

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.

See chart 1605

Leviticus time line

Leviticus	Event	Year 2 - 1445	Place
1-7	Types of offerings	1st Month	The Desert of Sinai
8-9	Ordination of Aaron and his sons	1st Month	The Desert of Sinai
10	Death of Nadab and Abihu	1st Month	The Desert of Sinai
11-15	Clean and unclean	1st Month	The Desert of Sinai
16	Day of Atonement	1st Month	The Desert of Sinai
17 - 19	Various Laws	1st Month	The Desert of Sinai
20	Punishment for sin	1st Month	The Desert of Sinai
21 - 22	Rules for Priests	1st Month	The Desert of Sinai
23	Appointed Festivals	1st Month	The Desert of Sinai
24	Blasphemer put to death	1st Month	The Desert of Sinai
25	Sabbath year and Jubilee	1st Month	The Desert of Sinai
26	Reward and Punishment	1st Month	The Desert of Sinai
27	Vows	1st Month	The Desert of Sinai

The question remains; did they enter the Holy of Holies.

Before we try to answer this question let's look at the events we have covered so far.

1. The tabernacle was set up on the 1st day of the 1st month in the 2nd year in the wilderness. 1-1-02 or 1-1-1445 BC

See Exodus 40:1

2. Then the people were informed about the various offerings

Leviticus, Chapters 1-7

3. Aaron and his sons went thru the 7 days of ordination

Chapters 8 & 9

4. The next day his two sons offer the strange fire and were put to death by the Lord

Chapter 10

5. The laws that governed clean and unclean were explained

Chapters 11-15

6. And here in chapter 16 The Day of Atonement is explained.

Did the two sons of Aaron enter the Holy of Holies?

If they did, it seems unlikely they had been given any warning not to do so, because the warning to Aaron is given here in chapter 16 and they entered the Holy of Holies back in chapter 10 on the very first day of their new position as priests of Israel.

Maybe this is why the strange fire was the emphasis back in chapter 10.

They had entered the Holy of Holies but were not put to death for that act because God did not hold them responsible for a law that had not been given or explained yet.

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

Aaron's entry into The Holy of Holies was restricted to the Day of Atonement

See Hebrews 9:6-7

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.

We know this because the water used for bathing in verse 4 was only available in the courtyard.

See pic 1610



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

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).

On the Day of Atonement Aaron was clothed completely in white.

See pics 1615



He did not wear the colorful robe, ephod or breastpiece that he normally wore.

He was also required to wear the undergarments that the regular priests were required to wear.

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 (a symbol of total surrender to God)

The sin offering was for the forgiveness of sin.

Again, the sin offering was always put on top of a burnt offering.

Every person must first surrender to God and then they can be forgiven of their sin.

Verses 6-10

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.

Then Aaron shall offer the bull for the sin offering which is for himself and for his household

The High Priest had to be forgiven before he could offer the sacrifice for the people

Aaron shall cast lots for the two goats, one for the Lord and the other 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

