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ETHICS AND MORALITY IN THE PRIESTLY LAW AND NARRATIVE

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SUN BOK BAE

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## Table of Contents

<b>Acknowledgements .....</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>Abstract .....</b>	<b>vii</b>
<b>Abbreviations .....</b>	<b>viii</b>
<b>Chapter One. Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Methodological Problems in Biblical Ethics .....	1
1.2 Common Understanding of the Priestly Source .....	5
1.3 P as a Proper Object of Biblical Ethics .....	18
1.4 The Definition of Morality and Ethics .....	21
1.5 How to Trace the Implicit Priestly Ethics and Morality .....	25
1.6 שלום <i>šālôm</i> as the Priestly Moral Vision .....	30
1.7 Outline of the Study .....	33
<b>Chapter Two. <i>Imago Dei</i> in the Priestly Narrative .....</b>	<b>35</b>
2.1 The Priestly Creation Account .....	36
2.2 A History of the Understanding of צלם אלהים “the Image of God” .....	37
2.3 Ancient Near Eastern <i>Imago Dei</i> .....	54
2.4 Biblical צלם .....	73
2.5 The Priestly <i>Imago Dei</i> .....	84
2.5.1 Genesis 5:1–3 .....	85
2.5.2 Genesis 9:1–7 .....	102
2.6 Synthesis and Implication for Priestly Morality .....	109
2.7 Conclusion .....	117
<b>Chapter Three. Divine Nature in P: Transcendence versus Immanence .....</b>	<b>119</b>
3.1 A Need for Further Justification of the Character Analysis of the Priestly Deity ....	119
3.2 The Body of the Priestly God .....	120
3.3 Transcendence and Immanence in Hebrew Bible Scholarship .....	125
3.4 A Critique of the Scholarly Opinions about P’s Transcendence .....	132
3.5 רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים in Gen 1:2 .....	136
3.5.1 The Wind of God or the Mighty Wind .....	138
3.5.2 The Breath of God .....	142
3.5.3 From the Spirit of God to the Person of God to God Himself .....	144
3.5.4 Summary and Implication .....	157
3.5.5 Excursus: The Combat Myth ( <i>Chaoskampfmythos</i> ) in P? .....	158
3.6 <i>Kəḇôḏ</i> YHWH in P .....	168
3.7 Conclusion .....	180

<b>Chapter Four. The Priestly Law More than Ritual Instructions: The Character of the Priestly Deity in the Law .....</b>	<b>182</b>
4.1 Continuous Divine Nature between the Narrative and the Law in P .....	184
4.2. Defense for Using Modern Categories: Cultic and Moral .....	187
4.3 Ritual within Narrative .....	191
4.4 Characterization .....	210
4.4.1 Appearance .....	212
4.4.2 Speech .....	215
4.4.3 Environment .....	218
4.4.4 Action .....	228
4.5 Conclusion .....	242
<b>Chapter Five. The Violence and the Violation .....</b>	<b>245</b>
5.1 Violence: The Cause of the Flood .....	247
5.1.1 וְהָיָה וְשָׁחַטְתָּ and דָּרַךְ .....	249
5.1.2 חָמָס .....	253
5.1.3 Violence and the Deity's Moral Value .....	255
5.2 The Violation of the Law .....	270
5.2.1 The Object of the Purification Offering .....	274
5.2.2 The Nature of Divine Forgiveness in the Priestly Expiation .....	289
5.2.3 The Meaning of אִשָּׁם .....	290
5.2.4 Forgiveness and Human Responsibility .....	309
5.2.5 A Potential Moral Case that Appears in the Sacrificial Law .....	316
5.3 Conclusion .....	323
<b>Chapter Six. Summary and Implications .....</b>	<b>327</b>
6.1 Summary of the Study .....	327
6.2 Nature, Meaning, and Significance of the Priestly Morality and Ethics .....	334
<b>Bibliography .....</b>	<b>343</b>

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## Abstract

The aim of this dissertation is to trace and delineate the moral vision, aim, and values in the Priestly document among the four Pentateuchal sources. This text has been largely regarded and treated in biblical scholarship as having no moral concerns. The general assumption is that P is so focused on so-called ritual and religious matters that it is barely interested in morality that other Pentateuchal and broader biblical texts strive hard to set up. This trend is not least because the literary nature of the entire Priestly document has not been properly taken into account. This document is a historical narrative. The cultic laws are a necessary part of this larger narrative and should be read in light of its plot. Reading the text with a literary approach, I argue that a consistent moral aim of human peace and well-being (*shalom*) are latent throughout the Priestly history. The morality in this narrative is closely related to the *anthropomorphic* divine character it describes, for instance, his sensitive bodily senses and certain aesthetic nature and preferences. Human violence disturbs his sensitive senses and inclination toward repose and peace. The cultic laws serve to elaborate this divine character in the course of the plot development. Along with the deity's bodily senses, the royal character becomes prominent in the laws. The entire law focuses on how to serve the sovereign deity's repose that is inseparable from the peace and well-being of the world with the relevant moral values, such as restoration and responsibility. This dissertation proposes a new significance of the Priestly history. Contrary to the somewhat pejorative characterization of the text being legalistic and ritualistic, this Pentateuchal source does not merely include moral concerns, but in fact has morality as its major interest. It is suffused throughout P's plot, story, speeches, concepts, themes, and laws. It is only hidden by P's style and narrative technique that exploit a large quantity of technical religious language.

## Abbreviations

- AHw* *Akkadisches Handwörterbuch*. Wolfram von Soden. 3 vols. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1965–1981
- ANEP* *The Ancient Near East in Pictures Relating to the Old Testament*. 2nd ed. Edited by James B. Pritchard. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994
- ANET* *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*. Edited by James B. Pritchard. 3rd ed. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969
- CAD* *The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago*. 21 vols. Chicago: The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 1956–2006
- COS* *The Context of Scripture*. Edited by William W. Hallo. 3 vols. Leiden: Brill, 1997–2002
- DDD* *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible*. Edited by Karel van der Toorn, Bob Becking, and Pieter W. van der Horst. 2nd rev. ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999
- GKC* *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*. Edited by Emil Kautzsch. Translated by Arther E. Cowley. 2nd ed. Oxford: Clarendon, 1910
- HALOT* *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Ludwig Koehler, Walter Baumgartner, and Johann J. Stamm. Translated and edited under the supervision of Mervyn E. J. Richardson. 5 vols. Leiden: Brill, 1994–2000
- JM* *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*. Joüon P. and Muraoka T. 2nd ed. Rome: GBP, 2009
- JSB* *The Jewish Study Bible*. Edited by Adele Berlin and Marc Zvi Brettler. 2nd ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014
- KAR* *Keilschrifttexte aus Assur religiösen Inhalts*. Edited by Erich Ebeling. 2 vols. Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1919–1923
- KTU* *Die keilalphabetischen Texte aus Ugarit, Ras Ibn Hani und anderen Orten*. Edited by M. Dietrich, O. Loretz, and J. Sanmartín. 3rd edition. AOAT 360/1



- NIDOTTE* *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis.* Edited by Willem A. VanGemeren. 5 vols. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997
- NJPS* *Tanakh: The Holy Scriptures: The New JPS Translation according to the Traditional Hebrew Text*
- RIMA* The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia, Assyrian Periods
- RINAP* The Royal Inscriptions of the Neo-Assyrian Period
- TDNT* *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament.* Edited by Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich. Translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. 10 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964–1976.
- TDOT* *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament.* Edited by G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren. Rev. ed. Translated by John T. Willis et al. 16 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977–2021.
- TLOT* *Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament.* Edited by Ernst Jenni, with Assistance from Claus Westermann. Translated by Mark E. Biddle. 3 vols. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1997.
- WO* *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax.* Bruce K. Waltke and M. O'Connor. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990

# Chapter One

## Introduction

This study seeks to describe the moral aspects of the Priestly history throughout the Pentateuch.<sup>1</sup> This literary work has often been either neglected or, at worst, denied to be ethical. I try to argue the opposite. The present study attempts to answer the following questions: Is there morality at all in the Priestly history? If so, how is the Priestly morality reflected and presented throughout this apparently legal and ritual literature? In other words, apart from a few cases that deal with interpersonal matters directly and explicitly, from where and how may the overall moral idea of the Priestly history be inferred, if it exists at all?

### 1.1 Methodological Problems in Biblical Ethics

The study of the Priestly morality is part of a broader discipline, i.e., biblical ethics. Biblical ethics has its own conceptual and methodological problems. One of the important questions that has arisen in scholarship is whether or not overall biblical ethics is possible for the same reason that the possibility of biblical theology is doubted. Robert R. Wilson points out both

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<sup>1</sup> I will use the following acronyms employed by the Documentary Hypothesis: J for the Yawhistic (*Jahwist* in German) source, E for the Elohist source, D for the Deuteronomic source, and P for the Priestly source. The Priestly source, document, and history are largely interchangeable with different nuances and all refer to the entirety of the P text. For my preference and justification of using “the Priestly history,” see below. P is considered to be edited and completed by H (the Holiness redaction). The adjective “Priestly” with the upper case refers to the composition P. I distinguish “Priestly” from “priestly” with the lower case that refers to the characteristics of the priests, not necessarily those of the composition P—this distinction is not strictly made in some scholarly works. “P” and “Priestly” refer to the same composition. This designation is potentially confusing. P can refer to either the original compositional layer before H’s supplements or to the final version of the P source that includes H. It is because H continues and does not radically deviate from the plot of the earlier composition, though its stylistic and ideological differences are discernible enough. Thus, what I assign to “P” or “Priestly” is related first to the original layer. When I need to specify the entire P source including H, I will try to use some modifiers or labels such as “Pentateuchal P(riestly source).” The later redactional layers that share the interest in lay holiness will be labelled as H. Cf. Jeffrey Stackert, “Leviticus,” *OEBB* 1:573–580 (esp. 573).

the heterogeneity of groups in ancient Israel and the plurality of ideas in the Hebrew Bible.<sup>2</sup> Peter J. Haas, continuing Wilson's challenge, questions the ethics of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament from his Jewish perspective of the Hebrew Bible as relevant only to a part of a larger tradition.<sup>3</sup> Judaism, he says, does not have a concept of the closed biblical canon and the Tanakh (the Jewish label for the Hebrew Bible) continues in rabbinic literature and beyond. In fact, he says the Jewish biblical canon needs this openness in order to be correctly interpreted. An ethics of the Hebrew Bible or of the ancient Israelites is thus problematic for him since it would need to be premised upon an arbitrarily selected time frame (i.e., up to Persian) or a historically contingent collection. John Barton criticizes Walther Eichrodt<sup>4</sup> and Johannes Hempel<sup>5</sup> for thinking that a consistent ethics can be found in the Old Testament, for example, under a rubric of obedience to God, since they failed to balance various diachronic and synchronic aspects and their theological preferences distorted their otherwise proper historical readings.<sup>6</sup>

The introductions of many previous monographs on biblical ethics and journal articles—especially, the first half of the articles in the sixty-sixth volume of the journal *Semeia* issued in 1994—point out several methodological problems that discouraged scholarship from producing studies on biblical ethics at least until the 1980s. Douglas A. Knight classifies the issues yet to be solved.<sup>7</sup> First of all, the meaning of ethics should be questioned. Ethics is a constructive operation in philosophical or theological ethics. However, biblical ethics is about ancient texts and so it needs to be analytical and interpretive. The object of analysis is also unclear. Knight

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<sup>2</sup> Robert R. Wilson, "Sources and Methods in the Study of Ancient Israelite Ethics," *Semeia* 66 (1994): 55–63.

<sup>3</sup> Peter J. Haas, "The Quest for Hebrew Bible Ethics: A Jewish Response," *Semeia* 66 (1994): 151–59.

<sup>4</sup> Walther Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament*, trans. J. A. Baker, 2 vols. (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1961, 1967), esp. 2:316–379.

<sup>5</sup> Johannes Hempel, *Das Ethos des Alten Testaments*, BZAW 67 (Berlin: Alfred Töpelmann, 1938).

<sup>6</sup> John Barton, "Understanding Old Testament Ethics," in *Understanding Old Testament Ethics: Approaches and Explorations* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2003), 15–31. See also John Barton, "The Basis of Ethics in the Hebrew Bible," *Semeia* 66 (1994): 11–22, esp. 13–14.

<sup>7</sup> Douglas A. Knight, "Introduction: Ethics, Ancient Israel, and the Hebrew Bible," *Semeia* 66 (1994): 1–8.

explains four existing approaches, namely, referential, literary, appropriative, and sociohistorical. The referential approach draws an ethical idea by interpreting the Bible against the historical background by means of historical-critical tools. The literary approach prioritizes the world of the text and nothing else. The appropriative one assumes the authority of the Bible and its ethical relevance to the modern world. The sociohistorical approach does not treat the background of the Bible as the tools for but rather the object of analysis. Knight asks which approach can be properly called biblical ethics. And a further, no less difficult problem he raises is what an ethical idea drawn from an ancient text can mean to us, regardless of any approach.

Henry McKeating suggests another important distinction, rightly considering the literariness of the biblical texts: the ethics of ancient Israelite society versus the ethics of the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible.<sup>8</sup> The former seeks to find the ethics in the thoughts and practices of the real, historical people. As the biblical text does not reflect the ancient Israelite society factually, one should reconstruct the ethics of the supposedly real, historical society not only out of text but also resorting to extra-biblical materials, such as archaeological remains and other ancient Near Eastern texts. Here, one should be cautious in one's reconstruction not to be hastily totalistic and unilineal since the ancient Israelite society has been changed in the course of history and even the society in a certain historical point is most likely to have consisted of distinct groups that retain varying values. The ethics of the Old Testament is one that the biblical text describes. It is obtained by analyzing the sense of the text, instead of reconstructing something behind the text. It is not necessarily consistent with one that historically existed among real people. Yet the

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<sup>8</sup> Henry McKeating, "Sanctions against Adultery in Ancient Israelite Society, with Some Reflections on Methodology in the Study of Old Testament Ethics," *JSOT* 4.11 (1979): 57–72., esp. 70; followed by John Barton, *Ethics in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 3–4. Chun adopts this distinction but substitutes a slightly different term, "ethics in the Old Testament," for the ethics of the ancient Israelite society: see S. Min Chun, *Ethics and Biblical Narrative: A Literary and Discourse-Analytical Approach to the Story of Josiah*, Oxford Theology and Religion Monographs (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 11–16.

difficulty in this ethics arose from the fact that there are competing and contradicting values and norms within the Hebrew Bible, as Wilson and Haas pointed out above. It is very doubtful that the moral system that covers the entire Bible can be justifiably established. Even if it is possible, the first step that must be taken is to treat fairly various moralities in the Hebrew Bible respectively, which represent an ethic primarily held by respective authors.<sup>9</sup>

To not get lost in the aforementioned distinctions, one should clarify the object of biblical ethical research and then decide appropriate methods. Biblical ethics should not attempt to harmonize too quickly the various strands of ethics within the Hebrew Bible or those of the ancient Israelite society reconstructed from the biblical and extra-biblical sources, but rather focus on each individual ethic on its own merit first. Whether one attempts to describe an ethic presented in the Hebrew Bible or to go further to reconstruct it in the text's historical or sociological background by means of the text and other textual and material sources, the first step is to select and define a text unit that contains a coherent thought and reveals the composition's moral ideas descriptively. To describe the moral ideas of a composition descriptively, Barton's "plain sense" concept is helpful. He argues against using terms like the "literal," "historical," or "original" meaning, but rather proposes the term "plain sense" in order that one may not fall into a false idea of biblical criticism. The plain sense consists of three qualifications: 1) attention to semantics; 2) awareness of genre questions; and 3) a non-committal (truth-bracketed) approach. By adhering to the plain sense of the text, he argues that the first stage of reading the Bible is to understand what the text says. All other applied readings (theological, feminist, post-structuralist, and post-colonial among others) are only valid after

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<sup>9</sup> Barton, "Understanding," 16–22 (esp. 16–17).

properly understanding what the text means.<sup>10</sup> This is originally a concept to defend biblical criticism as a literary operation rather than historical operation, and yet well applies to the kind of biblical ethics that I am proposing.

In other words, among Knight's four approaches, the literary approach is inevitably the first step, both on its own merit and as preliminary for the other approaches. Barton's further borrowing from E. D. Hirsch the distinction between meaning and significance justifies the descriptive search for biblical ethics as it is in the text. One may consider sorting out its significance and applicability for the modern world afterwards as a different level.<sup>11</sup> It will be clearer below that this methodological point of view is best suited for my pursuit of the Priestly morality. To use this method, one may decide the scope of the biblical texts that contains coherent and consistent ideas. Preliminarily speaking, P is a coherent literary work that contains a consistent moral thought. Its literariness requires a literary reading to find its meaning.

## **1.2 Common Understanding of the Priestly Source**

To study the Priestly Morality within the purview of biblical ethics, some preliminary questions must be answered. What is the nature of the Priestly source and its message? Since the term, the Priestly source, and its concept derived from the modern Pentateuchal scholarship, I must begin with how the Priestly source has been read from its rise. Since it is impossible here to survey the scholarship exhaustively, I will introduce a few, still significant, representative

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<sup>10</sup> John Barton, *The Nature of Biblical Criticism* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2007), 69–116 (esp. 101–116). For the importance of the genre in interpreting the text, which Barton himself draws on, see E. D. Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967), 68–126; Carolyn R. Miller, "Genre as Social Action," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 70 (1984), 151–167; There are useful anthologies of the excerpts from some important genre theories: e.g., David Duff, ed., *Modern Genre Theory* (London: Routledge, 2014); Michael McKeon, ed., *Theory of the Novel: A Historical Approach* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), 1–75.

<sup>11</sup> Barton, *Nature of Biblical Criticism*, 86–87. See Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation*, 24–67.

figures, whose problems are shared by many others, in order to later contrast with my understanding of P. Preliminarily speaking, the ethical discussion about P has been largely neglected and avoided in scholarship, while many scholars were overly concerned, though understandably, about the theme of the proper cult in P. The problem arose, at least partly, because many scholars did not read P properly as narrative. Many of them unduly attempted to find the meaning of P from their reconstruction of the historical context more than from the text itself, which was often biased. Some others too sharply separated the law and narrative in P. The point of this brief survey is not to complain about the widespread interest in cult, which is of itself an important and meaningful object of inquiry about P. Rather, I intend to reveal that the Priestly ethics and morality have not drawn their due attention, and it is related to the scholarly stereotypes about what kind of literature P is and how it should be read.

Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, simply meaning ‘five books’ (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy), had long been generally unquestioned except for a few verses. But as readers began to feel the contradictions in the Pentateuch more and more and as Mosaic authorship came to be questioned in the Middle Ages, the contradictions in the Scripture had to be explained and defended. The so-called Documentary Hypothesis originates from this need to defend the authority of the Scripture. Its core argument is that four different documents (J, E, D, and P) had once existed independently from one another and were combined together later, although opinions about the process through which they were combined vary from scholar to scholar.

One of the most influential names is Julius Wellhausen, author of *Prolegomena to the History of Israel* in the late nineteenth century, whose view considerably affected later

(especially Christian) scholarship.<sup>12</sup> For him, J and E had been combined first to an inseparable degree by the so-called Jehovist, and, then, JE and P were combined later by a different redactor. Above all, the importance of his version lies in his understanding of the ever-degenerating course of Israel's religious history<sup>13</sup> and identification of the Priestly document with the Second Temple Judaism. He differentiates the pre-prophetic, prophetic, and Jewish stages in Israelite religion. The point of distinction between the first two is the prophetic addition of universal ethics to the old Israelite religion:

Until their time the nation had sprung up out of the conception of Jehovah; now the conception of Jehovah was casting the nation into the shade. The natural bond between the two was severed, and the relation was henceforward viewed as conditional. As God of the righteousness which is the law of the whole universe, Jehovah could be Israel's God only in so far as in Israel the right was recognized and followed. The ethical element destroyed the national character of the old religion.<sup>14</sup>

The point is that the relationship between Yahweh and Israel comes to depend on the Israelites' moral lives for the first time, as John Barton comments on Wellhausen's prophetic religion and the followers of his idea: "The tradition deriving from Wellhausen sees them (prophets) as innovators in the ethical sphere, as we have seen: no one before had condemned the nation in the name of God, thereby implying that Israel lay under heavy moral imperatives."<sup>15</sup> The conditionality of the divine-nation relationship culminated in the Deuteronomic legislation which represents the prophetic reformation.

Yet Wellhausen does not mean that the pre-prophetic religion was entirely immoral or amoral. In fact, the authority of the priests who sometimes played the role of judge in the pre-

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<sup>12</sup> Julius Wellhausen, *Prolegomena to the History of Israel: With a Reprint of the Article "Israel" from the Encyclopedia Britannica*, trans. J. Sutherland Black and Allan Menzies (Edinburgh: Adam & Charles Black, 1885).

<sup>13</sup> See Eckart Otto, "Ethics," *OEBL* 1:271–280, esp. 272; Jeffrey Stackert, *A Prophet Like Moses: Prophecy, Law, and Israelite Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 2–16.

<sup>14</sup> Wellhausen, *Prolegomena*, 473–474 (see also 439–440); also cited with a comment by Aly Elrefaei, *Wellhausen and Kaufmann: Ancient Israel and Its Religious History in the Works of Julius Wellhausen and Yehezkel Kaufmann*, BZAW 490 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2016), 131.

<sup>15</sup> Barton, *Ethics in Ancient Israel*, 36 (my parentheses).



prophetic phase was divine and moral in its character, he says.<sup>16</sup> In my understanding, he only means that the morality of the pre-prophetic religion is not universal, but rather *ad hoc* and contextual. Thus, the gap between these two phases is not great for Wellhausen. The religions of both phases are natural and real. There is no distinction between the sacred and the secular in them in that both envision religion rooted in real life. The priestly office was not institutionalized, so that the prophets could work as priests and the teachings of the priests were oral and oracular. The prophets “are not saying anything new: they are only proclaiming old truth.”<sup>17</sup>

The real gap is actually bipartite between the preexilic prophetic and the postexilic legal religions.<sup>18</sup> The law represents the Second Temple Judaism after the Babylonian exile, which begins with the Priestly Code (Wellhausen’s and many others’ moniker for the Priestly source that already characterizes it as legal). Under the Persian government, the Priestly vision of the nation has to be separated from secular politics and become hierocratic. In other words, the religion stands as its own institution. Wellhausen does not mean that this religion replaced the former phases with radically different precepts. The problem is that the precepts that were relevant for everyday life, including ethics, became spiritual and religious in P. The original significance of both worship and ethical life (which were not even distinguished) is lost. The

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<sup>16</sup> Wellhausen, *Prolegomena*, 436. “The execution of their (the priests’) decisions did not lie with them; they could only advise and teach. Their authority was divine, or, as we should say, moral, in its character” (my parenthesis). Here, “moral” seems to be used in contrast with the concept of “legal,” “judicial,” and “enforced,” in addition to its usual sense of what should be done.

<sup>17</sup> Wellhausen, *Prolegomena*, 398 (and also 432). Cf. Barton, *Ethics in Ancient Israel*, 36, thus, adds to the above quote in n17, “Even so, the prophets were not necessarily to be seen as having ‘discovered’ ethics: more likely they drew on some kind of diffused beliefs.”

<sup>18</sup> See a helpful comment in Elrefaai, *Wellhausen and Kaufmann*, 59:

Wellhausen had in mind the relationship of the law and the prophets. Later, Wellhausen undertook to determine this relationship. He saw that the prophets and the law represented two different worlds. Wellhausen’s opinion that the law was later than the prophets caused a stir. The late dating of the law changed the conventional picture of the development of Israelite religion. To put it differently, it meant that the real source of the people’s religious spirit lay not with an ancient lawgiver, but with the prophets.

spontaneity, voluntariness, freedom, vitality, and enjoyment (the individualistic values he appreciated highly, opposing institutional religions<sup>19</sup>) “give way to “ascetic exercises,” i.e., duties and obligations.<sup>20</sup> Having said that, Wellhausen’s disparagement of the law, which is basically P in his mind, does not merely spring from its content. Even the same precepts in the earlier sources of the Pentateuch could lose their significance if they are repeated in P. It is rather because the law is written and fixed, in other words, unnatural and artificial. He attributes the blame to the (written) law as a genre, which strips off all the good values of the oral, spontaneous, natural prophetic teachings. P’s pretense of antiquity is a means for the Second Temple priests to manipulate the readers as if their cult were commanded by God through Moses and practiced in the Mosaic time, despite the fact that it had never been realized in the history of Israel.<sup>21</sup> Even though he concedes that the main stock of the Priestly Code is narrative, i.e., the Book of the Four Covenants, that narrative is of no significance for P’s content: “It is historical only in form; the history serves merely as a framework on which to arrange the legislative material, or as a mask to disguise it.”<sup>22</sup> In other words, P’s narrative merely plays an extra in a picture starring the law and institutions: “The law is the key to the understanding even of the narrative of the Priestly Code.”<sup>23</sup>

Later scholarship correctly began to observe the narrative character of P and toned down Wellhausenian anti-Judaism. Gerhard von Rad argues that “P is a genuine historical work,” while admitting P’s “appearance of an utter lack of interest in ordinary humanity, psychology, and the poetry of the situations” when compared to JE (a term for the allegedly earlier

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<sup>19</sup> Stackert, *Prophet Like Moses*, 6 and 6n20.

