

Leviticus 16

Verses 1- 5

Now the Lord spoke to Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they had approached the presence of the Lord and died. ² The Lord said to Moses: “Tell your brother Aaron that he shall not enter at any time into the holy place inside the veil, before the mercy seat which is on the ark, or he will die; for I will appear in the cloud over the mercy seat. ³ Aaron shall enter the holy place with this: with a bull for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering. ⁴ He shall put on the holy linen tunic, and the linen undergarments shall be next to his body, and he shall be girded with the linen sash and attired with the linen turban (these are holy garments). Then he shall bathe his body in water and put them on. ⁵ He shall take from the congregation of the sons of Israel two male goats for a sin offering and one ram for a burnt offering.

Now the Lord spoke to Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they had approached the presence of the Lord and died.

The death of Nadab and Abihu took place in chapter 10 when they offered strange fire before the Lord. The question remains; did they die because they entered the Holy of Holies or was it because they offered strange fire? Is it possible that they died for both of these reasons? The warning to Aaron was given after the death of his two sons so it seems unlikely that his sons knew of this restriction. Would God hold them responsible for a law that had not been given or explained yet? On the other hand why would they enter the Holy of Holies without having received any instructions to do so?

² The Lord said to Moses: Tell your brother Aaron that he shall not enter at any time into the holy place inside the veil, before the mercy seat which is on the ark, or he will die.

The only exception to this rule was on the Day of Atonement.