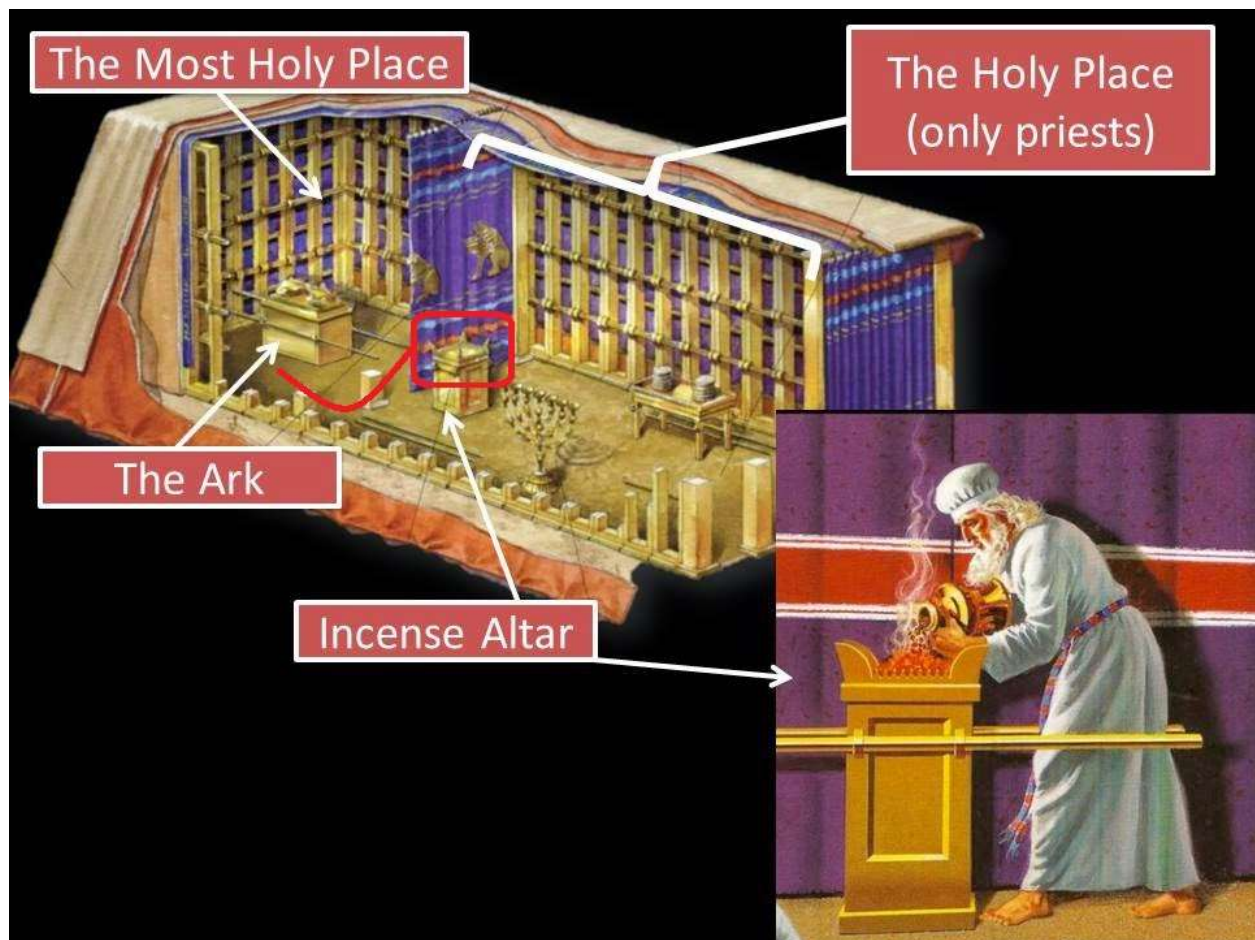
“Then Aaron shall offer the bull of the sin offering which is for himself and make atonement for himself and for his household, and he shall slaughter the bull of the sin offering which is for himself. ¹² He shall take a firepan full of coals of fire from upon the altar before the Lord and two handfuls 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.

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 Alter for burning incense

Inside the veil means The Holy of Holies

See pic 1620 The Golden altar & the Holy of Holies



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

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 Gods presence (which would cause him to die).

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.

Inside the veil refers to The Holy of Holies

Highlighting these words and explaining them may appear unnecessary right now but it will soon be obvious why it is being done.

Be patient grasshopper. ☺ (The younger adults will have to google this)