<sup>20</sup> Wellhausen, *Prolegomena*, 422–425.

<sup>21</sup> Wellhausen, *Prolegomena*, 9.

<sup>22</sup> Wellhausen, *Prolegomena*, 7. Cf. Stackert, *Prophet Like Moses*, 10.

<sup>23</sup> Wellhausen, *Prolegomena*, 361.

combination of J and E before P was added).<sup>24</sup> P has a clear theological concern of “the growth of particular cultic institutions out of the history.”<sup>25</sup> It tries to explain the meaning of the worship of Israel by situating it in the history of Israel, he says. And yet he still hesitates to fully admit that P could be narrative because of P’s “various pieces of cultic material” “presented with such bare objectivity, and so much without any addition which gives the theological significance.”<sup>26</sup> He thinks P’s narrative style is austere and minimal and its cultic regulations added later to the original impair narrativity. P’s lack of vividness and artistry in contrast to JE’s “narration of overpowering simplicity without anything doctrinal” allows him to characterize it more as a doctrinal thesis than as a narrative<sup>27</sup> even though he never really denies that P (without its secondary legal additions) is still narrative in a different style.<sup>28</sup> In this narrative, P’s main intention is to offer *an etiology of the cult* of Israel and all its material is presented from that perspective in his reading.<sup>29</sup>

The consciousness of P’s narrativity sometimes led to exclusion of the apparently non-narrative, ritual laws of P as secondary. Von Rad thought that various cultic laws were secondarily inserted into P’s narrative. Yet he offers a caveat that the secondary additions cannot always be separated precisely from the original narrative and that there is a degree of unity throughout all of P including its secondary cultic additions.<sup>30</sup> It was Martin Noth that emphasized

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<sup>24</sup> Gerhard von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, trans. D. M. G. Stalker, 2 vols. (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1962), 233.

<sup>25</sup> Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, 1:233.

<sup>26</sup> Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, 1:232.

<sup>27</sup> Gerhard von Rad, *Genesis: A Commentary*, trans. John H. Marks, Rev. ed., OTL (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1972), 27–28.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Gerhard von Rad, *Die Priesterschrift im Hexateuch: Literarisch Untersucht und Theologisch Gewertet*, BWANT 65 (Vierte Folge Heft 13) (Stuttgart-Berlin: Kohlhammer, 1934), 188: “Und das ist nun auch der Grund, weshalb wir P ein Erzählungswerk nennen müssen; den in der Schilderung der geschichtlichen Situation ruht ja gerade die Legitimität der jeweiligen Gottesordnung.”

<sup>29</sup> Von Rad, *Priesterschrift*, 187; cf. Martin Noth, *A History of Pentateuchal Traditions*, trans. Bernhard W. Anderson (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1972), 240–241.

<sup>30</sup> Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, 1:233.

P's narrativity to the extent to say that a large portion of P's "legal sections have nothing to do with the P narrative originally."<sup>31</sup> Some or even many of those legal supplements should not be represented by such a siglum as P<sup>s</sup>, since they may not have been added to the P narrative, but rather to the later combined Pentateuchal narrative.<sup>32</sup> Divested of the secondary and even later insertions, P is "the work of one man with a definite plan and distinct views."<sup>33</sup> The remaining awkwardness and irregularities in the style and structure of the original P narrative should be attributed to P's boundedness to its various sources. These literary characteristics he observes, in turn, affect his reading of P. He argues P's theology should not be reconstructed from the parts that were heavily influenced by older traditions and the ideas shared by contemporaries: namely the characterization of the deity in the narrative and the pre-Sinaitic institutions of circumcision and the Sabbath. The gist of the Priestly theology must be found in the Priestly Sinai narrative.<sup>34</sup> He admits that P retrojects the postexilic Jerusalem Temple and its cult to its remote past. However, he makes a conclusion different from Wellhausen or von Rad. He concludes that P is ideal in that it presents a cultic reformation program or merely attempts to change the contemporary view of the divine presence and the Temple.<sup>35</sup>

While he correctly characterizes original P as a narrative work, he does not really read it as a narrative. He already excluded from his narrative a significant amount of the cultic laws, which I think are still P. I wonder if one can really understand P properly and precisely in its tailored form. Furthermore, he dismissed almost every main part of original P narrative as not distinctly priestly. If he only considers the Sinaitic tradition for his reconstruction of P's

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<sup>31</sup> Noth, *Pentateuchal Traditions*, 8. For the details of his identification of the original P narrative, see the entire chapter three of the book (pp.8–19). Cf. Martin Noth, *Leviticus: A Commentary*, trans. J. E. Anderson, OTL (London: SCM, 1965), 10–15.

<sup>32</sup> Noth, *Pentateuchal Traditions*, 9–10.

<sup>33</sup> Noth, *Pentateuchal Traditions*, 10–11 and 228.

<sup>34</sup> Noth, *Pentateuchal Traditions*, 240–242.

<sup>35</sup> Noth, *Pentateuchal Traditions*, 228–247, esp. 242–243 and 246–247.

theological purpose, he is not reading a coherent narrative work. If original P that he reconstructed is indeed a full narrative, his reconstruction of P's theology from a selective reading of the part is certainly partial and insufficient.

Noth's attempt to regard the original layer of P as narrative after setting aside many laws as secondary has gained broad acceptance from later writers (except from those who consider P to be a redaction rather than an independent source). Some of them began to consider P's narrative and plot seriously for its meaning, unlike Noth. Karl Elliger and Norbert Lohfink attempted to find the purpose of the Priestly narrative from the entire narrative that they reconstructed.<sup>36</sup> Not narrowing their eyes to the cultic matters, however, they found the main theme to be neither the present cult nor the future cult, but rather the promise of the restoration of the people and the land.<sup>37</sup> They regard the Priestly history (their P<sup>g</sup>) as originating from the Babylonian exile as a consolation. I find it commendable that they avoid the Second Temple debate around the cult as the ultimate concern of P. Yet they share two common problems with Noth. By removing most of the cultic laws, they ignored a significant portion of P. As much as their reconstructed narrative is artificial and incomplete, so is the meaning of their P. As others, in addition, they still unnecessarily situate the P narrative in a specific historical context and find significance in it, which hinders them from seeing P's ethical concern latent under the narrative.

From a very distinct view of P, the same result has arrived. In spite of the differences among them, some scholars—Frank Moor Cross and Erhard Blum, among others—argued that P is not a self-standing document but an editorial revision of the previous independent work.<sup>38</sup> This

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<sup>36</sup> Karl Elliger, "Sinn und Ursprung Der Priesterlichen Geschichtserzählung," *ZThK* 49.2 (1952): 121–43. Norbert Lohfink, *Theology of the Pentateuch: Themes of the Priestly Narrative and Deuteronomy*, trans. Linda M. Maloney (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994), 136–172.

<sup>37</sup> Elliger, "Sinn und Ursprung", 143; Lohfink, *Theology of the Pentateuch*, 141–142.

<sup>38</sup> To name a few important ones: Ivan Engnell, *A Rigid Scrutiny: Critical Essays on the Old Testament*, trans. John T. Willis (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1969), 50–67; Rolf Rendtorff, *The Problem of the Process of Transmission in the Pentateuch*, JSOTSup 89 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990), 136–170; Frank Moore Cross,

view of the editorial nature of P has not been widely accepted.<sup>39</sup> The reasons for pros and cons about this view are abundant and need not be repeated here.<sup>40</sup> I would like to point out an implication of their view. Since P wanted to redirect the old historical narrative according to P's own vision, the place where P's thought ought to be sought mostly is the Sinai pericope because P's own material is ample in this text, which was anticipated by Noth.<sup>41</sup> Then, it is all the more reasonable to focus on the cultic theology of P for at least two reasons. First, P is not an independent literary work. Second, they do not necessarily separate law and narrative, unlike Noth and his followers do, which makes their P have even more cultic texts.<sup>42</sup> They do not have to consider the coherent narrative of P, which they would if P were an independent literary work for them. They may focus on the cultic theme in the Sinai pericope that appears impressive for its quantity and centrality, without linking it to the previous narrative.

The concentration on the cult for its cultic laws or even for its narrative in many studies of the Priestly source has been inclined to reconstruct a historical context or a social setting for P, as if it is a historical source or a set of historical data rather than a literary work. Scholars collect historical data not only from P but also from other biblical texts and their presuppositions and, in turn, apply their reconstructions too quickly—and many times circularly—when reading and

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*Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973), 294–325; and Erhard Blum, *Studien zur Komposition des Pentateuch*, BZAW 189 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1990), 219–360. For a fuller bibliography of this line of thoughts, see Ernest Nicholson, *The Pentateuch in the Twentieth Century: The Legacy of Julius Wellhausen* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 197–198.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Konrad Schmid, “Has European Scholarship Abandoned the Documentary Hypothesis? Some Reminders on Its History and Remarks on Its Current Status,” in *The Pentateuch: International Perspectives on Current Research*, eds. Thomas B. Dozeman, Konrad Schmid, and Baruch J. Schwartz, FAT 78 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 17–30, esp. 18.

<sup>40</sup> For the counter arguments, see Graham I. Davies, “The composition of the Book of Exodus: Reflections on the theses of Erhard Blum,” in *Texts, Temples, and Traditions: A Tribute to Menahem Haran*, eds. Michael V. Fox et al. (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1996), 78–84; Nicholson, *Pentateuch*, 205–215; Schmid, “Some Reminders,” 19; Joel S. Baden, *The Composition of the Pentateuch: Rewriting the Documentary Hypothesis*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 169–192.

<sup>41</sup> E.g., Blum, *Studien*, 293–332. Cf. Noth, *Pentateuchal Traditions*, 242–247.

<sup>42</sup> Blum, *Studien*, 313–314; Cross, *Canaanite Myth*, 299–300.

interpreting the text. For example, when Wellhausen argues that P must have been written by the Jerusalem Temple priests to justify their present cult in the Second Temple period, he does not really compare the Second Temple Judaism with the various Priestly cultic laws. Rather, he contrasts it with the preexilic sources (allegedly dated earlier than P) in the Hebrew Bible and dates P as postexilic.<sup>43</sup> Noth cautions that the adjective ‘Priestly/priestly’ should not give a misimpression to the reader that P is distinctly ‘priestly.’ In his view, P’s theology does not aim to legitimize the existing Jerusalem cult from the perspective of the majority of the officiating priests. The great portion of cultic laws are secondary and not part of the original narrative P, even if some of the later material may have indeed related to the existing cult. The original P rather “envisions an ‘ideal’ cultic order by portraying it as having been realized at one time in remote antiquity.”<sup>44</sup> In other words, one cannot restore Second Temple Judaism out of the Priestly text since P reflects neither contemporary nor historical cultic praxes as they were. If Noth is right, Wellhausen’s interpretation of P as characterizing Second Temple Judaism is unfounded and circular, while it is not rooted in historical evidence. That said, the problem that is relevant here is not just that his identification of P’s cult with Second Temple Judaism is circular. It is also that he does not consider the possibility that different thoughts could simultaneously exist in ancient Israel and be preserved in the Hebrew Bible, which is an anthology. He thinks P should only reflect some concrete historical situations. Yet Noth’s view is not so different in the end. Even though he correctly points out that P’s cult cannot be equated with the postexilic cultic practices, he argues that P’s author was nonetheless influenced by the Jerusalem temple tradition of his time and attempted to implement his *cultic* vision out of it. Like

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<sup>43</sup> See the first section “I. History of Worship” in Wellhausen, *Prolegomena*, 17–167. Cf. S. R. Driver, *An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*, New ed. (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1920), 135–143.

<sup>44</sup> Noth, *Pentateuchal Traditions*, 240.

Wellhausen, he reconstructs P's historical context by contrasting P's Jerusalem tradition with the older tradition. This led him to conclude that P's concern is to establish a correct cultic order.<sup>45</sup>

To sum up, studies on P have focused on the cult with one or another emphasis, and its ethical aspect was rarely highlighted. There may be largely three reasons behind it, one or more of which appear in many of the previous studies. First, it is at least partly related to remaining repercussions of the idea that priests who represent the impersonal cult and prophets who represent the word and the spiritual oppose each other, which gave birth to an unfair antipathy toward the cult.<sup>46</sup> In relation to this, secondly, a great amount of cultic material expedited this stance. P's cultic material and the common bias against it have dwarfed its ethical aspect.

Thirdly, P has not been read properly as narrative. There are a few versions of this problem. 1) P was understood as law more than as narrative by some scholars. Yet the problem was not always because P's narrativity had not been recognized at all. 2) Entire P was not fairly treated as a full narrative including the law as its social system (see below). 3) The historical reconstruction and reading it into the text as a key to the interpretation of either the alleged original P narrative or P's cultic laws has directed scholars to overly emphasize the cultic orders as if its establishment were the sole concern of the Second Temple period.

This widespread understanding of P has a ramification to the works that deal with biblical ethics. P's sacrificial and ritual laws have been rarely considered as a source of biblical ethics.<sup>47</sup>

It is true that some ethical topics such as marriage/sex have been studied and scholars have referred to various relevant laws in Pentateuchal P when an ethical topic is explicit. Even in this

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<sup>45</sup> Noth, *Pentateuchal Traditions*, 242–247.

<sup>46</sup> For example, Eichrodt, *Theology*, 1:364–369; Wellhausen, *Prolegomena*, esp. 361, 402–403, 508–510. Cf. John H. Hayes and Frederick C. Prussner, *Old Testament Theology: Its History and Development* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1985), 274–275 and Frank H. Gorman, *The Ideology of Ritual: Space, Time and Status in the Priestly Theology*, JSOTSup 91 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990), 8.

<sup>47</sup> Cf. Barton, *Ethics in Ancient Israel*, 186.



case, the relevant laws come more from H's rather than P's law.<sup>48</sup> In most of the works that deal with the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament ethics, whether they prioritize narrative or law over the other for biblical ethics, the Priestly cultic texts are simply excluded or more outwardly denied its moral aspect.<sup>49</sup> Though somewhat outdated, a stereotypical opinion about the relationship of P and cult with ethics is most succinctly and clearly stated, which many late comers still assume, in J. M. Powis Smith's *The Moral Life of the Hebrews*. Even while admitting that "morals cannot be thought of apart from religion," he asserts that "the two main elements in Hebrew religion," morals and ritual, "were never congenial partners."<sup>50</sup> He takes for granted that ritual and morals are inversely proportional. Thus he opines that P's "interests and hope did not move in the field of the moral, but in that of the ceremonial and legal."<sup>51</sup> If I succeed in arguing that P is ethical and moral more than cultic, one possible implication is to redirect the debate of the opposition between priestly cult and prophetic ethics. The defence of the cult used to be that prophets did

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<sup>48</sup> For example, Philip J. Budd, *Leviticus: Based on the New Revised Standard Version*, New Century Bible Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 3; Frank Crüsemann, *The Torah: Theology and Social History of Old Testament Law*, trans. Allan W. Mahnke (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996), 322–327; Driver, *Introduction*, 52; Eckart Otto, *Theologische Ethik des Alten Testaments*, Theologische Wissenschaft 3,2 (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1994), 219–256.

<sup>49</sup> See how the moral aspect of the Priestly cultic texts are passingly if not uncritically mentioned, unmentioned, or denied in the monograph-sized studies of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament ethics: e.g., Barton, *Understanding*; Walter C. Kaiser Jr., *Toward Old Testament Ethics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1983), esp. 81–137; John E. Goldingay, *Old Testament Ethics: A Guided Tour* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2019); E. Otto, *Theologische Ethik*, esp. 219–256; Cyril S. Rodd, *Glimpses of a Strange Land: Studies in Old Testament Ethics* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2001), esp. 5–18; Waldemar Janzen, *Old Testament Ethics: A Paradigmatic Approach* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1994), esp. 106–139; Christopher J. H. Wright, *Old Testament Ethics: For the People of God* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004), esp. 286–287, 294–299; Mosche Weinfeld, *Social Justice in Ancient Israel and in the Ancient Near East* (Jerusalem: Magnes; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995). Cf. Eckart Otto, "Of Aims and Methods in Hebrew Bible Ethics," *Semeia* 66 (1994): 161–172. E. Otto, who prioritizes law over narrative as important sources for biblical ethics does not list the Priestly laws (except for H) among his "system of legal and ethical rules in the Covenant Code, Deuteronomy, Decalogue, and the post-priestly Holiness Code."

<sup>50</sup> J. M. Powis Smith, *The Moral Life of the Hebrews* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1923), 319. His book attempts to reconstruct a history of the ethics of Israel, depending on the entire biblical corpus, with a historical scheme that is similar to Wellhausen's. Similarly indicated in Rodd, *Glimpses*, 12; Eckart Otto, "Kultus und Ethos in Jerusalem Theologie: Ein Beitrag zur theologischen Begründung der Ethik im Alten Testament," *ZAW* 98 (1986): 161–179, esp. 162–164.

<sup>51</sup> J. Smith, *Moral Life*, 292–301 (the quote from 293). One can find a similar sentiment toward law and Judaism to that of Wellhausen, *Prolegomena*, 167–318.

not reject the cult per se. While not denying this position, my study might add that the cult is not legalistic and ritualistic but have ethical implications at least according to P's claim, if not this was the idea of the priesthood.

I have to mention, briefly though, that this study is not the first attempt to seek the morality of P, especially of P's cultic laws that escape many others with respect to biblical ethics. There have been at least several commendable studies.<sup>52</sup> While I share with them many of the methodological views and conclusions, there are some points from which I part with them. Some of them do not consider the narrative in their interpretations of the cultic laws. When others do, they either limit their scope of the relevant narrative to the Sinai pericope or extend to the narrative beyond the Priestly source.<sup>53</sup> More problematic is their symbolic and metaphoric approach. They do not find moral themes or moral values from the story. Many of them rather pursue the ethical meanings in the symbolic interpretation of the Priestly cultic system. The idea that P's cult has symbolic meanings is by no means wrong. Yet the meaning of P is to be sought in the story of its entirety where the moral aim and values are latent, not necessarily disguised in symbols. Then, the interpreter may decide if the meaning reached in light of the narrative context is symbolic or not. The reader should distinguish the different levels of the meaning of the Priestly cult: the meaning of the cult within the narrative world and that meaning within the

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<sup>52</sup> Among others, William P. Brown, *The Ethos of the Cosmos: The Genesis of Moral Imagination in the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 35–132; Jacob Milgrom, *Cult and Conscience: The Asham and the Priestly Doctrine of Repentance*, SJLA 18 (Leiden: Brill, 1976); Jacob Milgrom, "The Biblical Diet Laws as an Ethical System," *Interpretation* 17 (1963): 288–301; Jacob Milgrom, "Ethics and Ritual: The Foundations of the Biblical Dietary Laws," in *Religion and Law: Biblical-Judaic and Islamic Perspectives*, eds. Edwin B. Firmage, Bernard G. Weiss, and John W. Welch (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990) 159–191; Mary Douglas, *Leviticus as Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999); Jonathan Klawans, *Purity, Sacrifice, and the Temple: Symbolism and Supersessionism in the Study of Ancient Judaism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); Jonathan Klawans, "Pure Violence: Sacrifice and Defilement in Ancient Israel," *HTR* 94.2 (2001): 133–155; Leigh M. Trevaskis, *Holiness, Ethics and Ritual in Leviticus*, Hebrew Bible Monographs 29 (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2011). There is pagination discrepancy between the cambridge.org version (135–157) and the JSTOR version (133–155) of Klawans's *HTR* article. I follow the former in the subsequent citations.

<sup>53</sup> A notable exception is W. Brown, *Ethos of the Cosmos*.

narrative to the reader (see below). The reader cannot bypass the narrative and go directly to the cultic texts in P as if the latter are independent. As will be clearer below from my methodological discussions, I read P as a coherent narrative in which the law is included as an organic part. I expect this approach contributes to the previous, otherwise commendable, studies of the ethics of P or P's cult as well as to the studies of P in general.<sup>54</sup>

### 1.3 P as a Proper Object of Biblical Ethics

Even though one can acknowledge ancient materials that P utilized and even the diachronic compositional strata within P, I think P can and should be read within its own literary context as an independent, coherent document as is the implication of the siglum P.<sup>55</sup> In other words, it is unnecessary to distinguish layers in order to study P's purpose, message, and idea even though the identification of P<sup>g</sup> and P<sup>s</sup> or P<sub>1</sub>, P<sub>2</sub>, and P<sub>3</sub> may be useful when a study's focus is on a reconstruction of P's compositional history or the history of Israelite worship.<sup>56</sup> The traditional (or so-called, New) Documentary Hypothesis has been criticized and almost abandoned, at least for a large part of Pentateuchal scholarship, in part because too many layers and redactors had to be posited not only for P but also for the other Pentateuchal sources. However, this does not undermine the Documentary Hypothesis. I think a version of this approach is still the best option to explain the literary features of the present form of the Pentateuch with respect to its (dis)unity, contradictions, and (in)coherence. I take the Neo-Documentary Hypothesis, methodologically a refined version of its predecessors, for my reading

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<sup>54</sup> For the recent predecessors of this approach in the studies of P, see Simeon Chavel, *Oracular Law and Priestly Historiography in the Torah*, FAT 2/71 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014); Liane M. Feldman, *The Story of Sacrifice: Ritual and Narrative in the Priestly Source*, FAT 141 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2020).

<sup>55</sup> Cf. Jeffrey Stackert, "Distinguishing Innerbiblical Exegesis from Pentateuchal Redaction: Leviticus 26 as a Test Case," in *The Pentateuch: International Perspectives on Current Research*, eds. Thomas B. Dozeman, Konrad Schmid, and Baruch J. Schwartz, FAT 78 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 369–386 (esp. 385–386).

<sup>56</sup> Cf. Baden, *Composition*, 32; Feldman, *Story of Sacrifice*, 23–26.

of the Priestly history and the Pentateuch as a whole. In this newer version, the Pentateuch consists of four independent, coherent documents (J, E, P, and D), each of which admit to a compositional history of its own. They are interwoven by a single redactor who compiled the sources in a consistent manner, following principles of maximal preservation, minimal intervention, and arrangement of the plot in chronological order. The penultimate documents of the Pentateuch can be reconstructed by tracing coherent narrative claims.<sup>57</sup> P is a work of literature which is a story, speaking more specifically, historical narrative.<sup>58</sup> This narrative is consistent and expresses coherent thoughts.

The Priestly history with its cultic material is not a ritual manual in which different ancient ritual customs are merely collected and piled up for praxis. There are now many scholars who characterize it as utopian<sup>59</sup> and polemical (against either foreign, non-Priestly, or rival priestly religious traditions<sup>60</sup>) rather than realistic. It may sound ironic that P is both historical and utopian. However, I use “history” as a history genre that presents a reflection of the past and the present, rather than a report of the factual, objective events.<sup>61</sup> Even the past (and perhaps, many times, also the present) does not have to be a factual event exactly as it happened. A historian does not have access to the hard facts; he knows them by written or oral traditions or by his evaluation of the traditions. Paul Ricoeur and Hayden White demonstrate a close relationship

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<sup>57</sup> For the summary of the Neo-Documentary Hypothesis, see Baden, *Composition*, 246–249; Stackert, *Prophet Like Moses*, 20–22.

<sup>58</sup> For the designation of the Priestly history, see Chavel, *Oracular Law*, 17n39.