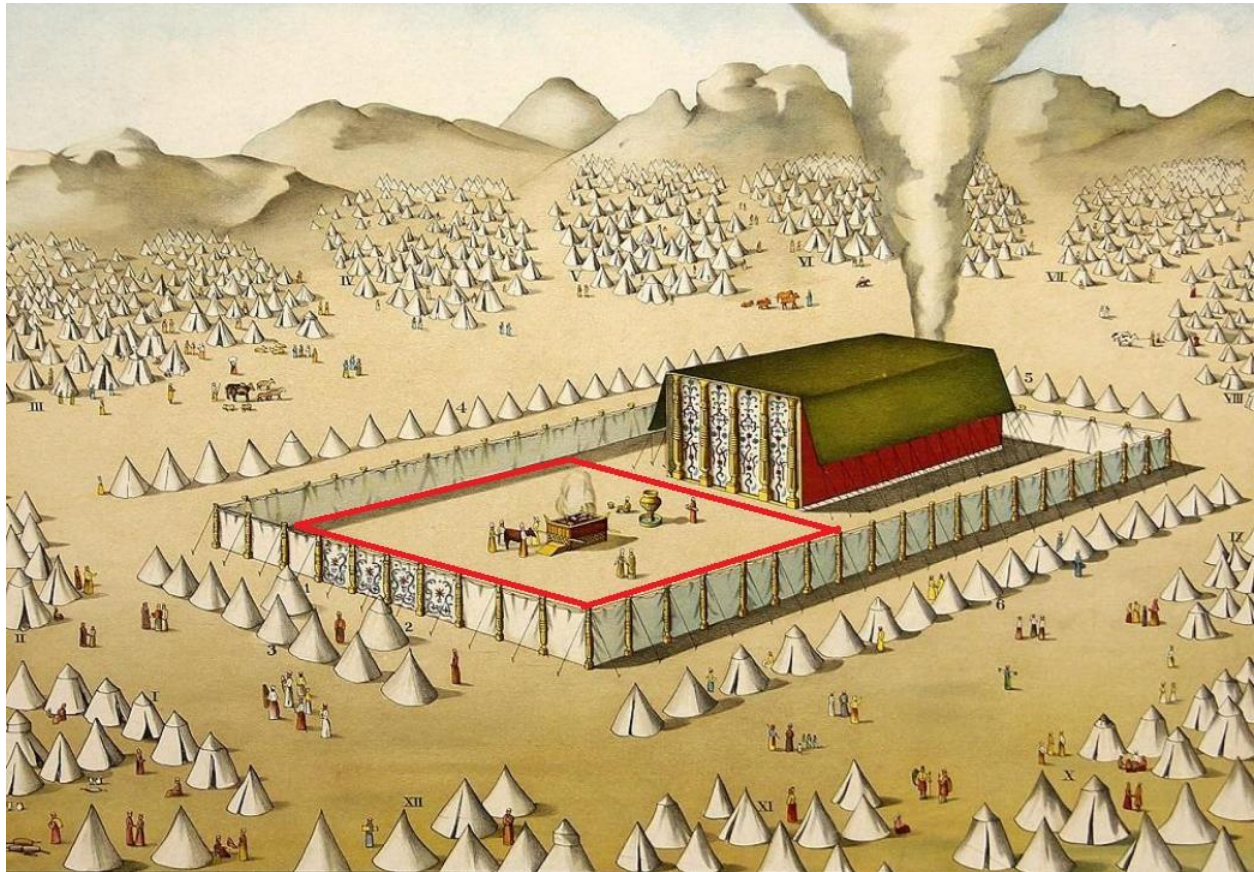
See Hebrews 9:6 -7

⁶ Now when these things have been so prepared, the priests are continually entering the outer tabernacle, performing the divine worship, ⁷ but into the second, only the high priest enters once a year, not without *taking* blood which he offers for himself and for the sins of the people committed in ignorance.

³ Aaron shall enter the holy place with this: with a bull for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering.

The holy place here is referring to the courtyard of the Tabernacle.

See pic 1605



He had to offer a ram for a burnt offering because the sin offering was always laid on top of a burnt offering.

⁴ He shall put on the holy linen tunic, and the linen undergarments shall be next to his body, and he shall be girded with the linen sash and attired with the linen turban (these are holy garments). Then he shall bathe his body in water and put them on.

On the Day of Atonement Aaron was clothed completely in white. He did not wear the colorful robe, ephod or breastpiece that he normally wore.

See pics 1610



⁵ He shall take from the congregation of the sons of Israel two male goats for a sin offering and one ram for a burnt offering.

The Day of Atonement was not just for Aaron and the priestly family but for all of Israel. The burnt offering was a sacrifice to the Lord and the sin offering was for the forgiveness of sin.

Verses 6 -10

⁶ Then Aaron shall offer the bull for the sin offering which is for himself, that he may make atonement for himself and for his household. ⁷ He shall take the two goats and present them before the Lord at the doorway of the tent of meeting. ⁸ Aaron shall cast lots for the two goats, one lot for the Lord and the other lot for the scapegoat. ⁹ Then Aaron shall offer the goat on which the lot for the Lord fell, and make it a sin offering. ¹⁰ But the goat on which the lot for the scapegoat fell shall be presented alive before the Lord, to make atonement upon it, to send it into the wilderness as the scapegoat.

⁶ Then Aaron shall offer the bull for the sin offering which is for himself, that he may make atonement for himself and for his household.

The High Priest had to be forgiven for his sin before he could offer the sacrifice for the sins of the people.

⁸ Aaron shall cast lots for the two goats, one lot for the Lord and the other lot for the scapegoat.

The lots were used to determine the fate of the goats. The goat for the Lord was a sin offering and the scapegoat was sent into the wilderness.

Jesus fulfilled both of these by his suffering and death on the cross. His death was the sacrifice for our sin (a sin offering) and he bore the punishment that we deserved (the scapegoat for our sin).