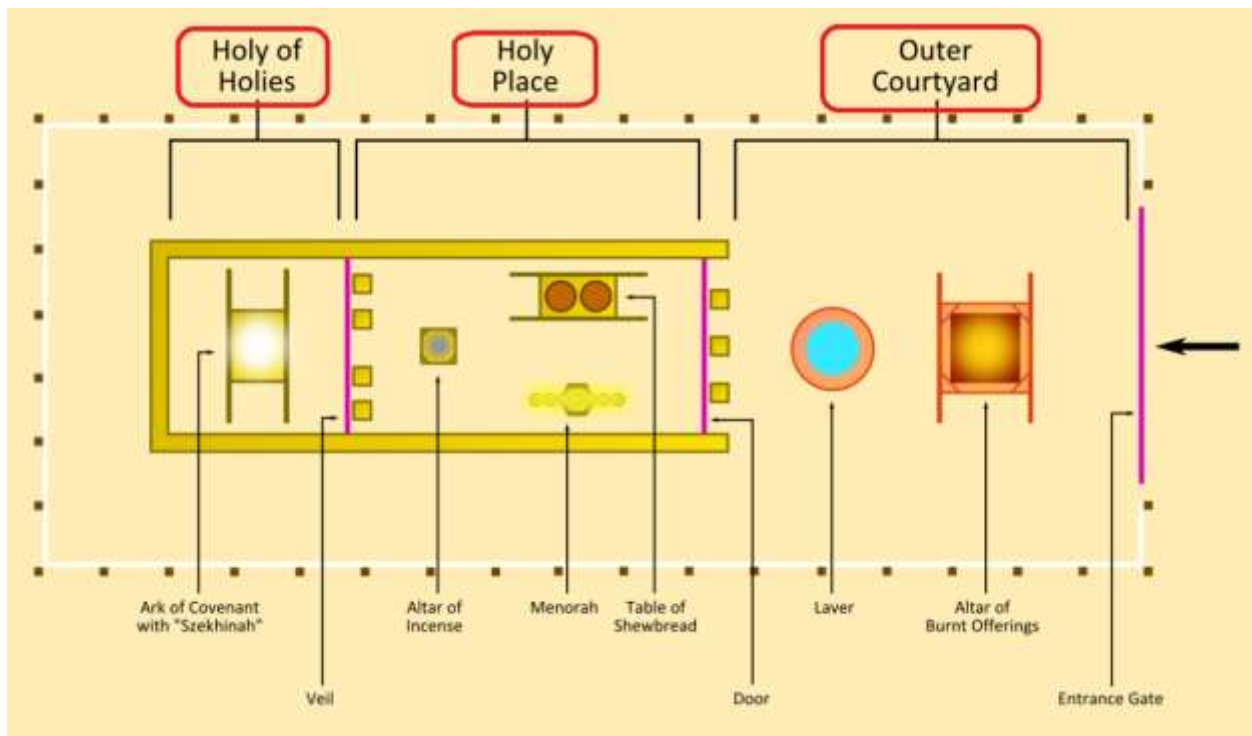
Aaron had to leave the Holy of Holies and go to the court of the tabernacle to slaughter one of the goats at the bronze altar.

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.

See pic 1625 3 parts of the Tabernacle



Having a name for the 3 different parts of the Tabernacle helps us be more specific when describing events that take place there.

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 of verse 18.

“Then he shall go out to the altar that is before the Lord”

The tent of meeting means the courtyard

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

No one could be in **the tent of meeting** (the courtyard) when Aaron was in the Holy of Holies.

Then **he shall go out to the altar that is before the Lord** and make atonement for it

The **altar that is before the Lord** means the Golden Altar of Incense

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.

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** is the Holy of Holies

The **tent of meeting** is the court of the Tabernacle

And **the altar** is the Golden altar of Incense

Then Aaron shall confess over the live goat **all the sins of Israel** and send *it* away into the wilderness. The goat shall bear on itself all their iniquities.

The Law produced an understanding of sin, but could not offer forgiveness.

See Hebrews 10:1-4

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.

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 section where the Golden Altar is located.

We know this because after Aaron put the white clothes on he then went into the area where the Golden Altar resides.

See verse 12

So far the holy place has meant 3 different things.

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

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

Maybe the maker of the picture above should rename the Holy Place. 😊

He shall 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 offerings and sin offerings were offered up on the altar

The altar here means the Bronze Altar in the courtyard

But the bull and the goat of the sin offering, 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.

This shall be a permanent statute for you: in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month

The first Day of Atonement fell on 7-10-1445

Atonement shall be made for you to cleanse you; you will be clean from all your sins before the Lord

Atonement meant they were cleansed from their sin.

It is to be a Sabbath of solemn rest for you, that you may humble your souls

This provided a time of self-examination and repentance.