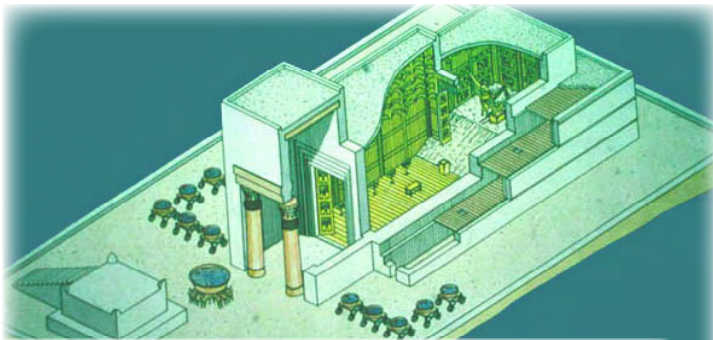


# Cataclysmic Tranquility

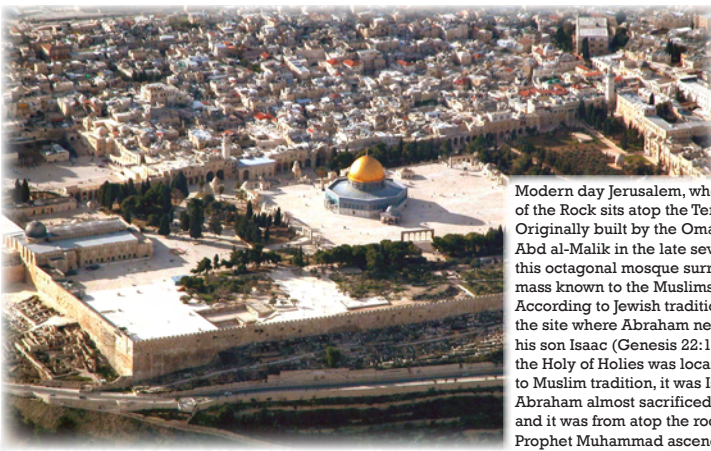
Long Beach Alliance Church • March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2008 • Easter Sunday • Pastor Chris Lankford



Model of the Temple Mount (from the Jerusalem model near the Holyland Hotel). The Temple (re-constructed by Herod) was built atop an enormous raised platform which occupied more than a fifth of the city's total area. The Temple itself stood in the center of the Temple Mount facing East.



The most sacred area of the Jerusalem Temple complex was the "holy of holies" (1<sup>st</sup> Kings 6:16, 20), a space set off from the rest of the sanctuary and approached through a thick multi-veiled curtain. Here stood two huge cherubim, carved of olive wood and overlaid with gold, with their wings spread protectively over the Ark of the Covenant of Yahweh (1<sup>st</sup> Kings 6:23-28). Images of cherubim appeared throughout the Temple interior, carved on walls and doors and woven into hangings. Reconstruction drawing by Leen Ritmeyer; ©Ritmeyer Archaeological Design.



Modern day Jerusalem, where The Dome of the Rock sits atop the Temple Mount. Originally built by the Omayyid caliph Abd al-Malik in the late seventh century, this octagonal mosque surrounds a rock mass known to the Muslims as Es-Sakhra. According to Jewish tradition, this rock is the site where Abraham nearly sacrificed his son Isaac (Genesis 22:1-18) and where the Holy of Holies was located. According to Muslim tradition, it was Ishmael whom Abraham almost sacrificed on Es-Sakhra, and it was from atop the rock that the Prophet Muhammad ascended to heaven.