Verses 11-14

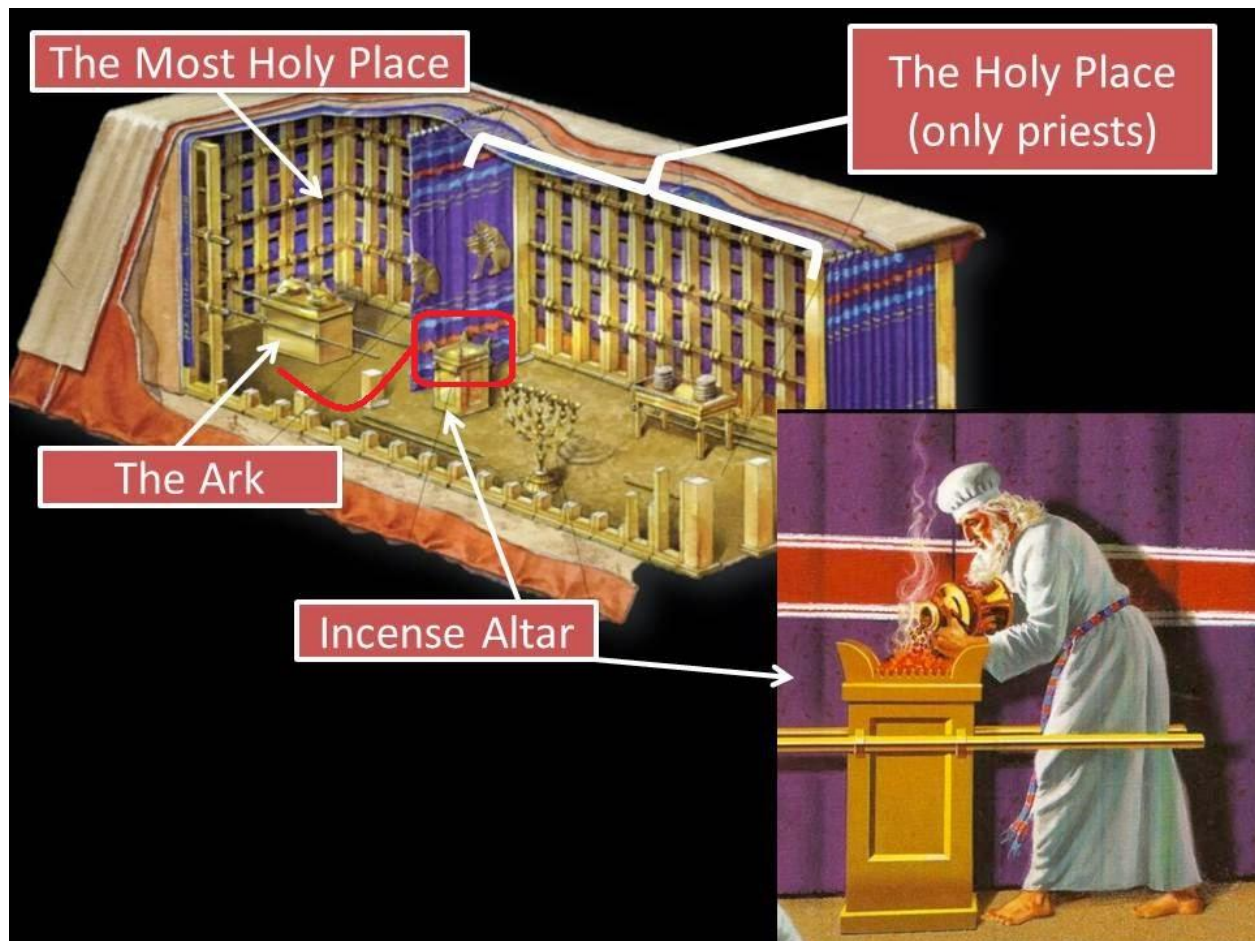
“Then Aaron shall offer the bull of the sin offering which is for himself and make atonement for himself and for his household, and he shall slaughter the bull of the sin offering which is for himself. ¹² He shall take a firepan full of coals of fire from upon the altar before the Lord and two handfuls of finely ground sweet incense, and bring *it* inside the veil. ¹³ He shall put the incense on the fire before the Lord, that the cloud of incense may cover the mercy seat that is on *the ark of the testimony*, otherwise he will die. ¹⁴ Moreover, he shall take some of the blood of the bull and sprinkle *it* with his finger on the mercy seat on the east *side*; also in front of the mercy seat he shall sprinkle some of the blood with his finger seven times.

¹² He shall take a firepan full of coals of fire from upon the altar before the Lord and two handfuls of finely ground sweet incense, and bring *it* inside the veil.

The altar before the Lord refers to The Golden Altar for burning incense and inside the veil means The Holy of Holies. This firepan used to hold the coals had not been mentioned prior to this time but it could be the same firepan used to take coals from the bronze altar to use at the golden altar to burn incense.

