God is not that way. His law never changes. Though He didn't write it down until the time of Moses, God introduced His law to Adam and Eve. They knew what was right and wrong.

If your teacher told you that in order to pass math you'd have to stand on your head for 10 minutes, you would think that was stupid and unfair. God never made any "standing on your head" laws. God's laws are practical. The Ten Commandments state in simple terms how we should worship God and how we should get along with other people.

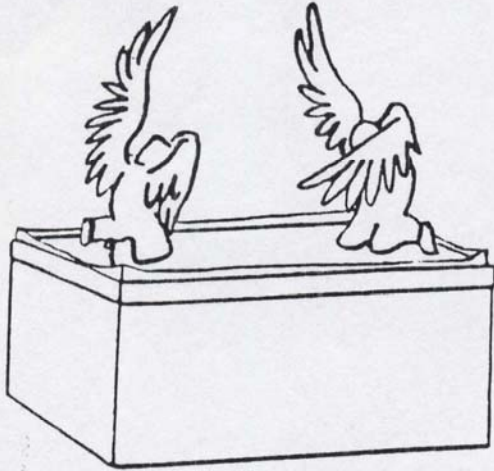
The penalty for breaking any one of God's laws even once is death. That may seem unfair, but sin (breaking the law) is like a disease germ. If allowed to survive, it multiplies and grows. In God's perfect universe there must be no disease germs of sin.

It's a terrible picture. Every human who has ever lived has done at least one sin, so everyone is under the death sentence. The law is clear.

Fortunately, God isn't only a judge. He is also full of love and forgiveness. So He found a way to satisfy the law, to clean us from sin's germs completely, and to allow us into His kingdom of eternal life.

In the ark of the covenant lay the unchanging, condemning law. But above it rested the mercy seat—the way to salvation. We'll learn about the mercy seat next.

Pathfinder Honor : The Sanctuary



Physical characteristics. The cover of the ark was called the mercy seat, upon which the atonement was made on the Day of Atonement. It was about three feet eight inches by two feet three inches and was made of solid gold.

Use, symbolism, and significance. The Hebrew word used for mercy comes from a root word meaning "to cover" or "to pardon."

~~The mercy seat was present over the law.~~ It stood for God's most important attribute as far as sinners were concerned: mercy. The ark, with its justice and judgment, and the mercy seat, with its pardon, were both needed to show the way God deals with us.

Mercy without justice is sentimental and unfair. If a wrong is done, someone should pay. Justice without mercy is severe and revolting both to God and to us. God found a way to combine both, and He revealed that in the Most Holy Place of the sanctuary—the ark and the mercy seat.

The tables of stone within the ark, bearing their God-inscribed laws, made it plain that God's kingdom is founded on an unchangeable standard of righteousness. Killing, stealing, committing adultery, dishonoring one's parents, will always be wrong. Before a sinner can be pardoned, the penalty must be paid; justice must be met.

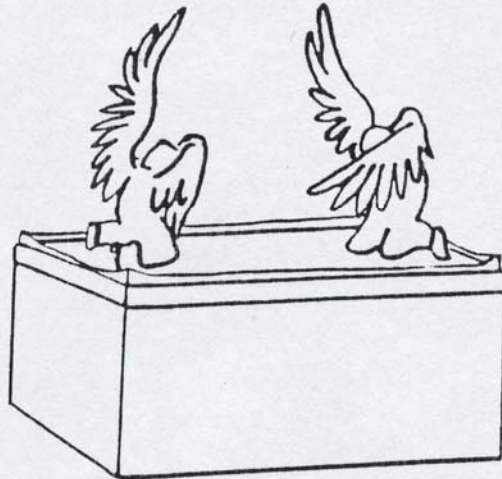
The animal sacrifices of Israel were symbolic of that paid sacrifice. Each drop

of blood pointed to Jesus, who with His death would meet the law's rigid demands for justice. On the basis of just the law, sinners and God can never get together again in peace.

The wonderful news of the sanctuary (and the wonderful news of the gospel) is that Jesus' blood rests on the mercy seat in heaven, and because of His death, God is able to treat us with the mercy He so much wants to give.

Application for the Christian. Can you think of a time in your life when you needed mercy or forgiveness from someone else? Being forgiven and not being made to pay the full price for things you do wrong is the most wonderful thing in the world. Even more wonderful is receiving mercy from God. With Jesus as our worthy high priest, mercy from heaven is always available.

Pathfinder Honor : The Sanctuary



Physical characteristics. On each end of the mercy seat was a magnificent angel form made of solid gold. One wing of each angel was stretched out high, and the other was folded over his body in reverence and humility. The faces of the angels were turned toward each other, and they always looked down at the mercy seat. Their faces showed reverence toward the holy law of God within the ark.

Use, symbolism, and significance. Not only are God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit involved in saving people. The angels also participate. They are the ministers of heaven sent to help us in all that we do. Hebrews 1:14 (KJV) says that angels are "sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation."

The Bible tells us about many times when angels helped people or gave them a message from God. Here are a few names of Bible people who heard or saw angels: Lot; Abraham; Daniel; John the revelator; Philip; Mary, the mother of Jesus; Balaam; Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist; and of course, Jesus.

God has not left us out. Each of us has an angel who is to be with us until our death. Surely we have seen or heard the voice of an

angel and didn't know it. Won't it be wonderful to find out when we get to heaven!

Between the golden angels on the ark was the mercy seat. Hovering just above the mercy seat was a glorious little cloud called the Shekinah. The brilliance of this dazzling light was too bright for human eyes. The mercy seat was a symbol of the throne of God in heaven. The Shekinah represented the presence of God Himself.

Application for the Christian. God still "tabernacles" with us on earth. We have no tent or temple, but we do have churches. These special buildings are built and dedicated to the worship of God. He meets with us in church. He meets with us individually at our homes.

Angels still minister to our needs. Jesus is still our High Priest, applying forgiveness of our sins to the records of heaven. The whole story of salvation, as explained by the sanctuary service, still happens all of the time.

Our hearts should be reverent and appreciative when we think about the marvelous plan of salvation as told in the story of Israel's sanctuary.