<sup>59</sup> To name a few, Menahem Haran, *Temples and Temple-Service in Ancient Israel: An Inquiry into the Character of Cult Phenomena and the Historical Setting of the Priestly School* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1978), 10–12 and 197–198; Menahem Haran, “The Character of the Priestly Source: Utopian and Exclusive Features,” *Proceedings of the World Congress of Jewish Studies* 8 (1981): 131–138; Menahem Haran, “Behind the Scenes of History: Determining the Date of the Priestly Source,” *JBL* 100.3 (1981): 321–33; and Baruch J. Schwartz, “‘Profane’ Slaughter and the Integrity of the Priestly Code,” *HUCA* 67 (1996): 15–42.

<sup>60</sup> Isabel Craz, *Atonement and Purification: Priestly and Assyro-Babylonian Perspectives on Sin and Its Consequences*, FAT 2/92 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017), 88–90 and 145. Craz briefly reviews various opinions about P’s alleged rivals (pp.8–12).

<sup>61</sup> Cf. Chavel, *Oracular Law*, 17n39.

between history and fiction in that both are in the form of the narrative presentation.<sup>62</sup> They may be distinguished; history deals with the past of reality and fiction does the imaginary. Even so, the world that a historical narrative describes is not an empirical past per se. The historian selects and organizes events beyond factual chronology—namely, plotting a history in its own narrative logic (i.e., narrative chronology)—by using his imaginative power as a novelist would do to shape an imaginary world. Narrativity mediates the real and the imaginary, i.e., interweaves history and fiction.<sup>63</sup> Such a historical narrative has a beginning, a middle, and an end and assigns importance and significance to the events. Only historical narrative is a fuller form of history than such historical presentations with insufficient narrativity as the annals and the Chronicle and can be called history proper. Here, history turns into a literary genre. The characteristic of this historical narrative is “the impulse to moralize reality, that is, to identify it with the social system that is the source of any morality that we can imagine.”<sup>64</sup> “Where, in any account of reality, narrativity is present,” says White, “we can be sure that morality or a moralizing impulse is present too.”<sup>65</sup>

P is an intellectual and subjective work; it studied and reflected on existing traditions and gave its own meaning. As a literary work, the Priestly history should be read as a political allegory that advocates for particular views about the contemporary context by presenting an imagined past that is carefully and coherently constructed of many traditions and materials,

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<sup>62</sup> Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, trans. Kathleen McLaughlin and David Pellauer, 3 vols. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984–1988), 3:180–192; Hayden White, “Value of Narrativity,” *Critical Inquiry* 7 (1980): 5–27. See also, Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, rev. and upd. ed. (New York: Basic Books, 2011), 25–54; Meir Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative: Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading*, ISBL (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985) 23–35.

<sup>63</sup> The first wording is from White, “Value of Narrativity,” 8; the second is from Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, 1:82.

<sup>64</sup> White, “Value of Narrativity,” 18.

<sup>65</sup> White, “Value of Narrativity,” 26.

including cosmology, history, anthropology, law, and theology.<sup>66</sup> It is a founding story that tells “about the origin of society and the crucial events that determine the social imagination of what counts as good and right in the common life of a historical community.”<sup>67</sup> This genre awareness as history justifies why P includes a large amount of cultic material and modern readers should not separate the ritual laws from the alleged original P narrative as secondary. P, which needs a social system to moralize the reality and give coherence to its story as a historical narrative, adopted cultic system as the social institution of its imagined world.

#### 1.4 The Definition of Morality and Ethics

When scholars discuss an ethical concern of P, though occasionally, they are biased by their narrow ideas of morality. This narrowness appears in different ways for different persons: e.g., the Romantic view that morality should be accounted for through interiority and spontaneity rather than external conduct and obligation<sup>68</sup> or the undue imposition of the modern self-independent moral category that is purely interpersonal and sharply separate from religion or other categories.<sup>69</sup> This narrowness hampers their appreciation of P’s ethics. More problematic is the assumption that a text is ethical only when ethical concern is explicit. Some attempt to find

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<sup>66</sup> Jeffrey Stackert, “Political Allegory in the Priestly Source: The Destruction of Jerusalem, the Exile and Their Alternatives,” in *The Fall of Jerusalem and the Rise of the Torah*, eds. Peter Dubovsky, Dominik Markl, and Jean-Pierre Sonnet (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016): 211–226; Stackert, *Prophet Like Moses*, esp. 28–31. Stackert’s tracing of P’s view on prophecy, along with those of the other Pentateuchal sources, is a good example that the interest of the Priestly literature is not confined to ritual.

<sup>67</sup> Peter Kemp, “Narrative Ethics and Moral Law in Ricoeur,” in *Paul Ricoeur and Contemporary Moral Thought*, eds. John Wall, William Schweiker, and W. David Hall (London: Routledge, 2002), 32–46, esp. 37. This quote talks about the narrative configuration of the ethical vision and its efficacy. It does not presuppose that the knowledge of the real community, before or after the configuration, is necessary to read the vision.

<sup>68</sup> For example, Wellhausen, *Prolegomena*, 436; More recently, E. Otto, “Ethics.”

<sup>69</sup> See the understanding of P and H in Israel Knohl, *The Sanctuary of Silence: The Priestly Torah and the Holiness School* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), esp. 175–180. Yet see J. Smith, *Moral Life*, 319.

places where the moral concern and judgement are explicit in P while the Priestly morality is largely implicit in the narrative.

A proper definition of morality and ethics for my study of Priestly morality is needed, therefore. I find a descriptive definition of morality rather than a normative definition is appropriate to search morality in the ancient literature: namely, morality that descriptively refers “to certain codes of conduct put forward by a society or a group (such as a religion), or accepted by an individual for her own behavior.”<sup>70</sup> This definition may become refined and more inclusive if the codes of conduct are replaced by values and norms that “shape character and guide conduct.”<sup>71</sup> And these values and norms necessarily presuppose intersubjectivity in a society to be ethical.<sup>72</sup> The benefit of this descriptive morality is that it allows the difference between the text and the modern reader. If the text acclaims a certain behavior, that behavior is still moral even when it is strange and even offensive to modern moral values and norms. It is not my intention to apply ethical criticism that evaluates the morality of a literary work in light of the critic’s moral standard, the kind of which Wayne C. Booth suggests.<sup>73</sup> The Priestly morality is, thus descriptively speaking, the morality presented in the text. It is values and norms about “how to treat each other” (which some scholars mistakenly claim to be absent in P) put forward by this Priestly text at some point(s) in the history of ancient Israel.

Ethics is usually defined as the critical reflection on morality, i.e., moral philosophy. But as I said above, it is not my intention to reconstruct P’s sociological background or an exact

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<sup>70</sup> Bernard Gert and Joshua Gert, "The Definition of Morality", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2020 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2020/entries/morality-definition/>>.

<sup>71</sup> William Schweiker, “On Religious Ethics,” in *The Blackwell Companion to Religious Ethics*, ed. William Schweiker (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005), 1–15, esp. 5–7. See also William Schweiker, *Theological Ethics and Global Dynamics: In the Time of Many Worlds* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004), 26–29.

<sup>72</sup> Paul Ricoeur, “The Problem of the Foundation of Moral Philosophy,” *Philosophy Today* 22.3 (1978): 175–92, esp. 178–182.

<sup>73</sup> Wayne C. Booth, *The Company We Keep: An Ethics of Fiction* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 11.

historical situation that gave birth to P, which cannot avoid a certain degree of speculation if possible. That means, I do not know exactly what particular morality on which P reflects critically against the author's historical background. Also, this study aims at tracking the Priestly morality descriptively and exegetically, not at critically reflecting on the Priestly morality. Either way, it may seem inappropriate to call my study Priestly ethics. Nevertheless, I may be allowed to talk about fruitfully "Priestly ethics" thanks to Ricoeur's definition of ethics and the distinction between ethics and morality that he suggests. Ricoeur differentiates ethics as teleological (i.e., for what to live) and morality as deontological (i.e., what one should do). He defines ethics as "the aim of an accomplished life," and more specifically, "*aiming at the good life with and for others in just institutions.*"<sup>74</sup> His definition of morality as "the articulation of this aim in norms characterized at once by the claim to universality and by an effect of constraint"<sup>75</sup> seems to be a collective term for various, specific moral norms and duties that guide conduct. This morality is subordinated (as well as complementary) to the ethical aim at the good life, which Ricoeur calls "the primacy of ethics over morality." This distinction is not a necessary but a heuristic one. The different nuances may be minimized and the two words may be interchangeably used at times. But the distinction is still useful.

This distinction does not contradict the common one between ethics as the critical reflection of morality and morality as values that guide conduct and may be productive with some qualification.<sup>76</sup> The good life that ethics aims at is too broad and general. It needs content. That said, Ricoeur's ethics is "aiming at X" and one needs to paradigmatically replace X by a

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<sup>74</sup> Paul Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, trans. Kathleen Blamey (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 170 and 180 (my italics).

<sup>75</sup> Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, 170.

<sup>76</sup> See a helpful discussion on ethics and morality in William Schweiker, *Responsibility and Christian Ethics*, New Studies in Christian Ethics (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 34–40.



moral content. One may think of the hierarchy of moral values. There may be many moral values that are suited for different cases of one's life. Yet one or a few moral values may entail and unify other values and become an end of these values and ultimately of the guides to how one should live. One may act according to certain moral values in order to live ultimately for the higher moral value, which Ricoeur calls ethics. This is particularly beneficial, and perhaps conceptually and practically necessary, when two or more moral values contradict each other in a certain case, while they are otherwise compatible. The rule of thumb in such situations is to choose the one that better serves the moral aim, even though it may not be always practicable. It is suitable to call this aim at the good life ethics when one provides the good life with content. To specify the content of the good life, one may reflect what good life their moral values aim at. This is a critical reflection of moral values, which may be called ethics. And this reflection is not only about one's private life but also about one's relationship with others by the mediation of social institutions.<sup>77</sup> In other words, Ricoeur's narrative ethics is not just tantamount to the sum of moral precepts here and there. It is the consistent, unifying moral aim (of the good life) to which many other, subordinate moral values and norms throughout the narrative are directed: i.e., a moral vision that a narrative configures to suggest the good life.<sup>78</sup>

P is a political allegory that tries to advocate and reinforce a certain configuration about the world, including values, to its contemporaries. And this study seeks to find the *ultimate value* that P assumes, clings to, and tries to convey. This ultimate value is P's moral aim, which P's author thoughtfully contemplated as the goal of human life and actions and which she carefully

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<sup>77</sup> Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, esp. 169–202 and 203–239; see also, Ricoeur, “Problem of the Foundation,” 175–192.

<sup>78</sup> Peter Kemp, “16. Peter Kemp: Ethics and Narrativity,” in *The Philosophy of Paul Ricoeur*, ed. Lewis Edwin Hahn, The Library of Living Philosophers 22 (Chicago: Open Court, 1995), 371–394, esp. 388–389.

designed its narrative to unfold in the story.<sup>79</sup> In this sense, the Priestly morality that this study attempts to search may be also called as the Priestly ethics as well as the Priestly morality. Morality and ethics necessarily include others and social institutions by the definition above. If P is an ethical work, it must have such social institutions as the nation and law. This is what cultic material provides P's narrative. From the ethical perspective, the Priestly ethics might not exist if it did not have its cultic system. The Priestly ethics and morality in this study should be sought neither in the law or in the narrative alone, but only in the entire Priestly history including the law and narrative. The Priestly ethics is the moral aim that unifies many values and norms that are suffused throughout P's law and narrative. The present study aims at revealing what good life P claims implicitly, while its narrator unfolds its story, as the unifying, upper-level moral value that one should live for, which entails other values. However, one should not expect an explicit one.<sup>80</sup> It is only hidden by P's style and narrative technique that exploits a large quantity of technical religious language, which have caused the scholarly failure to grasp it.<sup>81</sup> The question is how to "read out" this moral value that is suffused in the deeper level of the narrative.<sup>82</sup>

### **1.5 How to Trace the Implicit Priestly Ethics and Morality**

Having borrowed the definition of ethics and its priority over many moral rules from Ricoeur, I do not intend to apply his narrative ethical schema. He posits three stages of

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<sup>79</sup> I do not mean that I have access to the real author's morality or this moral value and aim is of the real author. We only have the text and the value found from the text is of the text, which may or may not correspond to the real author's value. The real author could write a work whose value he does not necessarily believe. See below for more about the idea of an implied author.

<sup>80</sup> Stackert, "Political Allegory," 211–226.

<sup>81</sup> Though what is hidden in P is not an ethical concern, Geller similarly indicated P's literary strategy of silence in Stephen A. Geller, "Blood Cult: An Interpretation of the Priestly Work of the Pentateuch," in *Sacred Enigmas: Literary Religion in the Hebrew Bible* (London: Routledge, 1996), 62–86, esp. 66, 68.

<sup>82</sup> For the concept of "reading out," see Seymour Chatman, *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1978), 41–42. My use of this concept already anticipates my structuralist approach to the Priestly historical narrative (see below).

hermeneutic development: mimesis<sub>1</sub> (prefiguration), mimesis<sub>2</sub> (configuration), and mimesis<sub>3</sub> (refiguration). Mimesis<sub>1</sub> is “a preunderstanding of the world of action, its meaningful structures, its symbolic resources, and its temporal character.”<sup>83</sup> This prefigured world is supposed to be shared by the author and the reader. And mimesis<sub>2</sub>, which configures the prefigured world into the imaginary world by emplotment,<sup>84</sup> purposes mimesis<sub>3</sub>. The text suggests a new world, the components of which receive a syntagmatic and temporal unity with the new relations and meanings that the plot provides. Mimesis<sub>3</sub> “marks the intersection of the world of the text and the world of the hearer or reader.”<sup>85</sup> That is, the act of reading affects the reader to apply the configured world and thus change the prefigured world into the third, applied world. The action that attempts to change the world is the ethical action. Ricoeur’s model assumes that the three mimesis are continuous and inseparable. The ethical vision relates to the real world from beginning to end of the reading process.

I think this model is very difficult for the ancient Near Eastern narrative such as the Priestly history because of historical chasm between the ancient text and the modern reader. A high degree of complication to precisely date and locate P is well-known. Neither do I know the prefigured context of the author and the reader, nor their refigured world, i.e., how the text affected them after their reading. For instance, it may be less troublesome if one can definitely prove P is from post-exilic Jerusalem or Diaspora, as Wellhausen did. Yet it is almost impossible in my mind. Even if one succeeded in doing so, it is still hard to know who had read and been influenced by P before it was combined with the Pentateuch. We simply do not have any

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<sup>83</sup> Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, 1:54–64 (the quote from 54).

<sup>84</sup> Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, 1:64–70.

<sup>85</sup> Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, 1:70–77.

evidence. If one dates P as preexilic,<sup>86</sup> which I agree with, it is even more complicated to know about the readership. Haran even argues that P, an esoteric document, was not intended to be read.<sup>87</sup> Also, this model's relation to the real world is not fit because my object of study is not the narrative's effect on the ancient reader, not to mention on the modern reader.

For this reason, I might as well concentrate on Ricoeur's mimesis<sub>2</sub>, the configuration of the text. Taking a structuralist literary critical approach that sees the text as a closed system, a text-centered analysis is sufficient for my study.<sup>88</sup> The benefit of this approach for any narrative as well as an ancient narrative, is that it does not require one to consider the author and her historical and social context to interpret a literary work. Once an author created his literary work, that work exists independently of his existence. The meaning is contained in the text and the readers do not have access to the author. This approach assumes that the real author does not control the meaning of her literary work behind the text. Then, how can one expect coherence of a narrative and who projects consistent values in the literary work? The structuralist approach suggests the implied author as an alternative to the real author. This concept was invented by Wayne C. Booth. It allows the real author behind the text to remain neutral with respect to the norms and values of the text. While the implied author becomes the source of the norms and values that are revealed in the text, the real author and her norms and values are hidden and does not have to be equated with the implied author and her values. He argued that the term is one "that is as broad as the work itself but still capable of calling attention to that work as the product

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<sup>86</sup> Yehezkel Kaufmann, *The Religion of Israel: From Its Beginnings to the Babylonian Exile*, trans. and abr. Moshe Greenberg (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), 175–200; Haran, *Temple*, 132–148 (esp. 146–148); Haran, "Character," 131–138; Haran, "Behind," 321–333; Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, AB 3 (New York: Doubleday, 1991), 3–13; Knohl, *Sanctuary*, 220–222; Stackert, "Political Allegory," 211–226 (esp. 219–220).

<sup>87</sup> Haran, "Character," 131–138; Haran, "Behind," 321–333.

<sup>88</sup> Cf. Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2002), esp. 146–147; John Barton, *Reading the Old Testament: Method and Biblical Study*, rev. and enl. ed. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996), 104–120 (esp. 115).

of a choosing, evaluating person rather than as a self-existing thing.”<sup>89</sup> In other words, the implied author is supposed to be detected from every aspect of a work, “a completed artistic whole.”<sup>90</sup>

Yet Booth’s sense of the implied author is sometimes ambiguous and criticized accordingly. He personified the implied author as the real author’s second self and the author’s product; the real author’s intention seems to somehow hover with the anthropomorphic implied author.<sup>91</sup> Later formalist narratologists divorced it from any connection with the real author by making the concept a purely depersonified textual construct.<sup>92</sup> Chatman says:<sup>93</sup>

For readers who feel uncomfortable about using the term “implied author” to refer to this concept, I am perfectly willing to substitute the phrase “text implication” or “text instance” or “text design” or even simply “text intent”—always on the understanding that “intent” is used to mean not what was in the mind of the real author bent over a desk but what is in the text that we hold in our hands, or see on the stage or the screen or the comic strip. It is a sense of purpose reconstructable from the text that we read, watch, and/or hear.

This redefined implied author is a structural principle in the text that invented and distributed all the components in the narrative.<sup>94</sup> Therefore, this concept theoretically supports the sufficiency of the text analysis to draw the meaning of the narrative. I, being attentive to the narrative unity

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<sup>89</sup> Wayne C. Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 74.

<sup>90</sup> Booth, *Rhetoric of Fiction*, 67–77, esp. 73.

<sup>91</sup> Booth, *Rhetoric of Fiction*, 67–77, 137–144. Compare especially his views on Shakespeare between p.76 and pp.141–142; it seems as if he talks about real Shakespeare in the latter. See also the critiques in Chatman, *Coming to Terms*, 80–83, 84.

<sup>92</sup> Chatman, *Story and Discourse*, 147–151 (esp. 149); Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction*, 89–92 (esp. 90); David Darby, “Form and Context: An Essay in the History of Narratology,” *Poetics Today* 22 (2001): 829–852. Rimmon-Kenan (pp.91–92) pointed out that Chatman is inconsistent to his definition that the implied author is a structural principle and Chatman later conceded in Seymour Chatman, *Coming to Terms: The Rhetoric of Narrative in Fiction and Film* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990), 218n29. Yet Rimmon-Kenan modified her strictly structuralist understanding of the implied author and abandoned the term later in Ruth Ginsburg and Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, “Is There a Life After Death? Theorizing Authors and Reading Jazz,” in *Narratologies: New Perspectives on Narrative Analysis*, ed. David Herman (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1999), 66–87, esp. 73–77. While their attitude to the author is personified as Booth’s and not qualified by “implied” any longer, they still differentiate their concept completely from the real, biographical writer. Cf. Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction*, 152.

<sup>93</sup> Chatman, *Coming to Terms*, 86.

<sup>94</sup> Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction*, 90.

of the Priestly history, will read various texts in it closely as a literary work, interpreting its story world, especially focusing on the characterization of the Priestly deity. By focusing on P's characterization of the deity, the aforementioned, inherent difficulty to find a moral view that the narrative edifies is generally, if not perfectly, resolved. In my reading of P, the deity is a model as well as authoritative figure; what he does and commands is not only duty but also good by nature and followable.

That said, the text-centered, literary approach does not completely prevent me from drawing on evidence outside P. It is inevitable to sometimes make use of other biblical and extra-biblical (especially ancient Near Eastern textual and material) sources, to understand biblical text that distances us more than two millennia. This historical gap includes not only cultural but also linguistic gaps. Even though I may not reconstruct the ancient reader's and the author's shared understanding of the world due to the paucity of evidence for the authorship and readership, literary and linguistic conventions—such as genres and the knowledge of the cognate languages of Hebrew—can be substantially useful to bridge the gap to some degree between the ancient text and me. The examples of this usefulness are ample. A comparative study between Deuteronomy and ancient Near Eastern documents of William L. Moran finds out that the Hebrew word “love” (אה"ב) in Deuteronomy and elsewhere “may be defined in terms of loyalty, service and obedience,” “a covenantal love.”<sup>95</sup> Also, some exegetes find a corroborative support for a presumably more correct interpretation of the very first phrase of Gen 1:1, ברשית, from the parallel beginning of a Mesopotamian creation account, *Enuma Elish*. In light of the beginning temporal clause of *Enuma Elish*, the reading, “ברשית ברא אלהים” as a construct chain of the

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<sup>95</sup> William L. Moran, “The Ancient Near Eastern Background of the Love of God in Deuteronomy,” *CBQ* 25 (1963): 77–87, esp. 81–82. Cf. William W. Hallo, “Compare and Contrast: The Contextual Approach to Biblical Literature,” in *The Bible in the Light of Cuneiform Literature: Scripture in Context III*, eds. William W. Hallo, Bruce William Jones, and Gerald L. Mattingly (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen, 1990), 1–30.

prepositional phrase (ברשית) with the following verb “to create” (בריא) to begin a subordinate, temporal clause rather than as an independent prepositional phrase is now grammatically preferred, which is not unattested in the Hebrew Bible, such as in Hos 1:2, Isa 29:1, and Jer 50:46: thus, “when God created,” instead of “in the beginning God created.”<sup>96</sup> This study is basically an exegetical research that attempts to descriptively read out the underlying moral value hidden in P, using critical methods of academic studies of the Bible and, especially, concentrating on the narrative features.

### 1.6 שלום *šālôm* as the Priestly Moral Vision

My thesis is that the Priestly history, often times thought of as ritualistic and legalistic in a pejorative sense, is actually moral and ethical. Legalism is neither P’s argument nor its norm. It is only a style. The Romantic critique of P as amoral because it lacks interiority depends on an insufficient definition of morality. Likewise, the view that P has no interpersonal concern is a faulty reading of the text. My reading will show every pivot in P includes concern for how people should treat each other in the broader context of the relationship among the deity, humans, and the world. The best biblical term to communicate this general idea is שלום *šālôm*. Preliminarily speaking, the Priestly ethical aim is to have the nation of שלום *šālôm*, which means “peace” and “well-being,” among others. Humans were by nature supposed to treat each other well and maintain the order of the world set in the creation even before the deity’s coming on earth. It is because the world was created in harmonious order according to the divine nature and

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<sup>96</sup> E. A. Speiser, *Genesis*, AB 1 (New York: Doubleday, 1964), 8–13, esp. 11–12; Umberto Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis*, 2 vols. (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1961), 1:19–20; Martin F. J. Baasten, “First Things First: The Syntax of Gen 1:1-3 Revisited,” in *Studies in Hebrew Literature and Jewish Culture: Presented to Albert Van Der Heide On the Occasion of His Sixty-fifth Birthday*, eds. Martin F. J. Baasten and Reinier Munk, Amsterdam studies in Jewish Thought 12 (Dordrecht: Springer, 2007), 170, 177–178. Cf. JM, 442–443 (§129p A3); WO, 156 and 156n38 (§9.6e).

preference as the report of the divine aesthetic satisfaction for his creation was repeated in Gen 1 and because they all were created as the divine image, the expression that is used mainly for royalty in the ancient Near East outside Israel and Judah. As this plan turned out to be unsuccessful, the deity decided to dwell on earth among the Israelites as a royal figure. At this narrative juncture that stresses the royal characteristic of his earthly dwelling, more vividly than the earlier part of the narrative, the implied author had Yahweh command Israel to facilitate each other's peace and well-being of their society. Otherwise, the society's turmoil will interrupt the deity's repose (peace) and well-being.