See pic 1615

The Golden altar & the Holy of Holies



The Most Holy Place is usually called the Holy of Holies.

¹³ He shall put the incense on the fire before the Lord that the cloud of incense may cover the mercy seat that is on *the ark of the testimony*, otherwise he will die.

The smoke from the burning incense covered the mercy seat so Aaron could not look directly at God's presence (which would cause him to die).

¹⁴ Moreover, he shall take some of the blood of the bull and sprinkle *it* with his finger on the mercy seat on the east side; also in front of the mercy seat he shall sprinkle some of the blood with his finger seven times.

The front of the Tabernacle faced east so the east side was the front of the mercy seat. He sprinkled some blood on the mercy seat and 7 times in front of the mercy seat.

Verses 15 -19

¹⁵ “Then he shall slaughter the goat of the sin offering which is for the people, and bring its blood inside the veil and do with its blood as he did with the blood of the bull, and sprinkle it on the mercy seat and in front of the mercy seat. ¹⁶ He shall make atonement for the holy place, because of the impurities of the sons of Israel and because of their transgressions in regard to all their sins; and thus he shall do for the tent of meeting which abides with them in the midst of their impurities. ¹⁷ When he goes in to make atonement in the holy place, no one shall be in the tent of meeting until he comes out, that he may make atonement for himself and for his household and for all the assembly of Israel. ¹⁸ Then he shall go out to the altar that is before the Lord and make atonement for it, and shall take some of the blood of the bull and of the blood of the goat and put it on the horns of the altar on all sides. ¹⁹ With his finger he shall sprinkle some of the blood on it seven times and cleanse it, and from the impurities of the sons of Israel consecrate it.

¹⁵ “Then he shall slaughter the goat of the sin offering which is for the people, and bring its blood inside the veil and do with its blood as he did with the blood of the bull, and sprinkle it on the mercy seat and in front of the mercy seat.

Aaron had to leave the Holy of Holies and go to the court of the tabernacle to slaughter one of the goats at the bronze altar.

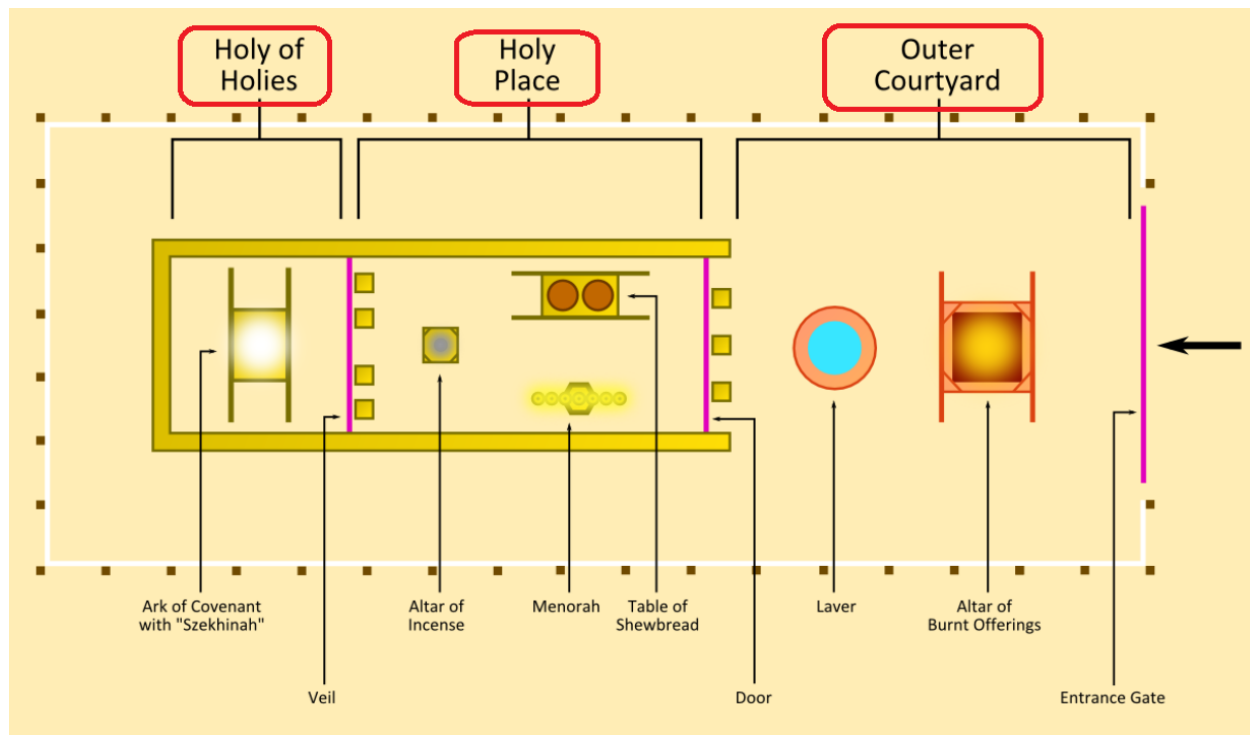
He would then take some of the blood of the goat and bring it inside to the Holy of Holies and sprinkle it on and before the mercy seat as he did with the blood of the bull.

