

# Question About Yom Kippur, Tetragrammaton, the Shekinah Glory, and the Blood

By Pastor Ed Anderson

Is this in error...the Jewish High Priest would pronounce the Tetragrammaton in the Holy of Holies...and the Shekinah glory would appear over the Mercy Seat upon which the blood of the sacrifice had been placed?

## Answer:

Your understanding is largely **correct in essence**, but there are some **important historical and textual clarifications** that should be made. Let's break it down carefully:

### TRUE ELEMENTS:

#### 1. The High Priest Entered the Holy of Holies Once a Year

- On **Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement)**, the Jewish High Priest would enter the **Most Holy Place (Holy of Holies)** in the Temple or Tabernacle (Leviticus 16).
- He would carry the **blood of the sin offering** and sprinkle it on the **Mercy Seat** — the golden covering of the Ark of the Covenant — to atone for the sins of the people.

#### Leviticus 16:15–16

“Then shall he kill the goat of the sin offering...and bring his blood within the veil...and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat...and make an atonement.”

#### 2. The Shekinah Glory Was Associated with God's Presence

- The **Shekinah** (שכינה) is a **post-biblical rabbinic term** meaning “the dwelling” or “settling” of God's divine presence.
- It was said to **appear between the cherubim** above the Mercy Seat (Exodus 25:22), especially during the wilderness period and the early Temple era.

#### 3. The Tetragrammaton (YHWH) Was Pronounced on Yom Kippur

- According to **Mishnah Yoma 6:2**, the High Priest would pronounce the **Divine Name YHWH** during the Yom Kippur rituals.

- The people who heard it would **fall on their faces and respond**: “**Blessed be the name of His glorious kingdom forever and ever.**”

This confirms the belief that **the Name was spoken** — **but only** by the High Priest, **only** on Yom Kippur, and **only** in the context of the Most Holy Place.

## CLARIFICATIONS & MISCONCEPTIONS:

### 1. Was the Shekinah still visible during the Second Temple period?

- **No.** Jewish tradition (Babylonian Talmud, Yoma 21b) says that the **Shekinah did not dwell in the Second Temple** (the one in Jesus’ time). It was present in Solomon’s Temple and in the Tabernacle before that.
- The **Ark of the Covenant was also missing** in the Second Temple, so there was no literal Mercy Seat for the High Priest to sprinkle blood upon.

### 2. Is the Tetragrammaton used or pronounced today?


- Orthodox Judaism treats the Tetragrammaton as **too sacred to pronounce**, substituting “Adonai” or “HaShem” (The Name).
- The exact pronunciation of YHWH has been **lost over time**, partly because of this tradition.





## MESSIANIC & CHRISTIAN APPLICATION:

In Christian understanding, especially from a New Covenant perspective:

- The **blood of Jesus** has fulfilled the Yom Kippur shadow:  
*“He entered once for all into the holy places... by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption.” – Hebrews 9:12*
- Jesus, our **Great High Priest**, entered the true heavenly Holy of Holies and **reconciled us to the Father**, not once a year — but once for all.
- The **Shekinah glory** is now present in the believer by the Holy Spirit:  
*“Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you...?” – 1 Corinthians 6:19*

### Summary:

Element	True?	Clarification
High Priest entered Holy of Holies once a year	 Yes	On Yom Kippur

Blood placed on the Mercy Seat	 Yes	In the First Temple period
Shekinah glory appeared visibly	 Yes	Only in Tabernacle and Solomon's Temple
Tetragrammaton pronounced	 Yes	Only by the High Priest on Yom Kippur
Still practiced today?	 No	Forbidden to pronounce; Ark missing; rituals symbolic