The meaning of שלום *šālôm* is to be discussed and clarified. Its broad semantic field is well-known.<sup>97</sup> Among many meanings, it has been widely translated as “peace,” while many also render it with “well-being.” Without theological reflection, שלום is also used for casual greetings (e.g., 1Sam 16:4–5). The proposed suggestions such as “peace,” “bodily health,” “totality,” “prosperity,” “fulfilment,” and “well-being” have some overlap with one another, while each has a different emphasis. This word is not restricted to indicate a peaceful state of private mind but more often implies a harmonious state with no strife of families, communities, cities or nations.<sup>98</sup> An active version of this harmonious state may be physical and material prosperity, i.e., well-being.<sup>99</sup> This implies that peace and well-being are closely related to the proper management of the world order, which is most explicit in ancient Near Eastern royal ideology. Well-being seems to be perhaps the most comprehensive rendering that covers many other options, both spiritual

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<sup>97</sup> See useful discussions including further references, among others, in G. Gerleman, “שלם *šlm* to have enough,” *TLOT*, 3:1337–1348; Johannes Pedersen, *Israel: Its Life and Culture*, 2 vols., SFSHJ 28–29 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991), 1:263–285; F. J. Stendebach, “שלום *šālôm*,” *TDOT*, 15:13–49; Gerhard von Rad, “שלום in the OT” *TDNT*, 2:402–406; John I. Durham, “שלום and the Presence of God,” in *Proclamation and Presence: Old Testament Essays in Honor of Gwynne Henton Davies*, eds. John I. Durham and J. R. Porter, new corrected ed. (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1983), 272–293.

<sup>98</sup> Pedersen, *Israel*, 1:263–265.

<sup>99</sup> Cf. von Rad, *TDNT*, 2:402, 406.



and material. Yet one has to admit that this word may be rendered in different ways according to each context.

This spectrum of meanings fits quite well with P's narrative. P's deity blesses the animals and the humans to be productive and successful from the very beginning. Its commission to humans of the proper management of the world implies that the well-being of the world depends on the harmonious operation of the creation order. John I. Durham introduces an interesting theological context of the use of שלום, related to the divine presence. The assumption is that שלום, whether peace or well-being, comes from and depends on divine presence.<sup>100</sup> This context is particularly relevant to P's Sinaitic pericope onward and relevant legal portion when the deity is permanently present among the Israelites. Yet the Priestly text never mentions שלום except for one potential case in Num 6:26. It is my task to demonstrate the concept of biblical שלום is underlying P, especially its ritual law, even as שלום is not explicitly mentioned.

As will become clear from the deity's bodily senses in the Tent of Meeting, P does not suppress divine anthropomorphism but bolsters it after his name (YHWH) is revealed. He only further foregrounds the deity's royal character.<sup>101</sup> The deity's royal character and bodily senses are important for reading out the Priestly ethics and morality. It is well-known that many so-called moral rules in later H are directed toward this aim and have been discussed thus.<sup>102</sup> Also, I will show that the Priestly ethical aim of שלום is suffused throughout P even as the moral concerns are not explicit in many laws of P. Above all, the whole ritual system, in which some scholars find no morality, serves for the characterization of the deity that is crucial for the

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<sup>100</sup> Durham, "Presence of God," 281–286. See also von Rad, *TDNT*, 2:403–44.

<sup>101</sup> Pace Knohl, *Sanctuary*, 124–164 (esp. 124–148).

<sup>102</sup> Among others, E. Otto, *Theologische Ethik*, 219–256; Knohl, *Sanctuary*, esp. 216–218.

Priestly ethical vision of שלום. The Priestly ritual laws reveal how sensitive the deity is and how he enjoys repose and peace, whose well-being depends on this state.

### 1.7 Outline of the Study

Against the preparatory background laid out so far, I will briefly offer an outline of the subsequent chapters. Chapter Two focuses on P's *imago Dei* (צלם אלהים) in Gen 1:26–28, Gen 5:1–3, and 9:1–7. Against the majority of scholarship, I argue it principally implies bodily resemblance between the deity and humans in P as well as in broader biblical and ancient Near Eastern context. Ancient Near Eastern royal ideology implied in this image language will allude to שלום as the moral value that humans should pursue in P. Chapter Three picks up the anthropomorphism of the Priestly deity. The phrases, רוח אלהים in Gen 1:2 and כבוד יהוה in the text reporting the Mosaic period, do not insinuate any spiritual, transcendent otherness of the divine character, contrary to some scholars. Though the exact English translations of these two phrases may be somewhat elusive, I argue that רוח אלהים pictures the deity suffered from material messiness of the primordial state of the earth and that כבוד יהוה stresses the royal appearance of the deity in front of the public, which may be best rendered by “the regalia of YHWH.” This chapter bridges Chapter Two and Chapter Four (and Chapter Five), suggesting that the anthropomorphic, corporeal characteristic of the Priestly deity continue and the morality around the divine character will not radically change.

Chapter Four prepares Chapter Five. I pick up some theoretical issues that are laid out above but need further discussion. Among others, I deal with how to view the textualized and the ritual within the narrative. I argue that the narrative genre and frame controls the meaning of the ritual text. As a historical narrative, the ritual law functions in P as the social system that offers a

consistent moral value. This ritual text cannot be separated from the Priestly narrative. Then, I begin a character analysis of the deity with respect to ritual laws, focusing on appearance, speech, environment, and action. This reveals the divine character that values his own repose, free from any disruption to his bodily senses. The Priestly ritual system is to satisfy and please his senses. Chapter Five first reads P's flood narrative. Violence, the cause of the flood, is what irritates the deity's senses. Then, I move to the Priestly expiatory/purificatory system. This teaches the values of responsibility and restoration. Forgiveness comes not because of the sacrifice per se. It only comes when the sinner takes all his responsibility to restore what he harmed. I chose two parts in this chapter, one from the narrative and the other from the law, in order to show that the same moral value consistently underlies the entire Priestly history. Finally, this study ends with the concluding chapter. I offer a summary of the entire dissertation and its implication.

## Chapter Two

### *Imago Dei* in the Priestly Narrative

As I said, the morality with which I am concerned in this study is values and norms that guide conduct among people as a descriptive (from the modern readers' viewpoint)—rather than normative—category. Morality is demonstrated by moral agents (persons) who carry out and take responsibility for their moral actions. Moral agency includes three subjects: “(1) a primal disposition to live a moral life; (2) the capacity to act morally; and (3) sound moral judgment.”<sup>1</sup> A good place to start the Priestly morality and ethical vision, therefore, is to see how moral agents are depicted in the Priestly history. Are they supposed to live morally? On what basis? Are they capable of living morally? If the two questions are answered positively, according to what norms and values do P's moral agents think, judge, speak, and act? The Priestly historical narrative rarely presents its moral values and norms explicitly and directly. But these questions can be answered through the analysis of P's characterization of the moral agents. Thus, who are the moral agents in the Priestly literary world? Israelites are obviously moral agents in P in that they received the law of how to live their life later in the narrative. As a matter of fact, all humans are considered to be moral agents in P, since they are accountable for their actions as shown by God holding them responsible for their violent actions, i.e., murder (e.g., Gen 6:11–13 and Gen 9:6) before there were Israelites.

Keeping this in mind, I will analyze the characterization of human beings in the Priestly creation narrative in Gen 1. There are several reasons that I begin my discussion with this narrative. First of all, this is the beginning of the Priestly history in terms of its story as well as

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<sup>1</sup> Schweiker, “On Religious Ethics,” 36.

its (physical) text. Also, it is the beginning of the moral agents, the human beings, and their environment, i.e., the created world. As a setting of the moral agent in the world in the Priestly history, Gen 1 provides important background for the Priestly morality and ethics. The close relationship between the human beings and the deity described in the creation narrative suggests a promising direction to trace the Priestly morality.

## 2.1 The Priestly Creation Account

It is well known among modern biblical scholars that two irreconcilable creation accounts are juxtaposed in Gen 1–2. Modern critics generally agree that 1:1–2:4a is the Priestly creation account that begins the Priestly history, even though there are some debates about the nature of Gen 2:4a.<sup>2</sup> For my primary purpose here to characterize the moral agent in the Priestly history, I will deal first with the creation of the human being (אדם) in Gen 1:26–28. It explores themes such as “the image of God,” ruling over the animals, and subduing the land—the latter two of which have been interpreted to have misled western culture to exploit nature.<sup>3</sup> Yet the meanings of the phrases, as well as the sense of the entire verses, are still debatable and not immediately grasped. For example, Gen 1:26 reads:

ויאמר אלהים נעשה אדם בצלמנו כדמותנו וירדו בדגת הים ובעוף השמים ובבהמה ובכל הארץ ובכל הרמש הרמש על הארץ

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<sup>2</sup> E.g., von Rad, *Genesis*, 63; Speiser, *Genesis*, 15–16; Baden, *Composition*, 177–178. But see Jon D. Levenson, “Genesis,” *JSB*, 10–11 and 13; Jon D. Levenson, *Creation and the Persistence of Evil: The Jewish Drama of Divine Omnipotence* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 165n1. Cf. Jan Christian Gertz, “The Formation of the Primeval History,” in *The Book of Genesis: Composition, Reception, and Interpretation*, eds. Craig A. Evans, Joel N. Lohr, and David L. Petersen, VTSup 152 (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 107–135, esp. 114–118.

<sup>3</sup> Most notably, Lynn White Jr. “The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis,” *Science* 155 (1967): 1203–1207. But see the responses from biblical scholars and theologians: among others, Lohfink, *Theology of the Pentateuch*, 1–17; C. Wright, *Old Testament Ethics*, 118–122; James Barr, “Man and Nature: The Ecological Controversy and the Old Testament,” in *Bible and Interpretation: The Collected Essays of James Barr*, 3 vols., ed. John Barton (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 2:344–360; Willis Jenkins, “After Lynn White: Religious Ethics and Environmental Problems,” *Journal of Religious Ethics* 37 (2009): 283–309.

And God said, “Let us make humanity in our image and as our likeness so that they may rule over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the sky, and over the animals, and over the whole earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”<sup>4</sup>

There are semantic and syntactical conundrums to be solved, which have afflicted modern critical biblical scholarship no less than earlier readers. 1) What do the **צלם** and **דמות** mean? Is the juxtaposition of the image and the likeness only stylistic, or do the two words serve their own roles respectively? 2) How should the two prepositions (**ב** and **כ**) attached to “image” and “likeness,” respectively, be understood? 3) Why does the deity refer to himself in the first-person plural pronoun in 1:26, whereas the narrator does in the third-person singular in 1:27: e.g., our **צלם** (צלמנו) vs. his **צלם** (צלמו)? 4) What is the nature of the human mission, “ruling,” and later “subduing” in 1:28? These questions are not new. Even before the rise of modern biblical criticism and ancient Near Eastern studies, at least some of these questions have long been approached theologically and philosophically by ancient readers. The most important question is the first one and the latter three illuminate the first. Thus, I will focus on the first, taking advantage of previous discussions of modern biblical and ancient Near Eastern scholarship. I expect this will point out the direction in which the study of the Priestly moral agent should advance. After analyzing Gen 1:26–28, it will become clear that it is impossible to isolate Gen 1:26–28 to understand it adequately, so I will eventually go to other relevant texts in P.

## 2.2 A History of the Understanding of **צלם אלהים** “the Image of God”

In the history of the understanding of the image of God, varying opinions have appeared, which can be classified into a few groups.<sup>5</sup> As with many classifications, this one is also

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<sup>4</sup> My translation.

<sup>5</sup> There are good surveys of history of scholarship, which group the opinions in slightly different manners. My survey is also largely indebted to them. See Werner H. Schmidt, *Die Schöpfungsgeschichte der Priesterschrift*,

heuristic. The lines between the different groups are fluid and some scholars may not be limited only to one group. Nevertheless, my survey will show a widespread reluctance to read a physical image from the image of God in Gen 1:26–27, regardless of the groups in which they are classified, except for a minority group of scholars.

The first group, which holds to one of the oldest interpretations—if not the oldest—and has long been the most popular before the attention to the ancient Near Eastern background, has seen the image of God as inner qualities. While many early church fathers understood the first-person plural in Gen 1:26 as proving the doctrine of Christology or of the Trinity,<sup>6</sup> the question is where in humans the image of God is found. Origen said: “It is our inner man, invisible, incorporeal, incorruptible, and immortal, that is made ‘according to the image of God.’ For it is in such qualities as these that the image of God is more correctly understood.”<sup>7</sup> This view is apparently related to his dualistic philosophy that material is inferior and has nothing to do with the divinity as he adds: “But if anyone supposes that this man who is made ‘according to the image and likeness of God’ is made of flesh, he will appear to represent God himself as made of flesh and in human form. It is most clearly impious to think this about God.”<sup>8</sup> The priority of mind/soul over body and invisible over visible was common among other early church fathers.

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WMANT 17 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener-Verlag des Erziehungsvereins, 1964), 134–136; Claus Westermann, *Genesis 1–11: A Commentary*, trans. John J. Scullion S.J. (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1984), 147–155; Barth, *Church Dogmatics III/1, The Doctrine of Creation, Part I* (= CD III/1), eds. Thomas F. Torrance and Geoffrey W. Bromiley, trans. J. W. Edwards, O. Bussey and Harold Knight (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1958), 191–206; J. Richard Middleton, *The Liberating Image: The Imago Dei in Genesis 1* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2005), 17–29; D. J. A. Clines, “The Image of God in Man,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 19 (1968): 53–103, esp. 54–61; and J. J. Stamm, “Die Imago-Lehre von Karl Barth und die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft,” in *Antwort: Karl Barth zum siebzigsten Geburtstag am 10. Mai 1956* (Zollikon-Zürich, Evangelischer Verlag, 1956), 84–98. Jónsson treats the research history of this topic in modern biblical scholarship (from 1882–1982) most comprehensively: Gunnlaugur A. Jónsson, *The Image of God: Genesis 1:26–28 in a Century of Old Testament Research*, trans. Lorraine Svendsen, rev. Michael S. Cheney, ConBOT 26 (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1988).

<sup>6</sup> Andrew Louth, ed., *Genesis 1–11, Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture: Old Testament 1* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 27–37. To name a few: Gregory of Nyssa, Clement of Alexandria, Marius Victorinus, and Augustine. Cf. Barth, *CD III/1*, 192–193.

<sup>7</sup> Louth, *Genesis 1–11*, 31.

<sup>8</sup> Louth, *Genesis 1–11*, 31.

Ambrose claims that the body, whose senses are unable to recognize the invisible God, cannot be the image of God; the image of God is human mind and reflection.<sup>9</sup> Likewise, Gregory of Nazianzus takes it as human mind and intelligence.<sup>10</sup> Some Jewish traditions also share this view. Though it may be correct that the anthropomorphic deity was widely acknowledged in rabbinic Judaism,<sup>11</sup> a *midrash* citing Gen 1:26 seems to link the image of God to wisdom: “He took counsel with the ministering angels. He said to them: ‘*Let us make man in our image*’ (Gen 1:26). Said they to him: ‘*What is man that Thou art mindful of him*’ (Ps. VIII, 5)? He answered them: ‘The man whom I desire to create will possess wisdom that shall exceed yours.’”<sup>12</sup> This tendency is more apparent in Hellenistic Judaism. Kittel adduces Philo and Wisdom of Solomon 2:23–24.<sup>13</sup> The latter, which apparently retells the Creation and Fall in Gen 1–3, seems to regard the image of God as immortality of soul:

23 ὅτι ὁ θεὸς ἔκτισεν τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἐπ’ ἀφθαρσίᾳ  
καὶ εἰκόνα τῆς ἰδίας ἀϊδιότητος<sup>14</sup> ἐποίησεν αὐτόν·  
24 φθόνῳ δὲ διαβόλου θάνατος εἰσηλθεν εἰς τὸν κόσμον,  
πειράζουσιν δὲ αὐτόν οἱ τῆς ἐκείνου μερίδος ὄντες.

<sup>9</sup> Louth, *Genesis 1–11*, 31–32.

<sup>10</sup> Louth, *Genesis 1–11*, 33.

<sup>11</sup> A. Marmorstein posits two opposing schools—the literalist school and the allegorical school—which represent the affirmation and the denial of divine anthropomorphism respectively: A. Marmorstein, *Essays in Anthropomorphism*, vol. 2 of *The Old Rabbinic Doctrine of God* (London: Oxford University Press, 1937). The well-established existence of the anthropomorphic concept of God in rabbinic Judaism is followed and supported by Morton Smith, “The Image of God: Notes on the Hellenization of Judaism, with Especial Reference to Goodenough’s Work on Jewish Symbols,” in *Studies in the Cult of Yahweh*, 2 vols., ed. Shaye J. D. Cohen (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 1:116–149 (1:117–123); Morton Smith, “On the Shape of God and the Humanity of Gentiles,” in *Studies in the Cult of Yahweh*, 2 vols., ed. Shaye J. D. Cohen (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 1:150–160 (esp. 1:152–155); Meir Bar-Ilan, “The Hand of God: A Chapter in Rabbinic Anthropomorphism,” in *Rashi 1040-1990: hommage à Ephraïm E. Urbach: Congrès Européen des études juives*, ed. Gabrielle Sed-Rajna (Paris: Cerf, 1993), 321–335 (also available online: [https://faculty.biu.ac.il/~barilm/articles/publications/publications0035.html#\[s5\]](https://faculty.biu.ac.il/~barilm/articles/publications/publications0035.html#[s5])); and Alon Goshen Gottstein, “The Body as Image of God in Rabbinic Literature” *HTR* 87 (1994): 171–195. Gottstein rejects Marmorstein arguing the existence of a school that opposes anthropomorphic deity. Admittedly, Marmorstein does not offer any clear evidence opposing divine anthropomorphism as Gottstein (also, M. Smith, “Image of God,” 1:120n18) points out, except for invisibility of God which may but not necessarily rejects it. However, at least the following *midrash* seems to imply a spiritual understanding of *imago Dei* (see below).

<sup>12</sup> The translation is from Judah J. Slotki trans., *Midrash Rabbah: Numbers*, 2 vols. (London: Soncino, 1983), 2:750 (his italics and my underline).

<sup>13</sup> Kittel, “εἰκόν,” *TDNT*, 2:392–397, esp. 2:394. See also F. J. Stendebach, “חַלֵּץ,” *TDOT*, 12:395–396. Cf. Sir 17:3.

<sup>14</sup> Some other manuscripts have ἰδιότης: i.e., “the image of his own peculiar nature.”



23 For God created human being for *incorruption*<sup>15</sup>  
And as *the image of his own eternity* he made him;  
24 With devil's envy *death* entered the world,  
Those who are of his portion experience it.<sup>16</sup>

Many medieval Jewish scholars more or less continued this line of thought that God cannot have a corporeal form, and his image should refer to something abstract. They had to devise some philological and philosophical detours since they knew so well that the meaning of the Hebrew word צלם designates physical appearance. Some unidentified Jewish interpreters were criticized by Abraham Ibn Ezra because they tried to save their understanding of the deity by distorting the syntax of the text. For example, they took “according to our image like our likeness” as Moses’s interruption in the midst of the quotation of the divine words; they rendered בצלם אלהים עשה את האדם in Gen 9:6 as “in an image God made humanity,” which should be “in the image of God he made humanity.” Ibn Ezra himself, while hesitating to make a direct comparison between God and humans, says that eternal human souls filling their body are comparable to the way the existence of God fills the universe. In other words, the soul corresponds to (the image of) God.<sup>17</sup> Also, Nahmanides (Ramban) argues that the first-person plural suffix on צלם includes both God and the earth (also, see Kimhi), so that God is only related to the human soul while the human body is made of the earth.<sup>18</sup> The solution of Maimonides (Rambam) is that the Hebrew word צלם

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<sup>15</sup> In other words, God intended humans to be immortal.

<sup>16</sup> My translation and italics. Note parallelism of immortality in Wis 2:23 and the contrast of death and immortality between 2:23 and 24.

<sup>17</sup> For Ibn Ezra, Ramban, Radak, and other medieval commentators on the image of God, see *Genesis part I*, 26–30 of Menachem Cohen, ed., *Mikra'ot Gedolot ha-Keter* (Ramat-Gan: Bar Ilan University, 1992). For an available translation: Michael Carasik, *The Commentators' Bible*, 5 vols. (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 2018), 1:19–21. For the English translations and annotations on Ibn Ezra's comments on צלם אלהים, see also H. Norman Strickman and Arthur M. Silver, *Ibn Ezra's Commentary on the Pentateuch: Genesis* (New York: Menorah, 1988), 42–47.

<sup>18</sup> This is an idea which Ramban and Radak respectively attribute to Yosef Kimhi, Radak's father. In addition to the sources mentioned in the previous footnote, the English translations and annotations of Ramban's comments on צלם אלהים are also available in Charles B. Chavel, *Commentary on the Torah: Ramban Nachmanides*, 5 vols. (New York: Shilo, 1971–1976), 1:53–54 and Yaakov Blinder, *The Torah: With Ramban's Commentary*, 7 vols. (New York: Mesorah, 2004), 1:72–74.

refers to a form that is “the true reality of the thing,” which implies a broader meaning than the shape and configuration of a thing. Though it is true that the form is a shape that consists of substances for many things in the world, the image of human beings is the intellectual apprehension of the soul.<sup>19</sup> One can see that both early Christian and Jewish traditions have maintained that spiritual is superior to material, the divinity is incorporeal, humans consist simultaneously of soul and body, and the human essence is soul—namely, the image of God.

The second group is those who understand the image of God externally. As mentioned above, rabbinic texts were full of the anthropomorphic understanding of the deity though anthropomorphism lost popularity in the later period. For instance:

His disciples asked him (i.e., Hillel the Elder): ‘Master, whither are you bound?’ He answered them: ‘To perform a religious duty.’ ‘What,’ they asked, ‘is this religious duty?’ He said to them: ‘To wash in the bath-house.’ Said they: ‘Is this a religious duty?’ ‘Yes,’ he replied; ‘if the statues of kings, which are erected in theatres and circuses, are scoured and washed by the man who is appointed to look after them, and who thereby obtains his maintenance through them—nay more, he is exalted in the company of the great of the kingdom—how much more I, who have been created in the Image and Likeness; as it is written *For in the image of God made He man*’?<sup>20</sup>

Hillel the Elder obviously understood the divine image in human beings as bodily resemblance when he taught his disciples that bathing is observing a religious duty. After the predominant understandings of the image of God as spiritual, intellectual, or even moral qualities and capacities in Christianity and (medieval) Judaism, the interpretation of it as external and corporeal began to be recognized again with the advance in the knowledge of the ancient Near Eastern textual and material cultures. Th. Nöldeke pointed out that the root צל"ם meaning “to be

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<sup>19</sup> Moses Maimonides, *The Guide of the Perplexed*, trans. Schlomo Pines, 2 vols. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), 1:21–23.

<sup>20</sup> The translation is from J. Israelstam and Judah J. Slotki, *Midrash Rabbah: Leviticus* (London: Soncino, 1983), 428 (§34.3; italics original, parentheses mine). It is also cited to argue for the acceptance of anthropomorphism in early rabbinism in Kittel, *TDNT*, 2:393; M. Smith, “Shape of God,” 153–155; and Gottstein, “Body as Image,” 174–175.

dark,” which appears in Arabic, Ethiopic, and Akkadian, is etymologically separate from the homonymous root, which means “to cut.” The root meaning “to be dark” is neither preserved in biblical Hebrew<sup>21</sup> nor is the etymological origin of the noun צֶלֶם for “image,” according to him. Thus, צֶלֶם אֱלֹהִים should imply “God in human form.”<sup>22</sup> Hermann Gunkel argues that God’s incorporeality, which relies on a “capacity for abstraction,” is unthinkable in the Old Testament period before the rise of Greek philosophy. Based on Gen 5:1–3, he concludes that the image and the likeness are synonymous and “the first human resembles God in form and appearance,” i.e. the body.<sup>23</sup> With Humbert contending for the bodily form of the image of God most strongly, this group began to win popularity in 1940.<sup>24</sup> Köhler specified what form the image of God refers to. Since the external form cannot be shared by male and female, he suggests the upright posture is the beauty of all humanity shares in contrast to the animals.<sup>25</sup> Eichrodt endorses Humbert and Köhler as far as the original meaning of the expression צֶלֶם אֱלֹהִים “the image of God.”<sup>26</sup> Gerhard von Rad likewise argues in many places that צֶלֶם is an actual plastic work and the image of God is not to be attributed one-sidedly to human spiritual nature; the bodily form is more important for this expression.<sup>27</sup> About thirty years later, J. Maxwell Miller continued this thought. He notices that צֶלֶם, which may easily remind Israelites of pagan image cults, is not a common word for divine manifestation in the Hebrew Bible as, for example, both Second Isaiah and Ezekiel use

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<sup>21</sup> This may not be right (see below).

<sup>22</sup> Th. Nöldeke, “צֶלֶם וְצִלְמוֹת,” *ZAW* 17 (1897): 183–187, esp. 186 (“Gott in Menschengestalt”).

<sup>23</sup> Hermann Gunkel, *Genesis*, trans. Mark E. Biddle, Mercer Library of Biblical Studies (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1997), 113.