¹⁶ He shall make atonement for the holy place, because of the impurities of the sons of Israel and because of their transgressions in regard to all their sins; and thus he shall do for the tent of meeting which abides with them in the midst of their impurities.

The Tabernacle consisted of three distinct areas; the outer court, the Holy place and the Holy of Holies. However, Moses uses the term The Holy Place to mean 3 different things in this Chapter and the reader must determine which one he means by the context.

In this verse the term the holy place means the Holy of Holies. We know that because in verse 18 Aaron will leave the Holy of Holies and go to the Holy place.

See pic 1620 3 parts of the Tabernacle



¹⁷ When he goes in to make atonement in the holy place, no one shall be in the tent of meeting until he comes out, that he may make atonement for himself and for his household and for all the assembly of Israel.

The holy place again means the Holy of Holies and the tent of meeting means the courtyard. No one could be in the tent of meeting (the courtyard) when Aaron was in the Holy of Holies.

¹⁸ Then he shall go out to the altar that is before the Lord and make atonement for it, and shall take some of the blood of the bull and of the blood of the goat and put it on the horns of the altar on all sides. ¹⁹ With his finger he shall sprinkle some of the blood on it seven times and cleanse it, and from the impurities of the sons of Israel consecrate it.

The altar that is before the Lord means the Golden Altar of Incense which is in the Holy place. It is clear that Aaron would make atonement for all three areas but he would start with the Holy of Holies (verse 17), and then proceed to the Holy Place to make atonement for it (verse 18).

Verses 20 - 22

²⁰ “When he finishes atoning for the holy place and the tent of meeting and the altar, he shall offer the live goat. ²¹ Then Aaron shall lay both of his hands on the head of the live goat, and confess over it all the iniquities of the sons of Israel and all their transgressions in regard to all their sins; and he shall lay them on the head of the goat and send *it* away into the wilderness by the hand of a man who *stands* in readiness. ²² The goat shall bear on itself all their iniquities to a solitary land; and he shall release the goat in the wilderness.

²⁰ “When he finishes atoning for the holy place and the tent of meeting and the altar, he shall offer the live goat.

The Holy Place here means the Holy of Holies

The tent of meeting is the court of the Tabernacle (The outer court)

The altar is the Golden altar of Incense (The Holy Place)

²¹ Then Aaron shall lay both of his hands on the head of the live goat, and confess over it all the iniquities of the sons of Israel and all their transgressions in regard to all their sins; and he shall lay them on the head of the goat and send *it* away into the wilderness by the hand of a man who *stands* in readiness.

All of this was symbolic to demonstrate that the sins of Israel were transferred to this scape goat that was sent away from them. However, this had to be repeated every year. The Law produced an understanding of sin, but could not offer true or lasting forgiveness.