**THEREFORE, BRETHREN, SINCE WE HAVE CONFIDENCE TO ENTER THE HOLY PLACE BY THE BLOOD OF JESUS, BY A NEW AND LIVING WAY WHICH HE INAUGURATED FOR US THROUGH THE VEIL, THAT IS, HIS FLESH, AND SINCE WE HAVE A GREAT PRIEST OVER THE HOUSE OF GOD, LET US DRAW NEAR WITH A SINCERE HEART IN FULL ASSURANCE OF FAITH, HAVING OUR HEARTS SPRINKLED CLEAN FROM AN EVIL CONSCIENCE AND OUR BODIES WASHED WITH PURE WATER.**

**~ HEBREWS 10:19-22 (NASB)**

## 1) There Will Be Blood...

- A) From the time of Moses to the time of Jesus Christ (around 1500 years), the High Priest of Israel would enter into the inner chamber of the Temple (Holy of Holies) to pay for the sins of Israel once a year (Hebrews 9:6-7).
- B) This "Day of Atonement" (Yom Kippur) followed the law of atonement from the Older Testament (Leviticus 16). This special day was designed to provide forgiveness of sins for all God's chosen people (Leviticus 16:29-34).

## 2) High Priest 101/Day Of Atonement\* Duties

- A) The High Priest was warned to only enter the Holy of Holies once a year (Leviticus 16:2ff). Forgiveness of sins was not a common occurrence within Israel, and came with great fear and "affliction" for the Jews (cf. 16:29-31).
  
- B) For this sacred day, the High Priest would wear very plain garments (16:4). These clothes were different than the normal high-priestly garments (Exodus 28), and were even more plain than regular priestly garments (Exodus 39:27-29).
  
- C) Among the people, the High Priest dressed regally, an indicator of the honor of this high office amongst the Jews. However, in the presence of God -- all honor is stripped away. The priest is simply a servant of the King. Note that the saints in heaven (Revelation 19:8) are portrayed wearing similar simple and plain clothing.
  
- D) The High Priest first made a sin offering for himself (Leviticus 16:11). This was a purification offering, so that the priest himself was pure in making an offering on behalf of the people (cf. 4:3-12).

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\* The word "atonement" should be understood as a rich multi-layered term which is a capstone description of several contributing theological actions (substitution, reconciliation, propitiation, expiation). Substitution means that Christ's life is substituted for the life of the repentant sinner. Christ pays the penalty for sin (which He did not deserve or earn) and the repentant sinner enjoys the benefits of salvation and being a child of God (which mankind does not deserve or earn). Reconciliation is the restoration of the relationship between God and His creation. Propitiation understands the life and death of Christ in terms of a sacrifice which brings about the turning of God's wrath from mankind, allowing for reconciliation. Expiation is making amends for sin, it is more impersonal than Propitiation, but also carried in the meaning of atonement. The "Day of Atonement," through its various movements, accomplished these many things. Further, Christ's crucifixion accomplishes a "better" (Hebrews 10) atonement, a sufficient and completing atonement for sin. Thus, the atonement, when practically applied has (like the word itself) great diversity.

- E) The priest then brought a pan of hot coals from the altar and sweet incense into the Holy of Holies, which would create a great deal of smoke (16:12-13). This protected the High Priest, since to even see the "mercy seat" (seat of atonement) meant death.
  
- F) The priest had to carry the coals and offering with him "inside the veil." The veil was 60 feet high, 30 feet wide, and several feet thick. The construction of the veil was such that the opening zigzagged through its several layers, creating a thick blanketing effect of rich blue and purple linens.
  
- G) The priest would then sprinkle blood from the sacrifice on the mercy seat in precise fashion (16:14). Then the priest would repeat the same procedure with another sacrifice (16:15-16) for the people. The blood sacrifices were purification for sin.
  
- H) Finally, the remaining goat (the "scapegoat," 16:8ff), accepted all the sins of the people, and was sent into the wilderness as payment for sin (16:20-22). Israel observed Yom Kippur each year for these purposes.

## 3) Jesus Christ's Atoning Sacrifice For Sin

- A) Jesus Christ is pure, the perfect High Priest for making a sacrifice (Hebrews 7:26). Jesus was the perfect "one sacrifice for sins for all time" (10:12). He is the ultimate "scapegoat" who carries the sin of mankind away.
  
- B) When Christ died, the veil in the Temple was torn in two from the top to the bottom (Luke 23:45; Matthew 27:51-53; Mark 15:38). The separation between God and man was abolished, and now we can approach God boldly because of a relationship with Jesus Christ (Hebrews 10:19-25).