

How then did Yahweh condescend to the importuning Moses in the matter of showing him His glory? "There is a place near Me", He said, "where you may stand on a rock. When My glory passes by, I will put you in a cleft in the rock and cover you with My hand until I have passed by.

Then I will remove My hand and you will see My back; but My face must not be seen".

And that was the closest view of the Lord God Almighty that man had seen since he walked with Him in the Garden of Eden.

(To be continued)

# Your Letters



## An odd statement

I was fascinated by the article by Brother Peter Cox of the above title ([Apr. 2008, p. 65](#)). We might ask the question, How can humanity so deceive itself as to find credibility in the practice of looking in the liver, and how could the supposed diviner have held such an exalted position as the *baru* (the Babylonian name for the priest who specialised in interpreting the markings on a liver)? The answer is in religious mystique, a phenomenon hard to understand unless one has experienced it. The combination of indoctrination, special buildings and elaborate ritual, combined with an élite priesthood who supposedly were the only ones to have access to divine mysteries, made all this

possible. There can be little doubt that some who practised it really believed in it.

I came close to such an experience a few times as a Roman Catholic. The fusion of all the elements mentioned above, together with a yearning to experience the divine, could become autosuggestive. One interesting aspect of this passage in Ezekiel 21 is found in the words used by the Spirit: ". . . your transgressions are *discovered*, so that in all your doings your sins do appear" (v. 24). The Babylonian *baru* looked in the liver and on the basis of his 'discovery' (based on the markings that 'appeared' in the liver) made his prediction.

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# Lessons from the Law for today (2)

John Nicholls

**C**ONTINUING our review of Brother Michael Ashton's book *The Beauty of Holiness*" (for details see [Apr. 2008, p. 46](#)), we come to the Day of Atonement, dealt with in chapter 16 of his book. This was the most important date in Israel's religious calendar. In Leviticus 16:1,2 the instructions to Moses are prefaced by reference to the deaths of Nadab and Abihu, which may suggest that part of their sin was to enter the most holy place.

Only on this day could the high priest enter the most holy place, and, as the writer to the Hebrews says, this underlined the inadequacy of the Law to reconcile men to God (9:8,9). This day

was the tenth day of the seventh month, a day of cleansing the nation that they might rest from their sins (Lev. 16:30,31). It pointed forward to the permanent rest that remains for God's people, both Jew and Gentile, in the Kingdom. On this day the people were to "afflict [their] souls" (v. 29), showing repentance for their sins, underlining the principle throughout Scripture that sins must be repented of and forsaken before there can be forgiveness.

Various offerings were made, including two goats as a sin offering for the people, one of which was released (the scapegoat, or dismissal offering). Aaron could once again wear his robes,