See Hebrews 10:1- 4

For the Law, since it has *only* a shadow of the good things to come *and* not the form of those things itself, can never, by the same sacrifices which they offer continually every year, make those who approach perfect. ² Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, because the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have had consciousness of sins? ³ But in those *sacrifices* there is a reminder of sins every year. ⁴ For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

Verses 23 - 28

²³ **“Then Aaron shall come into the tent of meeting and take off the linen garments which he put on when he went into the holy place, and shall leave them there.**

²⁴ **He shall bathe his body with water in a holy place and put on his clothes, and come forth and offer his burnt offering and the burnt offering of the people and make atonement for himself and for the people.** ²⁵ **Then he shall offer up in smoke the fat of the sin offering on the altar.** ²⁶ **The one who released the goat as the scapegoat shall wash his clothes and bathe his body with water; then afterward he shall come into the camp.** ²⁷ **But the bull of the sin offering and the goat of the sin offering, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the holy place, shall be taken outside the camp, and they shall burn their hides, their flesh, and their refuse in the fire.** ²⁸ **Then the one who burns them shall wash his clothes and bathe his body with water, then afterward he shall come into the camp.**

²³ **Then Aaron shall come into the tent of meeting and take off the linen garments which he put on when he went into the holy place, and shall leave them there.**

The tent of meeting means the courtyard. Aaron had gone beyond (outside) the courtyard of the Tabernacle to release the scapegoat to a person who would lead it farther into the wilderness.

In this verse, into the holy place, means the Holy place. We know this because after Aaron put the white clothes on he then went into the area where the Golden Altar resides.

All 3 parts of the Tabernacle were referred to as the Holy Place by Moses.

1. The courtyard of the Tabernacle. Verse 3
2. The Holy of Holies. Verses 16 and 17
3. The Holy Place where the Golden Altar resides. Verse 23

²⁴ **He shall bathe his body with water in a holy place and put on his clothes, and come forth and offer his burnt offering and the burnt offering of the people and make atonement for himself and for the people.** ²⁵ **Then he shall offer up in smoke the fat of the sin offering on the altar.**

The bull and goat had already been slain and their blood used in the atonement process. Now the burnt offering and sin offering were offered up on the altar.

²⁷ **But the bull of the sin offering and the goat of the sin offering, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the holy place, shall be taken outside the camp, and they shall burn their hides, their flesh, and their refuse in the fire.**

Normally this was only done when a bull was offered but in this case the goat was also burned outside the camp.

Verses 29 - 34

²⁹ **“This shall be a permanent statute for you: in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, you shall humble your souls and not do any work, whether the native, or the alien who sojourns among you; ³⁰ for it is on this day that atonement shall be made for you to cleanse you; you will be clean from all your sins before the Lord. ³¹ It is to be a Sabbath of solemn rest for you, that you may humble your souls; it is a permanent statute. ³² So the priest who is anointed and ordained to serve as priest in his father’s place shall make atonement: he shall thus put on the linen garments, the holy garments, ³³ and make atonement for the holy sanctuary, and he shall make atonement for the tent of meeting and for the altar. He shall also make atonement for the priests and for all the people of the assembly. ³⁴ Now you shall have this as a permanent statute, to make atonement for the sons of Israel for all their sins once every year.” And just as the Lord had commanded Moses, so he did.**

²⁹ **“This shall be a permanent statute for you: in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, you shall humble your souls and not do any work, whether the native, or the alien who sojourns among you; ³⁰ for it is on this day that atonement shall be made for you to cleanse you; you will be clean from all your sins before the Lord.**

The first Day of Atonement fell on 7-10-1445. Atonement meant they were cleansed from all of their sin.

³¹ **It is to be a Sabbath of solemn rest for you, that you may humble your souls; it is a permanent statute.**

The Sabbath provided time for self-examination and repentance.

³² So the priest who is anointed and ordained to serve as priest in his father's place shall make atonement: he shall thus put on the linen garments, the holy garments, ³³ and make atonement for the holy sanctuary, and he shall make atonement for the tent of meeting and for the altar. He shall also make atonement for the priests and for all the people of the assembly.

This is a good summary of the events in this chapter.

All of the following people and objects received atonement.

1. Aaron and his family (priests).
2. All 3 parts of the Tabernacle.
3. The people of Israel.