<sup>24</sup> Paul Humbert, *Études sur le récit du paradis et de la chute dans la Genèse*, Mémoires de l’Université de Neuchâtel XIV (Neuchâtel: Secrétariat de l’Université, 1940), 153–165. Cf. Stamm, “Imago-Lehre,” 88.

<sup>25</sup> Ludwig Köhler, *Old Testament Theology*, trans. A. S. Todd, Lutterworth Library 49 (London: Lutterworth, 1957), 146–147; Ludwig Köhler, “Die Grundstelle der Imago-Dei-Lehre, Genesis 1, 26,” *TZ* 4 (1948): 16–22; Ludwig Köhler, *Hebrew man: Lectures Delivered at the Invitation of the University of Tübingen December 1-16, 1952; with an Appendix on Justice in the Gate* (London: SCM, 1956), 34–35.

<sup>26</sup> Eichrodt, *Theology*, 2:122.

<sup>27</sup> Von Rad, *Genesis*, pp.57–61; von Rad, *Theology*, 1:144–148; von Rad, *TDNT*, 2:390–392.

דמות “likeness” instead of צלם “image.” The Priestly writer intentionally chose דמות (*damût*) for wordplay in its creation account to allude to and resist the Mesopotamian creation account that claims that humanity was created partly by divine blood (דָּם *dām*). P had to add צלם so that Israelites might have understood the abstract דמות (likeness) correctly as corporeal similarity, not as the material (blood) shared by the deity and humanity as in Mesopotamian Enuma Elish and Atrahasis epics.<sup>28</sup>

In addition, closer connections of the biblical phrase to the ancient Near Eastern textual and material parallels began to reveal the royal characteristic of the expression. Johannes Hehn mentioned the strong and effective relation between a deity and his plastic image in the ancient Near East. Citing the use of the image of god expression and the like such as the son of god and the name of god in Egyptian and Mesopotamian texts, he already noticed in 1915 those expressions were used only in reference to kings or priests.<sup>29</sup> Hans Walter Wolff argued that the kings erected their statues so that they might represent their sovereign authority in the places in which they could not be physically present. Thus, he interpreted the image of God in Genesis that humans, as the divine image, are the representative of God in the world.<sup>30</sup> Hans Wildberger, Werner H. Schmidt, and, recently, Middleton pay attention to the fact that many textual cases from Mesopotamia and Egypt demonstrate the use of the image of God predominantly for kings. They conclude that the meaning of the image of God should be sought from the royal ideology of the ancient Near East and is related to human dominion over the animal world as the representative of the deity. For these scholars, the divine-human relationship became functional

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<sup>28</sup> J. Maxwell Miller, “In the ‘Image’ and ‘Likeness’ of God,” *JBL* 91 (1972): 289-304, esp. 299–304. But he admits “man’s royal status” is to be understood in light of the Mesopotamian myths (303–304).

<sup>29</sup> Johannes Hehn, “Zum Terminus ‘Bild Gottes,’” in *Festschrift Eduard Sachau zum siebenzigsten Geburtstag* (Berlin: Verlag von Georg Reimer, 1915), 36–52.

<sup>30</sup> Hans Walter Wolff, *Anthropology of the Old Testament*, trans. Margaret Kohl (London: SCM, 1974), 160–161.

rather than formal.<sup>31</sup> This functional understanding does not require the ancient Near Eastern background as Gregory of Nyssa and Sa' adiah Gaon suggested the royal aspect of the image of God based on Gen 1:27 long before the decipherment of cuneiform.<sup>32</sup> While Wolff grounded the analogy with royal statues on the ancient Near Eastern background, Hillel the Elder made a similar analogy between the statues of kings and the human body as the divine image in light of his contemporary—that is, Greco-Roman—custom much before Wolff, as seen in the quote above.<sup>33</sup> Yet the new interest in the historical and cultural context of the Bible revived this view, which had long been underestimated due to the abstract (intellectual, spiritual, and moral) understanding of the deity.

However, we can see the traditional, spiritual tendency to understand *imago Dei* (i.e., the resemblance between God and humans) did not die out but has remained firm, if not predominant, in spite of the development of modern biblical criticism and the ancient Near Eastern studies. This tendency is because the physical similarity between the deity and humans in Gen 1:26–27 is felt to be uncomfortable, thus neglected, and even denied still among modern biblical scholarship. C. F. Keil and Franz Delitzsch, August Dillmann, S. R. Driver, and H. H. Rowley still continued the priority of the spiritual understanding.<sup>34</sup> These modern authors all

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<sup>31</sup> Hans Wildberger, “Das Abbild Gottes: Gen 1:26–30,” *TZ* 21 (1965): 245–259, 481–501, esp. 256; Schmidt, *Schöpfungsgeschichte*, 127–149 (esp. 139, 142–144). Cf. Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 151–154 for his summary and critique of Wildberger and Schmidt. See also Middleton, *Liberating Image*, 130–136. Middleton argues that Mesopotamian influence is stronger, based on various similarities among primeval accounts between biblical and Mesopotamian literature.

<sup>32</sup> Louth, *Genesis 1–11*, 34; Sa' adiah Gaon cited by Ibn Ezra in M. Cohen, *Mikra 'ot: Genesis part I*, 26 (for translation, see Strickman, *Genesis*, 44–45).

<sup>33</sup> Similar customs had been widespread in Mesopotamia and Egypt, which are closer to the background of the biblical text. Yet Hillel's interpretation is more likely borrowed from his contemporary custom. For the influence of Greco-Roman culture on Hillel's interpretation, see M. Smith, “Image of God,” 1:117–120.

<sup>34</sup> C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament: Pentateuch*, 3 vols., trans. James Martin (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1864–1885), 1:63–64; A. Dillmann, *Genesis: Critically and Exegetically Expounded*, 2 vols., trans. W. M. B. Stevenson (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1897), 1:81–82; S. R. Driver, *The Book of Genesis: With Introduction and Notes*, 11th ed. (London: Methuen, 1920), 14–15 and 32–33; H. H. Rowley, *The Faith of Israel* (London: SCM, 1956), 75–80 (esp. 74–76 and 79).

share a particular assumption that biblical narrative in general or, at least, the Priestly history, should not express the physical shape of the deity. This belief biased their reading of the biblical text no less than the dualistic mindset did to their premodern predecessors.<sup>35</sup>

A specific theology accentuated an abstract understanding again outside biblical scholarship. Karl Barth promoted a new theological interpretation, while parting company with modern critical and historical interpretations. He concentrated on prioritizing two cues: the first-person *plural* in Gen 1:26 and the creation of *male* and *female* in 1:27. While expressing his dissatisfaction with modern biblical exegetes who regard the first-person plural as a real plurality of divine beings, he advocated rather that the traditional interpretation of the Trinity from the early church does more justice to the biblical text.<sup>36</sup> He defined the existence of God as a relationship within himself in whom there is an addressing I and a responding Thou. This manner of divine existence was the image of God in humans for him, which is confirmed by Gen 1:27: “Male and female he created them.” Of course, he understood that the differentiation of sex is shared by animals and so does not distinguish humans from them. An important textual clue out of which he makes the point is the fact that the differentiation of sex is singled out for God’s definition of humans; that is, the differentiation of sex is not a mere fact for humanity as for animals, but rather a symbol of God’s creation of humanity: “the analogy of free differentiation and relation,” i.e., that God created human existence analogous to his own existence<sup>37</sup> in order that the latter would be his counterpart. As such, he emphasized that the image of God is only what belongs to God and something that is never inherently given to humans as their property,

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<sup>35</sup> For example, Rowley, *The Faith of Israel*, esp. 75–76 thinks the Hebrew Bible never conceived its pure spirit deity with having a physical form.

<sup>36</sup> Barth, *CD III/1*, 192

<sup>37</sup> The analogous (in opposition to substantial) similarity in terms of the manner of existence resonates with an interesting correspondence to that of Ibn Ezra, to my mind.

whether characters, virtues, or forms. In terms of those properties, humans are sharply distinct from God and rather similar to the rest of the creatures. Gen 5:1–3 supports this divine-human differentiation, Barth thought. Adam transferred his own image instead of the image of God since he could not hand over what he had never possessed: procreation is not creation!<sup>38</sup>

Quite a few important biblical scholars seriously considered Barth's theological interpretation and attached to it some flavor of biblical studies with ancient Near Eastern parallels and modern biblical criticism.<sup>39</sup> Before Barth fully articulated the I-Thou idea of the *imago Dei* from his reading of Gen 1:26–27, Wilhelm Vischer had understood the image of God as an I-Thou relationship that is conferred by divine grace, which was apparently influenced by Barth's earlier version of this thought and, in turn, later influenced his fuller version.<sup>40</sup> His interpretation is theological and Christological. Friedrich Horst also replicates a Barthian idea of the image of God. Yet, as a modern biblical scholar, he tries to gain support for this idea from the Near Eastern literary evidence. For instance, citing Aruru's creation of Enkidu in Gilgamesh, he argues that Akkadian *zikru* is the name that is called by others in contrast to that which is one's property and renders it as "counterpart."<sup>41</sup> He says that even though the word "image" (Hebrew צלם and Akkadian *šalmu*) is "a facsimile in general," the expression always bears and refers to a deeper meaning as counterpart. It is interesting that he takes the literal meaning of צלם (the bodily form) and the deeper meaning (counterpart, if it were really intended) as alternatives, not

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<sup>38</sup> Barth, *CD III/1*, 181–191, esp. 198–200. I think human procreation is suggested to be comparable to divine creation—although admittedly not identical—in Gen 5:1–3 (see below).

<sup>39</sup> Stamm, "Imago-Lehre," 84–98 surveys biblical scholarship on this issue in relation to Barth. For Stamm's own agreement with Barth, see J. J. Stamm, *Die Gottebenbildlichkeit des Menschen im Alten Testament*, ThSt 54 (Zollikon: EVZ-Verlag, 1959), 19. Cf. Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 150–151.

<sup>40</sup> Wilhelm Vischer, *The Witness of the Old Testament to Christ*, trans. A. B. Crabtree, Lutterworth Library 33 (London, Lutterworth, 1949), 47–48. Cf. Karl Barth, "Der heilige Geist und das christliche Leben," in *Zur Lehre vom heiligen Geist* (München: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1930), 39–105 (esp. 43–46). Jónsson, *Image of God*, 67–68

<sup>41</sup> Friedrich Horst, "Face to Face: The Biblical Doctrine of the Image of God," trans. John Bright, *Interpretation* 4.3 (1950): 259–270, esp. 265.

allowing a possibility that the latter is inseparably founded on the former in the ancient Near Eastern people's minds.<sup>42</sup> This is apparently because of his assumption of the Priestly theology that the Priestly creation account does not conceive an anthropomorphic deity, as many have done, even though he admits that anthropomorphism appears throughout the rest of the Hebrew Bible.<sup>43</sup> Claus Westermann adds a form critical argument to the armory of the I-Thou interpretation. He thinks that Gen 1:26–30 used to be an independent narrative from that of the creation of the world. Once the creation of humanity is detached from that of the world, “the text is speaking about an action of God, and not about the nature of humanity.”<sup>44</sup> In other words, human lordship over the earth is not the focus of the image of God. Rather, he finds the meaning of the phrase in the Mesopotamian account of the creation of humanity where the human duty to minister to gods, to his mind, means a special relationship (counterpart) to gods. If those such as Gunkel, Eichrodt, and others (see below) rejected the text's apparent original idea of the external appearance to be preserved once adopted by P because of their understanding of P's narrative, Westermann interestingly refuses to read P as if the text is still independent of P.<sup>45</sup>

This tendency to prioritize the spiritual occurred even with those who grasped the bodily notion of צלם אלהים, due to their understanding of the Priestly theology. Gunkel argued that the expression is not made up by P, but rather signals a vestige of an older source that P received.

The Priestly source clearly demonstrates its anti-anthropomorphic tendency elsewhere, yet it was

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<sup>42</sup> This is not because I assume the ancient mind is too vulgar to use metaphors without depending on material mediation. Rather, I think their material culture shows that they understood the expression as such, which I will argue below.

<sup>43</sup> Horst, “Face to Face,” 263–264.

<sup>44</sup> Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 155.

<sup>45</sup> Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 155–158. This argument is very subtle and unnecessary. Others did not have to rend Gen 1:26–30 off from the rest of the creation account to argue for the I-Thou relationship. His comparison of P's and Mesopotamian accounts of the creation of humanity is superficial and does no justice to their differences. His interpretation of the divine-human relationship even in his hypothetical pre-Priestly, not to mention Mesopotamian, account is questionable. This is all the more ironic in that the meaning that can be discernible only when read apart from P is intended part of P's theology.



not willing to change this older source, tolerating the fact that צלם cannot but refer to bodily resemblance.<sup>46</sup> P further permitted the first-person plural pronouns that suggest angelic beings, though he says these do not appear again in P, and a more abstract word דמות since they attenuate the blasphemous idea.<sup>47</sup> Eichrodt similarly argues that the physical similarity, even though צלם צלם should originally have meant it, is not P's.<sup>48</sup> It is P whose spiritualization insists on "the absolute otherness and transcendence of the divine nature" that "eliminates all trace of anthropomorphism from his theophanies and acknowledges no angel to mediate between God and Man because of his strict refusal to bring the divine realm down into the sphere of the creaturely."<sup>49</sup> P's "image of God," according to Eichrodt, is a spiritual expression, and conveys only "parabolic similarity."<sup>50</sup> He goes as far as to claim that the image of God is personhood, which makes humanity responsible to the address of personal Thou, God.<sup>51</sup> He supports this idea with P's use of דמות, which he thinks tones down the physicality of the word צלם.<sup>52</sup> Köhler also agrees that דמות has a weakening effect. Yet he maintains the physical meaning of צלם, arguing that the theology of the divine-human shared upright *form* (*Gestalt*) is P's peculiarity. The addition of דמות is not to weaken *similarity* of צלם but *equality*, in order to preserve God's uniqueness.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Gunkel, *Genesis*, 113–114. This reveals some inconsistent style of Gunkel's P. Gunkel's P is a creative author who can freely manipulate its sources except for a few places where a tradition is too strong to be altered (Ibid., lxxxiii–lxxxiv). But it is not clear to me why the few alleged vestiges of the older source are to be considered particularly stronger.

<sup>47</sup> Gunkel, *Genesis*, 112–114. Cf. Jónsson, *Image of God*, 46–54 notes that Gunkel thinks in his earlier work that P did not know the bodily sense of צלם אלהים, which he later modified in his Genesis commentary.

<sup>48</sup> Eichrodt, *Theology*, 2:122

<sup>49</sup> Eichrodt, *Theology*, 2:124.

<sup>50</sup> Eichrodt, *Theology*, 2:124.

<sup>51</sup> Eichrodt, *Theology*, 2:125–131 (esp. 126). Yet he rejects any Trinitarian interpretation of the plural pronouns in Gen 1:26 (125n1, 129n5).

<sup>52</sup> Eichrodt *Theology*, 2:122–123. Similarly, Humbert, *Études*, 163.

<sup>53</sup> See Köhler, "Imago-Dei-Lehre," 20–21.

Likewise, we can see the reluctance to accept that the image of God refers to the external appearance from those who argue for P's adoption of the ancient Near Eastern royal ideology. Wildberger, for example, concludes that *צלם אלהים* reveals a metaphorical rather than physical use in light of Egyptian royal expressions.<sup>54</sup> Further, he argues that Gen 9:6 is unmistakable proof that the biblical image of God should entail "inner dignity."<sup>55</sup> He offers three reasons that the image of God cannot indicate an external appearance: 1) There is at best a loose relationship between the external divine/human form and dominion; 2) the Hebrew Bible never describes the divine body and shape (even though, he admits, it is bold enough to use anthropomorphism!), and it is all the more unlikely that the Priestly source—which avoids anthropomorphism so completely—would have had any divine body in mind; 3) Gen 1:27, which says that both male and female are made of the divine image, would necessarily raise an "absurd" question on whether the body of the monotheistic deity in P is male or female if one indeed surmises an actual divine body.<sup>56</sup> Wildberger's second reason is particularly interesting. According to him, P is even more restrained in describing the external shape of the deity than the rest of the Bible; if P says something that sounds like a description of the divine shape, it cannot be literal. By this, Wildberger takes a different route from that of Gunkel and Eichrodt. The latter argued that P, which was bound to its sources at least to some degree, could not help transmitting the old expression that deviated from his theology and so had to tone down its physical connotation by using other means, as we have seen above. On the other hand, Wildberger's higher estimation of P's free authorship than that of Gunkel and Eichrodt, which I think correct, makes him reject the physical interpretation of *צלם אלהים* in P altogether as impossible. In sum, Wildberger maintains a

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<sup>54</sup> Wildberger, "Das Abbild Gottes," 492–493.

<sup>55</sup> Wildberger, "Das Abbild Gottes," 247–248. I would not oppose this were he also to maintain that "inner dignity," whatever he meant, cannot be alienated from the bodily form. Yet he does not.

<sup>56</sup> Wildberger, "Das Abbild Gottes," 246–252, esp. 248–249.

two-fold opposition to the formal relationship between the deity and humanity. First, the expression, the image of gods, did not connote outer similarity in other ancient Near Eastern royal ideologies. Next, P would by no means allow the notion of the body of God, let alone the bodily comparison between human and divine. This is the so-called functional approach, now the most popular view in scholarship, to my mind. It often denies the formal understanding of צלם (“image”). Wildberger seems to assume that the sin explicated in Gen 9:4–6 should have been disfigurement rather than bloodshed if the physical form, instead of the inner dignity, was literally meant by “the image of God.” I do not see it necessary that the physical form and the inner dignity should be mutually exclusive in explaining the image of God as he does.<sup>57</sup> Where is this human dignity from, if not the external resemblance between the deity and the humans?

In the midst of the enthusiastic comparison with the ancient Near Eastern cultures, there have been attempts to appreciate P more than merely claiming that P is anti-anthropomorphic and to reappraise the influence of the ancient Near Eastern royal ideology on biblical *imago Dei*. Yet these attempts also share the assumption that P may not allow an anthropomorphic image. While not completely denying that ancient Israel could have been under the influence of the ancient Near Eastern royal ideology, James Barr argues that Gen 1:26 should be read and interpreted in light of the Israelite context. In other words, the main theological background of the Priestly history is not to be sought in ancient Near East, but rather in the Hebrew Bible. He finds the Israelite context for the image of God in P from Second Isaiah and in Ezekiel, assuming the majority view that both the compositions of Second Isaiah and Ezekiel predate that of P. Barr’s argument goes as follows. The theology of Second Isaiah insisted on the incomparability and the universalistic scope of the deity simultaneously. While this posed no problem for Second

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<sup>57</sup> Especially, Wildberger, “Das Abbild Gottes,” 248.

Isaiah's unsystematic description of creation as typical of the prophets, P had to ask how the unique deity could be also universalistic: Is any relationship possible between God and the world? P wanted to describe humanity as having a special relationship with God apart from other creatures. How? The language of beauty such as "honor" and "glory," which other biblical passages such as Psa 8:6 use, was both inadequate and inappropriate since P reserved them only to the deity. If Second Isaiah caused P's author to ask the question, the answer came from Ezekiel that describes the divine appearance as a human form. P thought the expression of a divine-human relationship was a good way to express human dignity. That said, Barr argues that the image of God in P was not used to refer to the divine body. Yet why would P use צלם instead of other synonyms? Does it not deviate from P's opposition to cultic images? He argues that צלם is the least idol-evoking among the potential rival words used in the Hebrew Bible. What P imagined with צלם אלהים was neither P's nor Barr's interest. P did not know or could not define the content of the image of God. One can only say that P used the expression in an ambiguous way just to signify the divine-human relationship in the world, according to Barr.<sup>58</sup> Two points are related to my study. One is that צלם has no evil, idolatrous connotation in the Hebrew Bible; the other is P, which would not allow any image cult, cannot conceive the bodily similarity in divine-human relationship while he situates P in the Israelite religious ideas. It will turn out below that both points are unfounded. Preliminarily speaking, 1) a sufficient number of attestations of biblical צלם outside P refers to a cultic image, e.g., Num 33:52 and Ezek 7:20; 2) while it is true that P does not consider an image cult as possibility because no one would make a

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<sup>58</sup> This paragraph is a summary of Barr's two similar articles on the image of God: James Barr, "The Image of God in Genesis: Some Linguistic and Historical Considerations" 2:56–65 and "The Image of God in the Book of Genesis: A Study of Terminology," 2:66–77, both in *Bible and Interpretation: The Collected Essays of James Barr*, 3 vols. ed. John Barton (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013). See also, Jónsson, *Image of God*, 145–151. For criticism on Barr, see J. Miller, "God," 297–299.

statue when YHWH is physically present in the Tent of Meeting,<sup>59</sup> P's use of צלם is particularly for the outward resemblance between the deity and the humans.

More recently, Annette Schellenberg similarly argued that P uniquely develops its use of צלם from that of Mesopotamian and Egyptian royal ideology. Her suspicion about the functional approach in P comes from her understanding of Gen 9:1–7, in which she thinks God redefines the human-animal relationship after the flood.<sup>60</sup> In her reading, the humanity who failed to maintain the earth because of their violence (חמס) lost their ruling status over the animal world. The animal became like “opponents of war” to humans, and God never restored human rulership over them in Gen 9:2. It is now the deity, who designates himself with the first-person singular pronoun in 9:5, who maintains the order of the world. Yet the humans did not lose their *imago Dei* in 9:6. Thus, Gen 9:6 is Schellenberg's main support; P's author did not intend human rulership as the meaning for “the image of God” as the functional approach insists. As for the subsequent question, concerning “in what regard humans are godlike,” she disregards the obvious physical sense of Gen 1:27 and 5:3, for which she admits the possibility of “appearance and qualities.”<sup>61</sup> Instead, she argues that the question is not important in P. Rather, human qualities might not be like God at all. God does not have any expectation of human goodness in whatever sense. The image of God expresses only the special status given by God, “valid not

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<sup>59</sup> Remember P does not explicitly prohibit idols in its law, in contrast to J (Exod 34:17), E (Exod 20:4–6), and D (Deut 5:8–10). Two H texts prohibit idols (Lev 19:4 and 26:1). H's prohibition may be explained in light of its attention to the land. Lev 26:1 (perhaps as well as Lev 19:4) presupposes a possibility of idolatry in the land far from the Tent of Meeting where the deity is present. For H's interest in the land, see Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 17–22*, AB 3A (New York: Doubleday, 2000), 1404–1405; Christophe Nihan, *From Priestly Torah to Pentateuch: A Study in the Composition of the Book of Leviticus*, FAT 2/25 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), esp. 557–559.

<sup>60</sup> Annette Schellenberg “Humankind as the «Image of God»: On the Priestly Predication (Gen 1: 26-27; 5: 1; 9: 6) and Its Relationship to the Ancient Near Eastern Understanding of Images,” *TZ* 65.2 (2009): 97-115, esp. 99–103.

<sup>61</sup> Schellenberg “Humankind,” 109–110. Cf. Annette Schellenberg, “More than Spirit: On the Physical Dimension in the Priestly Understanding of Holiness,” *ZAW* 126 (2014): 163–179 (esp. 176). She seems to acknowledge that the image of God language means possibly the bodily resemblance. But she does not discuss the further significance of the bodily resemblance with respect to P's theology and ethics.

*because of* but *despite* humanity’s qualities.”<sup>62</sup> Similar to Barr, this metaphorical term is to express only divine-human relationship “as close to God above and superior over animals” while not having a specific referent, either concrete or conceptual.<sup>63</sup>

My version of the history of scholarship shows that the opposition to the understanding of the image of God in Gen 1:26 as implying an anthropomorphic or, sometimes, any form has been a tenacious and still predominant opinion even after the rise of modern biblical criticism and ancient Near Eastern studies. The conclusion of Stamm’s survey in 1956 that the general consensus of the meaning of *imago Dei* as physical similarity had been made after 1940 is now outdated. Even then, he conceded that many scholars—even those who accepted the meaning—were not satisfied with it and tried to add some spiritual significance.<sup>64</sup> A more up-to-date overview of the history of scholarship was made by Jónsson in 1988, after which the situation of the scholarship did not change markedly, in my view. He concludes that a near consensus in scholarship is a functional approach that *imago Dei* is a predication that humans are made to be “God’s representative,” i.e., the king.<sup>65</sup> This does not necessarily require the external similarity, as we have seen. In other words, the incorporeal understanding of *imago Dei* has not been overcome, but rather continues in varying versions.

