

Holiest (in Temple/Tabernacle)

YOUNG PEOPLE'S DICTIONARY OF SCRIPTURAL & RELIGIOUS TERMS

The word *holiest* or *the holiest of all* was a specific location found in the tabernacle in the wilderness as well as the various Jewish temples that were built after the Children of Israel entered the land of Canaan, the promised land. This place was the most sacred of all for it was there where the ark of God was placed, where the blood of atonement was sprinkled on the mercy seat of the ark, and where God dwelt among His people.

“And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all” (Heb 9:3)—this was the *tabernacle* that went through the wilderness for 40 years.

“And the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the LORD unto his place, into the oracle of the house, to the most holy place, even under the wings of the cherubims” (1Kings 8:6). This was the glorious temple that King Solomon built when Israel was established in the land of Canaan. It did not move like the tabernacle. This temple was built in God's permanent earthly location in Jerusalem.

When things were in order and the people of God (the Jews) were being obedient to the Lord, the only person who could enter the Holiest of All was the high priest. Only once a year was the high priest able to go into the chamber of the temple/tabernacle called the *holiest* and he must never dare to enter there without the blood of a sacrificed, ritually clean, animal. The blood was sprinkled, once a year, on the mercy seat. This was a reminder that a ‘substitute’ (the ritually clean animal such as a ox or a sheep, etc.) had shed its blood to cover the sins of the Jewish nation for the past year.

However, there was never peace in this kind of sacrifice because it had to be repeated once every year. Now we, Christians, have peace with God because our blessed Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ the eternal Son of God, offered Himself as a sacrifice to God. He died on the cross and in doing so carried His very own blood into God's presence. God has been so completely satisfied with the offering of His beloved Son, that there will never be another offering of blood needed to wash away our sins. *“For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself”* (Heb 9:26).

Not only that, but now, we who have accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour are invited to come right into the presence of God (the *throne of grace*) to worship, praise and make our prayers known to our blessed, loving God and Father. *“Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need”* (Heb 4:16).