It is obvious to me that Gen 1:26–28 assumes צלם אלהים “the image of God” first and foremost as the external similarity. This does not necessarily exclude other views if they are closely related to the corporeal understanding of the image of God. From the above overview of scholarship, we find two types of the main objections to the corporeal understanding of צלם אלהים in Gen 1:26–28 in the current. One is that the parallel expression from the ancient Near East is

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<sup>62</sup> Schellenberg “Humankind,” 110 (her italics).

<sup>63</sup> Schellenberg “Humankind,” 111–112.

<sup>64</sup> Stamm, “Imago-Lehre,” esp. 86–92.

<sup>65</sup> Jónsson, *Image of God*, 219–223.

metaphorical and does not necessarily imply physicality. This comes mainly from those who support the functional view. Some of them seem to allow certain spiritual qualities in addition to the royal function, but hardly the external appearance.<sup>66</sup> The other, also a widespread opinion which includes some of the former, is that anti-anthropomorphic P either suppresses the bodily similarity between the deity and humans of the expression, even if its source originally meant it, or does not insinuate the possibility at all if we correctly understand the text. I am going to argue that both are unfounded.

### 2.3 Ancient Near Eastern *Imago Dei*

The image of God has been compared with the parallel expressions and concepts in Egyptian and Mesopotamian texts in numerous studies. Egyptian ideas and terms seem to be important for many who prefer the functional approach, especially among German-speaking scholarship. This may be because Egyptian iconographies depict the divine bodies in various forms, even for a single deity. Each form is considered by Egyptologists as symbolic of only an aspect of the god.<sup>67</sup> And the royal moniker, “the image of god,” is not for the bodily similarity between the deity and the king according to Erik Hornung: “For the Egyptians the vital point is not the outward similarity between the king and a particular deity which might be suggested, for example, by statues of the god Amun with the individual features of the youthful Tutankhamun. . . . All the similarities point toward a comprehensive and fundamental kinship that links the king with all deities, so that he can be called simply ‘image (*tjt*) of the gods.’”<sup>68</sup> In

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<sup>66</sup> For instance, Wildberger, “Das Abbild Gottes,” 494–495.

<sup>67</sup> Cf. Erik Hornung, *Conceptions of God in Ancient Egypt: The One and the Many*, trans. John Baines (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982), 100–134 (esp. 109–124).

<sup>68</sup> Hornung, *Conceptions of God*, 135–142 (the quote from 139). Cf. Erik Hornung, “Der Mensch als »Bild Gottes« in Ägypten,” in *Die Gottebenbildlichkeit des Menschen*, Oswald Loretz, Schriften des Deutschen Instituts für Wissenschaftliche Pädagogik (München: Kösel-Verlag, 1967), 123–156; Eberhard Otto, “Der Mensch als Geschöpf und Bild Gottes in Ägypten,” in *Probleme biblischer Theologie: Gerhard von Rad zum 70. Geburtstag* (Munich:

a similar vein, Wildberger argues that abrupt interchangeability of one or many gods that qualify “son” and “image” in Egyptian texts (as well as in Gen 1:26) in terms of the royal relationship to deities is a clear sign that both royal honorifics are to be understood metaphorically without implying the similarity of the outer form.<sup>69</sup>

But the fact that the singular and the plural numbers of the deities are interchangeable in royal epithets does not necessarily mean that the royal appellations are simply metaphorical. A son of one deity could resemble many gods in form if the gods share a certain bodily, e.g., anthropomorphic, shape among their various manifestations. Hornung himself does not deny the implication of the bodily resemblance though it is not the point of the royal moniker. He adds in the midst of the above quote: “There is similarity of deed as well as similarity of appearance.”<sup>70</sup> Here, he insinuates, rather unintentionally, that the analogy between the deity and the king is mediated by outward resemblance, however conceptually. Some Egyptian royal inscriptions imply bodily resemblance between the god and the king.<sup>71</sup>

I am thy father. I begot thee, so that thy entire body is of the gods, for I assumed my form as the Ram, the Lord of <Mendes>, and I cohabited with thy august mother, in order to fashion thy form as —, for I know that thou art my champion, to perform benefactions for my ka. I begot thee, appearing like Re. . . . The fashioners and Ptahs are rejoicing, and thy Meskenet is exulting in joy, when they see thee, *an image bearing my august, great, and mighty body*. The great august ladies of the House of Ptah and Hathor of the House of Atum are in festival, their hearts rejoicing, their hands holding the tambourine, jubilating when they see thy beautiful appearance. The love of thee is like (that of) the

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Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1971), 335–348; Boyo Ockinga, *Die Gottebenbildlichkeit im alten Ägypten und im Alten Testament*, Ägypten und Altes Testament 7 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1984), esp. 125–141 (chapter 8); Bernd Janowski, “Die lebendige Statue Gottes: Zur Anthropologie der priesterlichen Urgeschichte,” in *Gott und Mensch im Dialog: Festschrift für Otto Kaiser zum 80. Geburtstag*, ed. Markus Witte, BZAW 345 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2004), 183–214, esp. 190–191.

<sup>69</sup> Wildberger, “Das Abbild Gottes,” 492–493.

<sup>70</sup> Hornung, *Conceptions of God*, 139.

<sup>71</sup> William F. Edgerton and Johan A. Wilson, *Historical Records of Ramses III: The Texts in Medinet Habu*, SAOC 12 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1936), 119–129 (quoted from 120–122) lines 3–9; see also a slightly different translation in K. A. Kitchen, *Ramesside Inscriptions: Translated and Annotated, Notes and Comments*, Series A 7 vols., Series B 4 vols. (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 1994–2014), A2:102–103 (lines 263:5–264:12 of §68). The italics are mine. Note how the text emphasizes the royal “appearance.”



majesty of Re, and the gods and goddesses give praise in <thy> beauty, lauding and making offering to my ka.

This is the deity Ptah's description of the birth of Ramesses III in the nineteenth Dynasty. The purpose of the entire text is to praise the king and legitimate his kingship. It is to be noted that bearing the divine image, being begotten by the deity, having a beautiful body, and the well-established kingship are closely correlated. Interestingly, Ptah begins his blessing upon Ramesses III with the latter's godlike body and then mentions his ability to rule over the world. The basis of the praise and legitimation seems to be based upon the king's special relationship with the deity: i.e., his unique creation/birth from the deity. This special status and the favor of many deities that is manifest from the continuous successes in his royal career originated from the king's beautiful divine body that resembles Ptah and Re. There is no reason that this description was meant to be understood only metaphorically in this royal propaganda. Even if the royal designations could be literary motifs, the "image" language was expressed with reference to the divine or the royal appearance: e.g., "Every image of him is according to the *form* of the Majesty of Re"<sup>72</sup> and "[Son of] Amun, who created his *beauty*,"<sup>73</sup> which resonate with the above quoted text. These references to outward appearance suggest to me that Pharaoh's physical beauty is not unrelated to his relationship with the deity. The image language in the Egyptian royal ideology is not purely functional, but rather the royal function is mediated by the formal

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<sup>72</sup> "Jedes Abbild von ihm ist gemäß der *Gestalt* der Majestät des Re" (italics mine). Pace Wildberger, "Das Abbild Gottes," 488. For Wildberger, the content of this quote is less important than its linguistic correspondence to biblical expressions. For the translation of the entire original text (in German), see Wolfgang Helck, ed., *Urkunden der 18. Dynastie: Übersetzung zu den Heften 17–22*, *Urkunden des ägyptischen Altertums* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1961), 228–232 (esp. 229/1724).

<sup>73</sup> "[Sohn des] Amun, der seine Schönheit schuf." Helck, *Urkunden*, 373/2044; also cited by Wildberger, "Das Abbild Gottes," 492 (italics mine). As I said, Wildberger reads this quote metaphorically due to the interchange of the grammatical number of the divine genitives: i.e., the son of *one creator god* versus the image of *gods*. According to him, the interchange of the plural and the singular in Gen 1:26–28 should be understood in the same vein. Even if one concedes the plural pronouns in Gen 1:26 assume more than one deity, which I do not follow, what if all the divine beings share the same anthropomorphic form?

similarity between the king and his deity.<sup>74</sup> This is not to deny a metaphorical effect of the royal terms. Rather, it is to clarify that the metaphorical effect is not incompatible with the resemblance of any sort, including, in this case, external resemblance.

Edward Mason Curtis finds metaphor and synecdoche not only in the text but also in the artistic divine representations in Egypt and Mesopotamia. For example, Curtis adduces Mesopotamian divine symbols that replace the human-shaped depictions of the divinities (and also some Egyptian divine representations, not necessarily symbols) to argue that the image of God “attempted to describe not so much the appearance of the deity, however, as something about his nature and function.”<sup>75</sup> The divine symbols may well have a function of synecdoche as Curtis thinks, but I do not know of an instance when the divine symbols have ever been called the image (*šalmu*) of a particular god or gods in general, at least in Mesopotamia. In addition, the anthropomorphic depiction of the deity cannot be equated as merely one of many symbolic representations of the deity, at least in Mesopotamia, as if the deity were of no determined form and manifest with varying forms at different times as in Egypt. The non-anthropomorphic divine symbols presuppose and depend on either their user, if they are inanimate, or their conqueror, if they are animals.<sup>76</sup> Tallay Ornan proposes that Mesopotamian high gods were always thought to have an anthropomorphic shape. Even though there was a tendency in the later period that gods were depicted increasingly with particular symbols in Mesopotamian material culture, the anthropomorphic conceptualization of the divine is indirectly “inferred from myth and ritual,

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<sup>74</sup> Even if it were not a physical shape, the king was supposed to act in analogy with solar events. Thus, the royal epithets were not merely metaphorical. Cf. Henri Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods: A Study of Ancient Near Eastern Religion as the Integration of Society & Nature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), 148–149.

<sup>75</sup> Edward Mason Curtis, “Man as the Image of God in Genesis in the Light of Ancient Near Eastern Parallels” (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1984), 97–113 (the quote from p.113). See esp. 106–107, 110, 112–113, 356.

<sup>76</sup> Tallay Ornan, “In the Likeness of Man: Reflections on the Anthropocentric Perception of the Divine in Mesopotamian Art,” in *What is a God? Anthropomorphic and Non-Anthropomorphic Aspects of Deity in Ancient Mesopotamia*, ed. B. Nevling Porter, The Casco Bay Assyriological Institute Transactions 2 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2009), 93–151, esp. 95–97.

according to which deities were fathered, born, nurtured, and raised in a manner similar to that of humans.”<sup>77</sup> The symbols become divine only after/because they were possessed and domesticated by a deity. In other words, divine symbols are not sources of the divine by themselves, but rather “emanations of divinities perceived as having human form.”<sup>78</sup>

That said, it may be helpful to think about which cultural (both material and textual) comparison with P should be prioritized between Egyptian and Mesopotamian. Though the Egyptian iconographic influence survived in the first millennium, it was certainly decreasing while the Mesopotamian cultural influx became greater, especially from the Neo-Assyrian control of the Levant.<sup>79</sup> Egyptian textual evidence, predominantly from the New Kingdom, which is used by scholars for comparison, is probably at best remote from the Priestly image language if at all relevant. Above all, it would be less promising for those who assign P to the postexilic period to compare it with the materials from the second millennium or even before.<sup>80</sup> It is true that Egyptian scribes in the first half of the first millennium continued the literary tradition of the New Kingdom or older. Yet the extent of the continuity is not without question due to the paucity of evidence.<sup>81</sup> And it is even harder to know P’s connection to the texts containing Egyptian cosmogonies. Or, one may argue that P might have continued the creation tradition that

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<sup>77</sup> Ornan, “In the Likeness,” 94. When Ornan includes the analogy of the manner between the divine and humans, broader than that of forms and shapes, she uses the term “anthropocentric.”

<sup>78</sup> Ornan, “In the Likeness,” 99.

<sup>79</sup> Cf. Othmar Keel and Christoph Uehlinger, *Gods, Goddesses, and Images of God in Ancient Israel*, trans. Thomas H. Trapp (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1998), 133–372.

<sup>80</sup> For instance, see the postexilic dating of P in Janowski, “Die lebendige Statue Gottes,” 210. Some texts cited by scholars may be older than the Eighteenth Dynasty, e.g., “Instructions for Merikare.” Yet the available manuscripts of *Merikare* come from the Eighteenth Dynasty. See the introduction of that text in Miriam Lichtheim, “Merikare,” *COS* 1:61–62; also, Wendy Raver, “Instructions for Merikare,” *OEA* 2:169–170 and Diana Magee, “Merikare,” *OEA* 2:382. As I mentioned passing in the first chapter, the postexilic dating is not my view. Yet the same caveat is applied for the use of Egyptian material.

<sup>81</sup> Cf. Antonio Loprieno, “Views of the Past in Egypt during the First Millennium BC,” in *Never Had the Like Occurred: Egypt’s View of Its Past*, ed. John Tait, Encounters with Ancient Egypt (London: UCL, 2003), 139–154, esp. 150–152 and Kim Ryholt, “Late Period Literature,” in *A Companion to Ancient Egypt*, 2 vols., ed. Alan B. Lloyd, Blackwell Companion to the Ancient World (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 709–731.

was popular from the Late Bronze Age among its various (whether oral or written) sources for its entire history. To support that, the comparison between P and an ancient Near Eastern culture is to be demonstrated with more comprehensive similarities in the firmer ground. There have been some attempts to suggest a close link between the Priestly creation account and the Egyptian cosmogonies while more scholars would compare the former with the Babylonian Story of Creation, Enuma Elish. Yet the similarities alleged by James K. Hoffmeier, for instance, are fragmentary, gleaned from here and there—from the various Egyptian cosmologies that are not necessarily coherent with one another.<sup>82</sup> They do not appear to suggest a particularly closer connection between P and Egyptian cosmologies. While some elements (e.g., the creation by speech and thought) are shared only by Egyptian and the Priestly cosmologies, as Hoffmeier argues,<sup>83</sup> I do not find the designation of the time and seasons by setting up the celestial bodies in the Egyptian cosmologies to be such a case because they are shared by Gen 1:14 and Enuma Elish.<sup>84</sup> Some general similarities in cosmologies are so widespread in the ancient Near East that one may well compare Egyptian and Mesopotamian cosmologies in like manner (e.g., splitting the sky).

I think it is more commendable to suggest a proximate relationship between the Priestly *imago Dei* and the Mesopotamian parallel.<sup>85</sup> First of all, P's depiction of the deity seems closer to the depiction of Mesopotamian deities, even though the Priestly history does not have a pantheon as that of Mesopotamia or Egypt. As will be argued below, P's deity is supposed to have anthropomorphic form. This fits better with Mesopotamian high gods, as Ornan

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<sup>82</sup> Cf. James K. Hoffmeier, "Some Thoughts on Genesis 1 & 2 and Egyptian Cosmology," *JANES* 15 (1983): 39–49.

<sup>83</sup> Hoffmeier, "Some Thoughts," 45.

<sup>84</sup> Cf. Enuma Elish V:1–6 in W. G. Lambert, *Babylonian Creation Myths*, Mesopotamian civilizations 16 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2013), 98–99; cf. Benjamin R. Foster, "Epic of Creation," *COS* 1:390–402, esp. 1:399.

<sup>85</sup> Similarly, Middleton, *Liberating Image*, 130–136.

demonstrated, than the Egyptian gods who have multiple forms, any of which is their true form. Also, the text itself shows some Mesopotamian influences anyway. It is not because I concede that the Priestly creation account was influenced by Mesopotamian creation accounts such as Enuma Elish instead of Egyptian cosmologies; I find no merit to argue any direct connection between Gen 1:1–2:4a and other ancient Near Eastern myths (see the next chapter). However, the Priestly flood narrative in Gen 6–9\* is likely to have some connection with the Mesopotamian flood accounts (i.e., Atrahasis and the Utnapishtim episode of Gilgamesh). The plot and the motifs of the Mesopotamian flood accounts are sufficiently similar to the extent that even those stressing differences between them do not deny that the Priestly flood account is interacting with them.<sup>86</sup> One of the strongest pieces of evidence for their close (potentially even direct) relationship comes from the uses of כַּפֵּר as a *qutl* noun (*kōper*) to mean “pitch” and a G-stem verb ([wə]kāpārtā) to mean “to smear” in Gen 6:14. This meaning of the root is unique in Hebrew but not uncommon in Akkadian. The Akkadian cognate noun (*kupru*) of Hebrew *kōper* appears in Mesopotamian flood stories as well.<sup>87</sup> Samuel Boyd, among others, compellingly demonstrates from various (especially, contact linguistic) perspectives that the G-stem verb in the sense of “to wipe on” (in contrast to more common “to wipe out”) and the *qutl* noun meaning “pitch” from כַּפֵּר in Gen 6:14 were most likely borrowed directly from Akkadian without

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<sup>86</sup> William L. Moran, “Atrahasis: The Babylonian Story of the Flood,” *Biblica* 52 (1971): 51–61, esp. 61; Tikva Frymer-Kensky, “The Atrahasis Epic and Its Significance for Our Understanding of Genesis 1–9,” *Biblical Archaeologist* 40 (1977), 147–155. Cf. Robert A. Oden Jr., “Transformations in Near Eastern Myths: Genesis 1–11 and the Old Babylonian Epic of Atrahasis,” *Religion* 11 (1981): 21–37; Robert A. Oden Jr., “Divine Aspirations in Atrahasis and in Genesis 1–11,” *ZAW* 93 (1981): 197–216.

<sup>87</sup> A. R. George, *The Babylonian Gilgamesh Epic: Introduction, Critical Edition, and Cuneiform Texts*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 1:694 (Tablet 10:263) and W. G. Lambert and A. R. Millard, *Atra-ḫasīs: The Babylonian Story of the Flood* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1969), 90 (Tablet III:2.13) Cf. Gunkel, *Genesis*, 144; Nahum M. Sarna, *The JPS Torah Commentary: Genesis* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1991), 52; and Jan Christian Gertz, *Das erste Buch Mose: Genesis; Die Urgeschichte Gen 1–11*, *Das Alte Testament Deutsch*, Neues Göttinger Bibelwerk 1 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2018), 250.

Aramaic intermediary or internal Hebrew development.<sup>88</sup> Even so, we do not have to date P back to the original composition of the myths in the second millennium to argue this. We have good reasons to believe that these stories continued to be popular in the first half of the first millennium. For example, we have the extant copies of both Gilgamesh and Atrahasis from Neo-Assyria; Gilgamesh was part of the curriculum for the Babylonian scribal education in the first millennium.<sup>89</sup>

More Mesopotamian influence is discernable. The prediluvian genealogy in Gen 5 seems to have some connection with the Sumerian King List, while the exact nature of the relationship might be elusive.<sup>90</sup> Though there is an objection,<sup>91</sup> the extremely long lifespan of the prediluvian patriarchs in Gen 5 together with the gradual decrease to the normal lifespan in the genealogy of Gen 11:10–26 is strikingly similar to the plot of the Sumerian King List. Keeping this common plot in mind, the same number (ten) of antediluvian figures both in P and certain editions of the Sumerian King List is hard to ignore.<sup>92</sup> Also, the unique designation for the manifestation of God in front of the people in P, i.e., *kəḫôḏ YHWH*, seems related to the divine and the royal *melammū* of Neo-Assyria and broader Mesopotamia (see the following chapter); the presentation of the deity as royal by the presence in and the appearance outside the Tent of Meeting shares many features with the Neo-Assyrian royal ideology. If P is preexilic, the Neo-Assyrian culture

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<sup>88</sup> See a fuller discussion in Samuel Lanham Boyd, “Contact and Context: Studies in Language Contact and Literary Strata in the Hebrew Bible” (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2014), 266–284.

<sup>89</sup> George, *Gilgamesh*, 1:33–39; W. Lambert and Millard, *Atra-ḫasis*, 1–25 and 31–41.

<sup>90</sup> Robert R. Wilson, *Genealogy and History in the Biblical World*, Yale Near Eastern Researches 7 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), esp. 166; Gunkel, *Genesis*, 134–136; Gertz, *Genesis*, 194–196. For the translation of the Sumerian King List, see Thorkild Jacobsen, *The Sumerian King List*, AS 11 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939), esp. 69–127; A. Leo Oppenheim, “The Sumerian King List,” *ANET* 265–266. For the form and function of this text, see Wilson, *Genealogy and History*, 73–86.

<sup>91</sup> Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 348–352.

<sup>92</sup> Wilson, *Genealogy and History*, 166.

becomes more pertinent.<sup>93</sup> This is also supported by Jeffrey Stackert’s observation that P does not assume divine abandonment or exile as does H, which means P may be at the latest preexilic.<sup>94</sup> Not all Mesopotamian influence should be posited as direct. Mesopotamian cultural influx may have been recurrent through Syria even before more direct contact became regular.<sup>95</sup> Therefore, P’s more comprehensive similarity to and more probable point of contact with the Mesopotamian culture in the first millennium suggests the latter to be the better comparative candidate for the *imago Dei* in P.

On this preliminary background, I think that the Mesopotamian concept of “the image of DN” from both textual and material remains frequently, if not always, points to the assumption of a certain external resemblance between the represented and the representation. Actually, the meaning of Akkadian *šalmu* (a cognate noun for Hebrew צֶלֶם *selem*, “image”) more often than not implies formal, bodily similarity. A predominant use of the image is for a three-dimensional or two-dimensional representation of someone or something, such as a statue or a relief, according to *CAD* and *AHW*.<sup>96</sup> Irene J. Winter further argues that *šalmu* always means “image” and may be applied to and translated as “statue” or “relief” only secondarily when the textual

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<sup>93</sup> Beyond P, the Neo-Assyrian period has been defended as the probable point of contact between other biblical and Mesopotamian compositions. See David P. Wright, *Inventing God’s Law: How the Covenant Code of the Bible Used and Revised the Laws of Hammurabi* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 15 for the discussion with respect to the Covenant Code and the Law of Hammurabi. For the influence of Esarhaddon’s Succession Treaty on the D source, see Bernard M. Levinson and Jeffrey Stackert, “Between the Covenant Code and Esarhaddon’s Succession Treaty: Deuteronomy 13 and the Composition of Deuteronomy,” *JAJ* 3 (2012): 123–140 and Hans U. Steymans, “Deuteronomy 28 and Tell Tayinat,” *Verbum Eccles.* 34 (released Jan 2013 online, cited 2021-06-05): 1–13; available from <[http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci\\_arttext&pid=S2074-77052013000200022&lng=en&nrm=iso](http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S2074-77052013000200022&lng=en&nrm=iso)>.

<sup>94</sup> Stackert, “Political Allegory,” 216–223.

<sup>95</sup> Cf. Shalom M. Paul, *Amos: A Commentary on the Book of Amos*, Hermeneia 30 (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 197.

<sup>96</sup> Possible exceptions is the examples translated as “constellation.” See *CAD* s.v. *šalmu*, 84. Even these instances are likely to indicate that the shapes of the constellations are human. The literal translation, “image” implying the form and shape, may have been intended here as elsewhere (see below).

context allows.<sup>97</sup> Thus, what does the image of a deity represent? J. N. Postgate says that various referents of Akkadian *šalmu* “share one essential characteristic: they are anthropomorphic,” at least in the so far known texts.<sup>98</sup> This statement may be a little exaggerated. Stephanie Dalley notes some stelae whose inscriptions begin with the words “*šalmu* (‘the image’) of PN” even with no pictorial images.<sup>99</sup> Yet it should not be ignored that *šalmu* is more often related to a pictorial, anthropomorphic image, and Postgate’s observation is still statistically meaningful to my mind.

Dalley, in addition, points out that *šalmu* “is also a general word for ‘constellation’” in a few occasions. *CAD*, 16:84 and *AHW*, 3:1079 indeed list three texts that use *šalmu* to refer to “constellation”: e.g., VAT 9428; AO 6460; and VAT 8247. The word *šalmu* may be referring to a constellation in VAT 8247 (see *KAR* 50:5–6).<sup>100</sup> Yet *šalmu* here may primarily mean “the heavenly *image*” of the bull in the rite and imply external resemblance between the bull and the conceived constellation, whatever it exactly was, rather than it simply refers to a “constellation” without assuming any external correspondence.<sup>101</sup> To my mind, *šalmu* in at least the first two of the above three texts still maintains its predominant lexical meaning (“image”) and is used to

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<sup>97</sup> Irene J. Winter, “‘Idols of the King’: Royal images as recipients of ritual action in ancient Mesopotamia,” in *On Art in the Ancient Near East*, 2 vols., CHANE 34.1–34.2 (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 2:167–195, esp. 2:169 and 2:169n5; Irene J. Winter, “Art in Empire: The Royal Image and the visual Dimensions of Assyrian Ideology,” in *On Art in the Ancient Near East*, 2 vols., CHANE 34.1–34.2 (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 1:71–108, esp. 1:78.

<sup>98</sup> J. N. Postgate, “Text and Figure in Ancient Mesopotamia: Match and Mismatch,” in *The Ancient Mind: Elements of Cognitive Archaeology*, eds. Colin Renfrew and Ezra B. W. Zubrow (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 176–184, esp. 178; cited also by Tallay Ornan, *The Triumph of the Symbol: Pictorial Representation of Deities in Mesopotamia and the Biblical Image Ban*, OBO 213 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2005), 95–96.

<sup>99</sup> Stephanie Dalley, “The God *Šalmu* and the Winged Disk,” *Iraq* 48 (1986): 85–101, esp. 88; Stephanie Dalley, “Stelae from Teima and the God *ŠLM* (*Šalmu*),” *Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies* 15 (1985): 27–33, esp. 28. Dalley’s evidence is found in Walter Andrae, *Die Stelenreihen in Assur*, Ausgrabungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft in Assur, A: Baudenkmäler aus Assyrischer Zeit 3 (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1913), 8–14.

<sup>100</sup> *KAR* 50:5–6 and 50:13–14. For the transliterations and translations of *KAR* 50, see F. Thureau-Dangin, *Rituels Accadiens* (Paris: Leroux, 1921), 22–25 in French and, more recently, Linssen, *Cults of Uruk*, 267–269 in English.

<sup>101</sup> Pace Dalley, “Winged Disk,” 88; Dalley, “Stelae,” 28.



refer to the shape of the relevant constellation when it has an anthropomorphic form.<sup>102</sup> It is noteworthy that *šalmu*—rather than *awīlu* (“human being”) or the like—was employed for designating presumably anthropomorphic shapes (which wear clothes and use tools) in VAT 9428.<sup>103</sup> Also, *šalmu* was not used to designate other shapes in this text, such as some geometrical figure in lines v13 and r4 called *absamikku*<sup>104</sup> or *abzamakku* (in Weidner’s transcription), the wagon box in line r8 (*kalakku*) or the dog in line r10 (*kalbu*). This is consistent with Postgate’s observation that *šalmu* implies human shape, if admitting existence of some exceptions.<sup>105</sup>

Thus, an image of DN, whether a statue or a relief, likely reflects the divine anthropomorphic body which the ancient Mesopotamian people conceived and believed their deities to have, as Ornan observed. It cannot be merely a symbolic expression representing some divine feature.<sup>106</sup> This physiognomic resemblance between the image and the referent is extended to the deity-king relationship in the Assyrian texts that contain royal ideology.<sup>107</sup>

16’ *ina* (AŠ) *ši-mat* <sup>d</sup>*Nu-dīm-mud ma-ni it-ti šīr* (UZU) *ilāni* (DINGER<sup>meš</sup>) *mi-na-a-šu*  
 17’ *ina* (AŠ) *purussû* (EŠ.BAR) *bēl mātāti* (EN KUR.KUR) *ina* (AŠ) *ra-a-aṭ šas/turri*  
 (ŠÀ.TÛR) *ilāni* (DINGER<sup>meš</sup>) *ši-pi-ik-šu i-te-eš-ra*  
 18’ *šu-û-ma sa-lam* <sup>d</sup>*Illil* (BE) *da-ru-ú še-e-mu pi-i nišē* (UK U<sup>meš</sup>) *mi-lik māti* (KUR)  
 20’ *ú-šar-bi-šu-ma* <sup>d</sup>*Illil* (BE) *ki-ma a-bi a-li-di ar-ki mār(i)* (DUMU) *bu-uk-ri-šu*

<sup>102</sup> For VAT 9428, see Ernst F. Weidner, “Eine Beschreibung des Sternenhimmels aus Assur,” *Afo* 4 (1927), 73–85. For AO 6460, see Thureau-Dangin, *Rituels Accadiens*, 118–125, esp. 119–120 and line 17; for this text, see a more recent translation and discussion in English in Marc J. H. Linssen, *The Cults of Uruk and Babylon: The Temple Ritual Texts as Evidence for Hellenistic Cult Practises*, CM 25 (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 245–251.

<sup>103</sup> Weidner, “Beschreibung,” 73–85 (esp. lines v1, v4, v8, r1, and r14).

<sup>104</sup> For the meaning of *absamikku*, see Eleanor Robson, “The Long Career of a Favorite Figure: The *apsamikku* in Neo-Babylonian Mathematics,” in *From the Banks of the Euphrates: Studies in Honor of Alice Louise Slotsky*, ed. Micah Ross (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2008), 211–226, esp. 211–212.

<sup>105</sup> The shape of the *šalmu* is possibly bovine in *KAR* 50:5–6, 13–14.

<sup>106</sup> This seems to be the opinion of many of those who take the functional approach for *imago Dei* in Gen 1:26–28. For them, a physical representation of the deity has nothing to do with the deity’s corresponding appearance and assumes no similarity, either external or internal. It is only a metaphorical representation of some feature, i.e., “function.” See Janowski, “Die lebendige Statue Gottes,” 194–195.

<sup>107</sup> The transliteration and translation are from Peter Machinist, “Literature as Politics: The Tukulti-Ninurta Epic and the Bible,” *CBQ* 38 (1976): 455–482, esp. 465–466 (my italics); also, Peter Bruce Machinist, “The Epic of Tukulti-Ninurta I: A Study in Middle Assyrian Literature,” (PhD diss., Yale University, 1978), 68–69 (IA/F 16’–18’ and 20’).

16' By the fate (determined by) Nudimmud (=Ea), his (=Tukulti-Ninurta's) *mass* is reckoned with the *flesh of the gods*.

17' By the decision of the lord of all the lands, he was successfully cast into/poured through the channel of the *womb of the gods*.

18' He alone is the eternal *image of Enlil*, attentive to the voice of the people, to the counsel of the land.

20' Enlil raised him *like a natural father*, after his first-born son (=Ninurta).

Here also, as in the blessing of Ptah upon Ramesses III, Tukulti-Ninurta's kingship is closely related to his divine birth and body. Even when the word *šalmu* (image) is not used, a first millennium royal inscription emphasizes the specially fashioned royal body for the *legitimate* kingship.<sup>108</sup>

[DI]NGER.[MEŠ.GAL.MEŠ] *ga-me-ru-ut* EŠ.BAR *mu-šim-mu* <sup>d</sup>NAM.MEŠ <sup>d</sup>10-ÉRIN.TÁḪ NUN *na-a-du ki-niš ib-nu-ni* [...] [*nab-ni-te*] *a-na nab-ni-ti* EN-ti *uš-te-en<sub>6</sub>-nu-ú* [*ši-kín bu-na-ni*]-ia *i-še-riš ú-šék-li-lu-ma zu-mur* EN-ti-ia *iš-pu-uk* [*ta*]-š*i-im*-[*ta*].

Great gods, who take firm decisions, who decree destinies; they properly created me, Adad-nārārī, attentive prince, [...], they altered my stature to lordly stature, they rightly made perfect my features<sup>109</sup> and filled my lordly body with wisdom.

Admittedly, the stature of Adad-narari II does not have to be understood divine in this text. Yet it gives insight that the royal body is indispensable to the royal function against the purely functional view. In other words, the proper body is a requirement for the proper function.

Having said that, an image is not necessarily to be equated with a photocopy or a portrait in the modern sense. Winter offers some beneficial insights on Mesopotamian kings' artistic representations. She observes that there had been idealized royal physiognomies in Mesopotamian art history. The statues of Gudea, a ruler of Lagash in the late third millennium,

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<sup>108</sup> The transliteration and the translation are from Grayson, RIMA 2, 147 (A.0.99.2 lines 5–7); also cited by Winter, "Art in Empire," 88.

<sup>109</sup> What is translated as "my features" is from a bound phrase: *šikin bunnannīya*, literally, my bodily features. Its two component nouns respectively (*šiknu* and *bunnannū*) and together are all related to the physical appearance. See CAD, 2:318 and 17:437. Etymologically speaking, *bunnannū* from *banū B* (even more if the nominal form is a derivative of the D-stem) may imply physical beauty in such a royal context as this. For *banū B*, see CAD, 2:90–94.

were characterized “with his direct gaze, his powerful arm, and his upright, stable posture.”<sup>110</sup> Likewise, the representations of Assurnasirpal II, a Neo-Assyrian king in the early first millennium, also stand out for their powerful musculature. Even though realism was not completely absent, says she, the ideal appearance in their physical shape, proportions, costumes, and postures was considered more important than the verifiability by the individual idiosyncrasy.<sup>111</sup> She brings two epistolary texts that occasion negotiations for choosing a more proper image for the king as her textual support. In each case, the king and his correspondent pay attention to some particular parts of the body as well as the accessories and the posture of the king.<sup>112</sup> The fact that the king could represent his allegedly divine(-like) body with an ideal form according to his decision is important, as she finds out, because it means that the same king could make also a divine image that resembled his ideal image. As a matter of fact, the ideal image of a king becomes the image of a deity by presenting the image of a deity in accordance with the king’s (ideal) image.<sup>113</sup>

Thus, the ancient Near Eastern *imago Dei* expresses first and foremost the physical appearance. The physical appearance is not limited to the physiognomic features, though the

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<sup>110</sup> Winter, “Art in Empire,” 83–86 (quoted from 85). See also the common features between Naram-Sin and Assurnasirpal II.

<sup>111</sup> Winter, “Art in Empire,” 85. Janowski says similarly for Hebrew צלם in Janowski, “Die lebendige Statue Gottes,” 189–190. Yet he seems to go the opposite direction from Winter in that he eventually denies both physical and metaphysical (only except for functional) resemblance between the deity and the humans in biblical *imago Dei*. The difference between the king and his image leads him to argue for a purely functional view for Gen 1:26–28: see his pp.194–196. By admitting some potential formal differences between the king and his image, I do not mean that the king’s physiognomy is unrelated to his royal image as Janowski argues. Instead, I point out that their external resemblance exists more in the conceptual than the factual level. Cf. Simeon Chavel, “The Face of God and the Etiquette of Eye-Contact: Visitation, Pilgrimage, and Prophetic Vision in Ancient Israelite and Early Jewish Imagination,” *Jewish Studies Quarterly* 19 (2012): 1–55, esp. 24 and 24–25n79.

<sup>112</sup> Winter, “Art in Empire,” 80–81 (esp. 81n20 and 81n21).

<sup>113</sup> Winter, “Art in Empire,” 92–94.

textual evidence I discussed above may seem mainly about the body. The letters below regarding the king’s choice of his proper image provide a wider sense of the physical appearance:<sup>114</sup>

ŠÀ-bu-ú ALAM šá a-na LUGAL EN-ia ú-še-bi-la šá-lim ki-i šá LUGAL EN-ia  
MURUB<sub>4</sub>.MEŠ-šú i-rak-ka-su-ma a-na pa-an <sup>d</sup>AMAR.UTU DINGIR-ka te-ru-bu ŠÀ-  
bu-ú ALAM šá a-na LUGAL EN-ia ú-še-bi-la ri-ik-su ša LUGAL EN-ia

One like the image that I sent to the king, my lord, (is) perfect. When<sup>115</sup> the king, my lord, girds his loins and you go before Marduk, your god, like the image which I sent to the king, my lord (is) the girdle of the king, my lord.<sup>116</sup>

Ša šal-mu—LUGAL ša e-pa-šu-ni GIŠ.haṭ-ṭu ina pa-an a-hi-šú pa-ra-ak-at Á-šú ina si-  
qi-a-ni-šu šá-ak-na-at a-na-ku TA pa-ni la-ma-gu-ru la e-pa-áš ina UGU bu-un-ni ina  
UGU me-me-ni a-qa-ba-áš-šu-n[u] [l]a i-šam-mu-ni

As for the royal image which they are making, the scepter is lying across his arm and his arm is resting on his thighs. I myself do not agree with this and I will not fashion (it so). I could speak with them about features—about anything whatever—but they wouldn’t listen to me.

These texts demonstrate Winter’s observation that the physical appearance of the king in the image includes “some attributes that we think of as external to the person—headgear, clothing,

<sup>114</sup> Steven Cole and Peter Machinist, *Letters from Priests to the Kings Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal*, SAA 13 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1998), 36–37 (§34), lines r2–11 (their transliteration and translation). For a slightly different translation, see Frederick Mario Fales, “New Assyrian Letters from the Kuyunjik Collection,” *AfO* 27 (1980): 136–153, esp. 142

<sup>115</sup> Benno Landsberger, *Brief des Bischofs von Esagila an König Asarhaddon*, (Amsterdam: Noord-Hollandsche Uitgevers Maatschappij, 1965), 8, line 15. For the temporal understanding of *kī ša* in this text, see Landsberger, *Brief*, 73. “*Kī ša*” is more often understood as comparison and rendered to “as”: Wolfram von Soden, *Grundriss Der Akkadischen Grammatik*, 3rd ed. (Roma: Pontificium Institutum Biblicum, 1995), 286–287 (§178f and g) and John Huehnergard, *A Grammar of Akkadian*, Harvard Semitic Studies 45 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2011), 287 (§26.2b). However, the comparative use of *kī ša* seems less likely in this text. The word for comparison is consistently *libbū*, written logographically with phonetic compliments (ŠÀ-bu-ú) in this text. See line 19 where *libbū* (ŠÀ-bu-ú) followed by relative *ša*, instead of *kī ša*, introduces a comparative clause. When *kī* is used alone (without *ša*) in this text, it is either temporal (lines 4, 30, and 34) or conditional (lines 22, 23, 39) as expected. Above all, the second instance of *kī ša* in line 47 is obviously temporal as Landsberger notes. The fact that lines 15–18 share a similar syntactic structure with lines 22–23 and 23–25—*kī (ša)* subordinate clause, followed by the main clause that begins with the *libbū* prepositional phrase—shows that *kī ša* is to be understood as an alternative of temporal/conditional *kī*. Cf. Jaakko Hämeen-Anttila, *A Sketch of Neo-Assyrian Grammar*, SAAS 13 (Helsinki: The Neo-Assyrian text Corpus Project, 2000), 128 [§4.5.3.1]).

<sup>116</sup> Landsberger, *Brief*, 8, line 14–18. The morpho-syntax is difficult, and the different sentence divisions are possible. For example, see another translation in Cole and Machinist, *Letters from Priests*, 147 (§178). I largely followed Landsberger’s German translation in his p.12 since it suggests the formal resemblance between the king and his image more easily.

and accoutrements.”<sup>117</sup> The point of the debate in the first quote is the girdling of the loins, which is possibly a synecdoche for the wearing of the full royal attire.<sup>118</sup> The sender, Šumuiddina, insists that the proper image of the king demonstrate the resemblance with the king in terms of the attire. Furthermore, the second text reveals that the posture of the royal image should correspond to that of the (ideally conceptualized) king.<sup>119</sup> Nabû-ašared, the sender of the second letter, was frustrated by the sculptors who would not comply with his corrections. He is complaining to the king that the positioning of the king’s arm and the scepter is inappropriate.

The posture—a specific configuration of the limbs—might be understood as a kind of action. The expansion from the bodily appearance to the posture and the action is not a non sequitur, but rather a very natural development from the perspective of a logical Mesopotamian mind. One may make an analogy with Jean Bottéro’s argument that some multivalent logograms of Sumero-Akkadian cuneiform scripts should have experienced a comparable expansion. For example, a cuneiform sign for “foot” is expanded to “to stand” and “to walk.”<sup>120</sup> This kind of a logical propensity (from things to concepts, from nouns to verbs) continued even after phonetism had been introduced to the cuneiform writing system, says Bottéro.<sup>121</sup>

For this intellectual background that *imago dei* includes a performative similarity deriving from the resemblance in the bodily shape and the signature pose, we have more positive material and textual supports. Bernard F. Batto argues that “the anthropomorphic winged figure replicates exactly the actions of the Assyrian king in the attack of a city (figs. 3–5) and at the

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<sup>117</sup> Winter, “Art in Empire,” 88.

<sup>118</sup> This phrase may imply one dressing up worthy of one’s office and demonstrating one’s readiness and suitability for the duty. Potential parallel expressions in Hebrew are אֲזִיר/הַגִּיר מוֹתָנִים/חֻלְצִים. Cf. Exod 12:11; Job 38:3; 40:7; Jer 1:17; 2 King 1:8; 3:21; 4:29; 9:1; Dan 10:5 among others.

<sup>119</sup> Cf. Winter, “Art in Empire,” 85–86 argues that some impressive postures of the kings were one of the means with which Mesopotamian artists characterized the kings.

<sup>120</sup> Jean Bottéro, *Mesopotamia: Writing, Reasoning, and the Gods*, trans. Zainab Bahrani and Marc Van De Mieroop (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 82.

<sup>121</sup> Bottéro, *Mesopotamia*, 97–102 (esp. 99).

conclusion of a successful military campaign and return from battle (figs. 6–9).<sup>122</sup> In the relevant reliefs, the king draws his bow when an anthropomorphic winged male figure draws his; he lets down the bow when the winged figure does so.<sup>123</sup> In this sense, the similarity of the postures between the image and the referent can be well expanded to that of the actions. Batto seems to understand this performative analogy merely as an artistic motif that symbolizes the royal majesty, relying on Podella’s observation that the Assyrian artists restricted the motif discriminately to more significant scenes such as battle or cultic ones in contrast to the hunting of animals and the crossing of a river. Even though the anthropomorphic winged figure may appear mainly in more important scenes and the performative analogy motif indeed emphasizes the royal authority, I do not think it has to be only metaphorical and purely functional. It is more likely that the king represents a deity (as the functional views contend) because he resembles the deity in form, is equipped as the deity is, and *behaves like* the deity.<sup>124</sup>

There are also texts that indicate the king is expected to imitate divine actions:<sup>125</sup>

*a-ta-a šá-ni-ú ina UD-mi an-ni-e GIŠ.BANŠUR ina pa-an LUGAL be-lí-ia la e-rab ana*<sup>126</sup> *ᵈUTU LUGAL DINGIER.MEŠ man-nu [id-du-ru] UD-mu k[al] [mu-šú] e-da-ar tu-ú-ra ši-it-ta ú-ma-ti LUGAL EN KUR.KUR ša-al-mu šá ᵈUTU šu-ú mi-ši-il UD-me ú-ta-da-ar*

<sup>122</sup> Bernard F. Batto, “The Divine Sovereign: The Image of God in the Priestly Creation Account,” in *In the Beginning: Essays on Creation Motifs in the Ancient Near East and the Bible*, (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2013), 96–138, esp. 112 and see the relevant figure numbers in his article. He draws on Thomas Podella, *Das Lichtkleid JHWHs: Untersuchungen zur Gestalthaftigkeit Gottes im Alten Testament und seiner altorientalischen Umwelt*, FAT 15 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1996), 134–140.

<sup>123</sup> Batto, “Divine Sovereign,” 112–114. Batto (relying on Podella, *Das Lichtkleid JHWHs*, 147–152) identifies the winged solar disk with the anthropomorphic figure inside with god Assur who appropriated the feature of the sun god in the Neo-Assyrian period. Cf. Simo Parpola, “The Assyrian Tree of Life: Tracing the Origins of Jewish Monotheism and Greek Philosophy,” *JNES* 52.3 (1993): 161–208, esp. 185n93.

<sup>124</sup> Cf. Hornung, *Conceptions of God*, 139 regarding Egyptian royal ideology: “There is similarity of deed as well as similarity of appearance; the king acts ‘like Mont (the god of war)’ or ‘like his father Amon-Re.’”

<sup>125</sup> Simo Parpola, *Letters from Assyrian and Babylonian Scholars* (= *LAB*), SAA 10 (Helsinki: Helsinki University Press, 1993), 159, #196 lines 14–r6 (his transliteration and translation, my italics). See also Simo Parpola, *Letters from Assyrian Scholars to the Kings Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal* (= *LAS*), 2 vols., AOAT 5 (Kevelaer: Butzon & Bercker, 1970–1983), 1:113 (#143). Also cited by Middleton, *Liberating Image*, 114.

<sup>126</sup> This *ana* must be comparative, according to Parpola, *LAS*, 2:130 on lines 17ff. Cf. Mikko Luukko, *Grammatical Variation in Neo-Assyrian*, SAAS 16 (Helsinki: Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, 2004), 175 (§7.2).

Why, today already for the second day, is the table not brought to the king, my lord? Who (now) stays in the dark much longer than the Sun, the king of the gods, stays in the dark a whole day and night, (and) again two days? *The king, the lord of the world, is the very image of the Sun god. He (should) keep in the dark for only half a day!*<sup>127</sup>

The recipient, Esarhaddon, secluded himself. He was apparently sick in this and relevant other letters. The main concern was most likely that the king kept refusing to eat,<sup>128</sup> whether because of the depression<sup>129</sup> caused by his illness or out of a pious motive to earn divine favor for healing.<sup>130</sup> Adad-šumu-ušur, the king's exorcist and the sender of the letter, is trying to persuade him to eat again. Adad-šumu-ušur's reasoning is at first upon the habit of the sun(-god) and the action of the king. A performative analogy is expected between the king of this world, Esarhaddon, and the king of the divine world, the sun god, Shamash. The latter appears during the day and does his job while ceasing to be visible at night. The king, who was the image of the sun god, was not supposed to retreat into his personal place longer than the duration that Shamash recedes; but he should come out after night and lives a normal life during the day. Middleton interprets this text to be purely functional by saying that "Esarhaddon is exhorted to live up to his privileged identity as the image (*šalmu*) of Shamash, by imitating the sun's behavior."<sup>131</sup> This is moving in the right direction, in my view. Yet, I suspect Adad-šumu-ušur's reasoning is deeper than that. Note the main point that Adad-šumu-ušur problematized seems more the unacceptable duration of the king's seclusion than his fasting, maybe as a rhetorical strategy. Considering that the letter is concerned about the bad condition of the king and attempts

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<sup>127</sup> I take this "day" (*ūmu*) as the twenty-four hours and equate "half a day" (*mišil ūme*) with "day" (i.e., daytime) in "a whole day and night" (*ūmu kal mūšu*) in line r1.

<sup>128</sup> It is relatively clear from the end of the letter. Cf. Parpola, *LAB*, 33, #43 = *LAS*, 1:32–35 (#51).

<sup>129</sup> See the restoration in line r15 (*karū ikki*), which is likely in light of Parpola, *LAB*, 33 (#43, line 10: *ikku kurrū*) = *LAS*, 1:32–35 (#51). Parpola's translation, such as "mope" and "restlessness," fits better with the context than "impatience" in *CAD*, 59 s.v. *ikku* A. So does it elsewhere: e.g., Parpola, *LAB*, 179–180 (#227, lines r17 and r21) = *LAS*, 92–94 (#122).

<sup>130</sup> See the discussion of the king's illness and the reason of his fasting in Parpola, *LAS*, 2:57–58 and 2:129–130.

<sup>131</sup> Middleton, *Liberating Image*, 114–115.

to discourage him from seclusion and fasting, Adad-šumu-ušur may be arguing that the king should be in the dark no more than half a day not merely because it is an obligation of his privileged status to be like the sun. The Neo-Assyrian kings were identified with the sun in various passages as well.<sup>132</sup> Esarhaddon here who bears “the image of the Sun god” was considered to bear the analogous appearance of god Shamash if the meaning of “the image of DN” that I argued above is correct. Thus, conforming to the action (here, the cycle of the rising and setting) of the sun god is the lifestyle that the king, more than anybody, is supposed to follow for the well-being (*šulmu*) of both his and of the land. If he does not follow the natural law of the sun, his health will not be restored, not to mention the welfare of the empire.<sup>133</sup> It is not just an obligation but the natural way the world operates. Adad-šumu-ušur would have thought of such ideological talk as more persuasive, though it appears to have turned out unsuccessful, than merely saying “You have to eat for your health!”<sup>134</sup>

If one agrees that actions can reveal personality of a character in the literary (and also the real) world, one does not have to sharply distinguish inner qualities and the external activities.

Another letter to the king demonstrates this:<sup>135</sup>

*ša LUGAL [be-lí] iš-pur-an-ni ma-a ina pi-i šá AD-ía as-se-<sup>r</sup>me<sup>1</sup> ki-i qin-nu ke-en-tu at-tu-nu-u-ni ù a-na-ku ú-ma-a ú-da a-ta-mar AD-šú ša LUGAL be-lí-ia ša-lam <sup>d</sup>EN šu-u ù LUGAL be-lí ša-lam <sup>d</sup>EN-ma šu-ú ina pi-i ša 02 EN-MEŠ-<sup>r</sup>ni-ía i-tuq<sup>1</sup>-ta man-nu ú-ḫar ú-šá-an-na man-nu i-šá-na-an*

As to what the king, [my lord], wrote to me: “I heard from the mouth of my father that you are a loyal family, but now I know it from my own experience”—the father of the king, my lord, was *the very image of Bel*, and the king, my lord, is likewise the very image of Bel. This (honour) has fallen to my share from the mouth of my two lords. Who can ever repeat it, who can vie with it?

<sup>132</sup> For the examples, see Parpola, *LAS*, 2:130 on lines r4f. Cf. See Parpola’s equation of the sun god and the mundane sun for our text: Parpola, *LAS*, 2:130 on line 18.

<sup>133</sup> This is my understanding of the lines after r7. Though the lines are heavily damaged (especially r7–r13), Parpola’s reconstruction of the lines r14–r18 seems fairly plausible.

<sup>134</sup> Cf. Parpola, *LAS*, 2:129.

<sup>135</sup> Parpola, *LAB*, 180–181, #228 lines 14–21 (his transliteration and translation) = *LAS*, 1:98–99 (#125). Also cited by Middleton, *Liberating Image*, 115.



The sender of this letter, also Adad-šumu-ušur, is responding to the gracious word of the king, Assurbanipal, son of Esarhaddon. As Simo Parpola describes, “the present context confirms . . . that the king was likened to Marduk (or Bēl) especially when it was appropriate to extol his *goodness* and *mercifulness*, and it would accordingly seem that these indeed were characteristics most popularly associated with Marduk at the period concerned.”<sup>136</sup> Again, Middleton finds from this text the functional similarity between the king’s benevolence and the deity’s. Yet if one is not caught in a trap of the totalistic functional fallacy, Adad-šumu-ušur is praising Assurbanipal’s nature rather than his function.<sup>137</sup> Even if one can read a royal function here, it is only collateral to the divine-royal quality in this text. Schellenberg is right to say that “the ANE understanding of images shows that the likeness between image and deity cannot be reduced to the image’s function, but is very much also about its qualities and capacities.”<sup>138</sup> This is even truer if we consider that many Mesopotamian deities are personifications of some aspects of nature and culture.<sup>139</sup> I only add what escapes Schellenberg and others that the inner qualities and capacities were not thought something separate from the external appearance including postures and actions. And the former is described by the latter in ancient Near Eastern literature frequently.<sup>140</sup> In other words, *imago Dei* closely correlates with *imitatio Dei*. This *imitatio Dei* entails not only certain actions of god but also his nature and personality as does the *imago Dei*.

As is to be apparent from the discussion so far, I do not exclude such views that assign a special status to the referent of the *imago Dei* language, either functional or I-Thou. What I am

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<sup>136</sup> Parpola, *LAS*, 2:112 (his italics).

<sup>137</sup> Middleton, *Liberating Image*, 115.

<sup>138</sup> Schellenberg, “Humankind,” 100. Cf. Wildberger, “Das Abbild Gottes,” 494–495; Oekinga, *Gottebenbildlichkeit*, 153

<sup>139</sup> Bottéro, *Mesopotamia*, 215.

<sup>140</sup> For example, see the descriptions of Gilgamesh and Enkidu in Tablet 1; these characters are first introduced by these external qualities.

arguing is that the image of God in ancient Near East cannot be interpreted as merely metaphorical.<sup>141</sup> The analogy between human and divine appearance is the basis of the qualitative similarity and, further, functional similarity. If there is indeed a metaphor, it is not that bodily similarity is a metaphor in royal ideology but that the statue, if צלם indeed refers to the statue, is a trope for bodily similarity. Bottéro's reconstruction of Mesopotamian *Weltanschauung* from the cuneiform scripts and the divination texts, which Bottéro prefers to call Treatises, are applicable to the relationship between the royal language and the royal ideology. Mesopotamian scholars go to their divination texts to find out divine decrees. But the two are mediated by the things and phenomena of the material world. They can discover the divine decrees by interpreting the world. They can interpret the world by reading the cuneiform divination texts. There is no way from the text to the spiritual, which is unmediated by the world. Likewise, if this is indeed the ancient Mesopotamian world-view, the language of the royal image would not express the royal ideology directly unless it is mediated by the royal body, i.e., the external appearance; the body incarnates the ideology.

## 2.4 Biblical צלם

Before going into the meaning of צלם in the Priestly history, it may be useful to see its occurrences in the broader biblical context. The word “image” in Hebrew, צלם, appears five times in Genesis (1:26, 27<sup>x2</sup>; 5:3; and 9:6, which all belong to P). Outside Genesis, the word is used twelve times in Hebrew and seventeen times in Aramaic throughout the Hebrew Bible:

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<sup>141</sup> Contra Jeffrey H. Tigay, “The Image of God and the Flood,” in *Studies in Jewish Education and Judaica in Honor of Louis Newman*, eds. Alexander M. Shapiro and Burton I. Cohen (New York: Ktav, 1984), 169–182, esp. 170–174.

Num 33:52; 1 Sam 6:5, 11; 2 Kings 11:18; Ezek 7:20; 16:17; 23:14; Amos 5:26; Pss 39:7; 73:20; Dan 2:31-32, 34-35; 3:1-3, 5, 7, 10, 12, 14-15, 18-19; and 2 Chr 23:17.<sup>142</sup>

In Amos 5:26, since the verb “to carry,” נָשָׂא, is used, “your images” refers to some type of divine statues. The two deities, Sikkuth and Kiyyun, are generally identified as Mesopotamian astral gods.<sup>143</sup> In light of Ornan’s observation that Mesopotamian gods and goddesses were considered to have anthropomorphic forms (including astral gods, e.g., Nabu=mercury and Ishtar=Venus) and the depiction of the deities in the cultic setting was humanoid even when the Assyrian and Babylonian artists in the first millennium tended to avoid the anthropomorphic presentation of the deities elsewhere, the images of the astral deities in its cultic setting in Amos 5:25 may imply anthropomorphic shapes.<sup>144</sup> Num 33:52 refers to some cultic idols, but their

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<sup>142</sup> Among these, only Num 33:52 is potentially P: see Moshe Weinfeld, *The Promise of the Land: The Inheritance of the Land of Canaan by the Israelites* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 81–84. Yet it was treated as H in Knohl, *Sanctuary*, 98–99 or as “redactional” (by which it is meant, I assume, compilational rather than post-compilational) in Baruch J. Schwartz, “Reexamining the Fate of the ‘Canaanites’ in the Torah Traditions,” in *Sefer Moshe: The Moshe Weinfeld Jubilee Volume; Studies in the Bible and the Ancient Near East, Qumran, and Post-Biblical Judaism*, eds. Chaim Cohen, Avi Hurvitz, and Shalom M. Paul (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2004), 151–170, esp. 160–164.

<sup>143</sup> While Kiyyun is generally agreed to be Saturn, the identity of the former is uncertain. Saturn and Ninurta have been suggested for Sikkuth. It is unclear whether “your images” only refers to Kiyyun or to both Sikkuth and Kiyyun. Some scholars have tried to reorder the verse or emend the text for various reasons. Whether the present MT text has experienced some textual corruptions or not, the plural of צִלְמֵי is to be considered to imply both Sikkuth and Kiyyun. I think one of the most helpful explanations for this verse and the two astral deities in it is offered by Paul, *Amos*, 194–198. For the deities, see also M. Stol, “Kaiwan,” *DDD* 478 and M. Stol, “Sakkuth,” *DDD* 722–723. Cf. Göran Eidevall, *Amos: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Yale Bible 24G (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017), 170–172; Hans Walter Wolff, *Joel and Amos: A Commentary on the Books of the Prophets Joel and Amos*, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977), 265–266; Francis I. Andersen and David Noel Freedman, *Amos: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Bible 24A (New York: Doubleday, 1989), 532–537.

<sup>144</sup> Ornan, *Triumph*, 171 and *passim*. The religious influence of Neo-Assyria reflected here did not have to wait until the fall of Samaria in 722 BCE as some commentators correctly suggested. Paul, *Amos*, 197 surmises the Assyrian influence through Arameans. Syria had already been influenced by Assyria, and Jeroboam II annexed their territory to Israel; this was the time that Amos delivered his oracles. Andersen and Freedman, *Amos*, 534 entertains the possibility that the astral gods were introduced during the treaty ceremony. Israel and Neo-Assyria may have been in peaceful relationship for a while since Jehu, the founder of the Dynasty to which Jeroboam II belong and his great-grandfather. Remember Shalmaneser III’s royal inscriptions that mention Jehu, including the famous “Black Obelisk”: e.g., Grayson, *RIMA* 3, 48 (A.0.102.88).

That these images are made for cult is also inferred by Shalom Paul’s observation that the Hebrew expression “to make for one self” (עָשָׂה לָהּ) in this verse is frequently used to describe making cultic images in the Hebrew Bible as an Akkadian cognate expression *šalmam epēšu*. See Paul, *Amos*, 196–197.

shapes are not specified. Two types of images, appearing in 1 Sam 6:5 and 11, represent mice and tumors in form and are likely three-dimensional statuettes (cf. כלי זהב “golden objects” in 1 Sam 6:15). In 2 Kgs 11:18 and 2 Chr 23:17, the former text of which may be the *Vorlage* of the latter, the images are of a Canaanite deity, Baal. We can assume that the images of the Canaanite weather deity were humanoid, resorting to textual and material evidence from Ras Shamra. For example, Baal wields weapons (mace, *šmd*) with his hand and fingers. His enemy, *Yammu*, who personifies sea, also has only two arms.<sup>145</sup> A stele depicting a humanoid Baal and the like evidence support anthropomorphism in Canaanite divine representation.<sup>146</sup> It is more or less ambiguous what forms are implied by צלמי תועבתם (lit. “the images of their abomination”) in Ezek 7:20.<sup>147</sup> Yet two other instances of צלם in Ezekiel safely suggest human form. The male images in Ezek 16:17 must be of human form rather than of male genitalia since they were clothed in Ezek 16:18.<sup>148</sup> While the male figures in Ezek 16:17 are cultic by the context of Ezek 16, the images of the Chaldeans are not necessarily so in Ezek 23:14–15. Presumably the relief images depict Babylonian army officers and soldiers, considering their attire listed in Ezek

<sup>145</sup> *KTU* 1.2 IV:11–18. For translations and commentaries, see Dennis Pardee, “The Ba’lu Myth,” *COS* 1:242–274, esp. 1:248–249; Mark S. Smith, *The Ugaritic Baal Cycle*, 2 vols., VTSup 55, 114 (Leiden: Brill, 1994–2009), 1:322–323, 1:326–327. The enclitic *m* on *yd* with no accompanying numeral or adjective like “many” (√RBB), in addition to the preposition *bn* (*bēna*, ‘between’), makes the interpretation of *bn ydm* as “between two arms” (*bēna yadēma*) more likely. Dual is a productive number category: see Josef Tropper, *Ugaritische Grammatik*, 2nd ed., AOAT 273 (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2012), 289 (§53.2111) and Bordreuil and Pardee, *Manual*, 31. For instance, “two shekels” was normally written with *ṭqlm* without a numeral or other quantitative modifier in Ugaritic economic texts. This is to be read as dual *ṭiqlāma*, not as plural *ṭiqlūma*, which would make the transaction incomprehensible and thus deviate from the purpose of the economic record.

<sup>146</sup> *ANEP*, 168 (#490). See also *ANEP*, 307 (#490).

<sup>147</sup> Some cultic images may have been meant by צלמי תועבתם (“the images of their abomination”) in light of the accompanying words in this verse (שקוץ “abhorrence” and נדה “menstruation” or “defilement” in addition to תועבה “abomination,” which all primarily appear in cultic contexts). Cf. Moshe Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1–20: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 22 (New York: Doubleday, 1983), 153–154; Walther Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 1: A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel*, trans. Ronald E. Clements, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979), 211–212. If צלמי תועבתם are cultic images and the language of צלם and the cult described in this verse assume some Mesopotamian influence, not implausible for Ezekiel, צלמי תועבתם may be cultic images in human form, whether statue or relief.

<sup>148</sup> *Pace* Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 1*, 343–344. Cf. Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1–20*, 280.

23:15.<sup>149</sup> The cultural and political attraction to Babylonia through its artistic monuments was not itself idol worship, but rather a gateway to it.<sup>150</sup>

The instances of (biblical) Aramaic צלם are condensed in Dan 2 and 3. The Book of Daniel in its present form is later than P by centuries. Yet at least some elements of the Hebrew and Aramaic narratives (Dan 1–6) show a certain degree of knowledge of Mesopotamian royal and scribal cultures. They may well go back to the end of the Neo-Babylonia and Persian period,<sup>151</sup> and there is no evidence that the meaning of צלם radically changed in the course of time. In Dan 2, Nebuchadnezzar saw a gigantic, not necessarily divine, image (צלם) in his dream. The different materials for different body parts make it probable that this image is a three-dimensional statue rather than pictorial or etched. The facts that the words for the body parts are not specific to human beings and that Aramaic dual and plural with suffixes are identical in forms<sup>152</sup> should prevent one from automatically regarding the image as a human shape. Yet the appearance of toes (אצבע) in Dan 2:41–42, which are rarely used when referencing animals, makes it likely that this image is anthropomorphic. In this light, other low-profile descriptions seem to point to a human form accumulatively. The absence of the identification of the shape as either human or a certain animal, compared to those in Dan 7–8 (and elsewhere, e.g., Ezek 1)—even I concede that “what is true for chaps. 7–12 . . . is not necessarily true for the whole book”<sup>153</sup>—seems to take a human form for granted. Likewise, no numeral or any modifiers on

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<sup>149</sup> Cf. Moshe Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21–37: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 22A (New York: Doubleday, 1997), 478–479; Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 1*, 486–487; Othmar Keel, *The Symbolism of the Biblical World: Ancient Near Eastern Iconography and the Book of Psalms*, trans. Timothy J. Hallett (New York: Seabury, 1978), 239.

<sup>150</sup> Cf. Ezek 23:28–30.

<sup>151</sup> Carol A. Newsom, *Daniel: A Commentary OTL* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2014), 6–12 and 21–23. Even so, Daniel 2 is not earlier than the third century, as Newsom points out (p.9).

<sup>152</sup> Franz Rosenthal, *A Grammar of Biblical Aramaic*, 7th ed. (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2006), 28 (§45).

<sup>153</sup> John J. Collins, *Daniel: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 26.

the plural nouns of arms (זרע), legs (שק), and feet (רגל) are more likely that the quantities may not be unusual if not dual for sure.

The episode in which Daniel's three friends were forced to worship an image that Nebuchadnezzar made and set up in Dan 3 may also designate an anthropomorphic divine statue. About the type of the art, though the comment of only its height and width in Dan 3:1 is ambiguous whether it is three-dimensional or two-dimensional; the image made of gold is unlikely to be a two-dimensional relief or picture.<sup>154</sup> The image was certainly divine, presumably one of the deities that Nebuchadnezzar served in the story world, whichever the author had in mind.<sup>155</sup> Nebuchadnezzar commanded his people to pay homage to the image (Dan 3:5-7, 10-12, 14-15, 18, 28), which is explicitly equated to serve the king's gods (Dan 3:12, 14, 18, 28). The expression עב"ד צלם ("to make an image") is cognate with Hebrew עש"ה צלם and Akkadian *šalmam epēšu*, which are frequently used for making cultic images, as already said. Nebuchadnezzar's (and also the narrator's) conception of divine form is disclosed to be anthropomorphic by his exclamation in Dan 3:25:

ענה ואמר הא אנה חזה גברין ארבעה שרין מהלכין בגוא נורא וחבל לא איתי בהון ורוה די רביעיא  
רביעאה דמה לבר אלהין

He replied. Behold! I see *four men* freely walking in the middle of the fire but there is no harm on them. And *the appearance of the fourth resembles a divine being!*

Here, a divine being (בר אלהין) looked like the other three. The qualification to be recognized as a divine being may be something additional based on the anthropomorphic form, probably a good proportion of the body, size, costumes, and an elegant posture, which are equivalent to the royal

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<sup>154</sup> It is of no difference whether it is of solid gold or overlaid.

<sup>155</sup> The deity may or may not be identified as one of the Babylonian gods. The Persian official titles that are anachronistically applied to the Neo-Babylonian administration in Dan 3:2–3 reveal the author is later than the narrative time and not meticulous with the Neo-Babylonian municipal system.

ideals that Winter suggested.<sup>156</sup> Therefore, this text corresponds to the anthropomorphic conception of gods in the ancient Near East.

All the aforementioned instances explained above show that צלם in the Hebrew Bible is a physical image and it resembles predominantly, but not restricted to (in the cases of 1 Sam 6:5 and 11), human shape. Except for the case of Ezek 23:15, they appeared in cultic settings. And they may be considered as three-dimensional apart from Ezek 23:14. In sum, the predominant instances demonstrate that the meaning of צלם in the Hebrew Bible is basically parallel to that of *šalmu* in Neo-Assyrian texts. Probably due to the primary concern of many biblical texts for religious matters, the word appears in cultic settings frequently and refers to cultic statues generally.<sup>157</sup> Thus, Barr's argument that P chose צלם out of a group of synonymous words *because* it did not "designate it as idolatrous and evil" becomes untenable.<sup>158</sup>

One possible exception to the predominant biblical meaning of צלם is found in Dan 3:19. This verse says "And צלם of his face changed (וצלם אפיהוהי אשתנו)." Garr considers צלם in this verse as nonconcrete or abstract.<sup>159</sup> Though it is true that it has a different referent from that of the other instances of צלם that refers to a statue for instance, it must be understood as a vivid, if not concrete, image. It obviously refers to Nebuchadnezzar's facial shape.<sup>160</sup> LXX renders it as "form" (μορφή), which I think cannot be more appropriate.<sup>161</sup> This has an important implication

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<sup>156</sup> Winter, "Art in Empire," 84–88.

<sup>157</sup> Cf. W. Randall Garr, *In His Own Image and Likeness: Humanity, Divinity, and Monotheism*, CHANE 15 (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 135.

<sup>158</sup> Barr, "Study of Terminology," 73. Cf. J. Miller, "God," 297–299.

<sup>159</sup> Garr, *In His Own Image*, 134.

<sup>160</sup> Thus, Collins, *Daniel*, 177 renders it as "the appearance of his face." Similarly, as "facial expression" in Catherine L. McDowell, *The Image of God in the Garden of Eden: The Creation of Humankind in Genesis 2:5–3:24 in Light of the mīs pī pīt pī and wpt-r Rituals of Mesopotamia and Ancient Egypt*, Siphut 15 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2015), 119n13. See also Klaus Koch, *Daniel*, 6 pts, *Biblicher Kommentar Altes Testament 22* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchner Verlag, 1986–2005), 1:252 (der Ausdruck seines Gesichts).

<sup>161</sup> All the other places in Dan 2–3, צלם are rendered with "εἰκών" (image).

for the meaning of צלם. Considering the etymology of צל"ם “to carve,”<sup>162</sup> the most basic and inclusive meaning may be “form,” as an effect of carving. If צלם is used as a *nomen regens* (a governing noun) of the construct chain, as in most of the cases, צלם is basically the “form” of its *nomen rectum* (governed noun). In this regard, whether translated “form” or “image,” צלם remains the same. Only the translation value might differ by the relation between the *nomen rectum* and the referent of צלם. If the referent of צלם is identical with and only specifies that of the *nomen rectum*, צלם might well be translated as “form.” For example, “the צלם of Nebuchadnezzar’s face (אנפודה)” refers to Nebuchadnezzar’s face and “form” is the best translation in this verse. However, if the referent of the צלם is different from that of its *nomen rectum* (that is, the former is outside the latter), the underlying meaning is still “the form of X” and yet that “form” necessarily implies the formal similarity to the shape of X. And, thus, the better translation value might be “image” or “representation” unless one wants to specify further as “statue” or “relief” in a suitable context. In 1 Sam 6:5, for instance, the referents of “your צלמים of mice (צלמי עכבריכם)” are not the real mice that harassed the Philistines, but rather their replicas that assume their shape in the things outside them. The text could have used the same “your צלמים of mice” in order to refer to those very real mice that harassed them even if it were describing their shape. Thus, the relationship between צלם and X should be decided contextually in each case. Even so, the use of צלם without implying resemblance is rare and appears only in somewhat later texts,<sup>163</sup> it may be said that this usage is a later pragmatic expansion though it is already implied semantically.

There are two other, apparently more exceptional, instances against the predominant use of צלם in Psalms (this time, in Hebrew):

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<sup>162</sup> Cf. HALOT, 3:1028; Stendebach, TDOT 12:387–388.

<sup>163</sup> I can only think of Dan 3:19 and Ps 73:20. For the latter text, see below.



Psa. 39:7 אך בצלם יתהלך איש אך הבל יהמיון יצבר ולא ידע מי אספם  
Surely בצלם man walks about.<sup>164</sup> Surely are they restless for nothing. He heaps but he  
does not know who gathers them.

Psa. 73:20 כחלום מהקיץ אדני בעיר צלמם תבוז  
Like a dream after one awakes, O Lord, in the manner of awakening (them)<sup>165</sup> you  
despise their צלם.

Ernst Würthwein's identification of the poet's enemy as idol worshipping foreign nations has only indirect, thin evidence for Ps 73:20.<sup>166</sup> Whether the enemy is of Israel or personal, the psalm lacks any references to the enemy's piety to any god. In these two verses, the understanding of צלם as something that represents formal resemblance seems less likely at first. Considering parallelism with הבל (vanity, breath) in Ps 39:7 and with חלום (dream) in Ps 73:20, it apparently seems to mean something abstract. I think there are a couple of different ways to understand these verses. Some posit a different homonymous root II צלם meaning "to be black, dark, black."<sup>167</sup> This root is rare in the Hebrew Bible and Nöldeke, as seen above, denied its existence in biblical Hebrew in that the appearance of the trace of II צלם only in the late biblical texts is unlikely.<sup>168</sup> Nevertheless, צלמות "darkness," if correctly vocalized as צלמות, is an obvious derivative of II צלם (Isa 9:1; Jer 2:6; 13:16; Amos 5:8; Pss 23:4; 44:20; 107:10, 14; Job 3:5;

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<sup>164</sup> For בצלם in this verse, see below.

<sup>165</sup> See below for the defense of my translation. For now, I chose to translate the preposition כ as כ of norm in light of the כ-ב interchange in other instances (see below) including Gen 1:26 and 5:3. The meaning of the preposition כ, even if it is temporal or instrumental, does not change my understanding of the verse.

<sup>166</sup> Ernst Würthwein, "Erwägungen zu Psalm 73," in *Wort und Existenz: Studien zum Alten Testament* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1970), 161–178 (esp. 169, 172, and 174).

<sup>167</sup> Already from Rashi on Ps 39:7: *Mikraot: Psalms Part I*, 124. See the translation and comment in Mayer I. Gruber, *Rashi's Commentary on Psalms*, Brill reference library of Judaism 18 (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 324. However, Rashi obviously but implicitly invokes Gen 1:26 by coining צלם דמותם and assigns more common meaning of צלם, i.e., "image" for Ps 73:20 (*Mikraot: Psalms Part II*, 6 and Gruber, *Rashi's*, 485 and 489–490). See, *HALOT*, 3:1028, (s.v. "צלם" and "II צלם"). Barr is inclined to this etymological distinction though he is not conclusive: e.g., Barr, "Study of Terminology," 2:73–74; James Barr, "Philology and Exegesis: Some General Remarks, with Illustrations from Job," in *Bible and Interpretation: The Collected Essays of James Barr*, 3 vols. ed. John Barton (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 3:725–744, esp. 3:735n30.

<sup>168</sup> Nöldeke, "צֶלֶם ו צֶלְמֹת," 186–187 (see also 184). Similarly, Wildberger, "Das Abbild Gottes," 251–252 and Stendebach, *TDOT* 12:388, 391. For a response to Nöldeke, see Samuel Rolles Driver and George Buchanan Gray, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Job*, 2 vols., ICC (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1921), 2:18–19.

10:21-22; 12:22; 16:16; 24:17; 28:3; 34:22; 38:17.).<sup>169</sup> The Masoretic vocalization (צִלְמוֹת “the shadow of death”), which Nöldeke and his followers think authentic, is hardly original. Above all, it was never written in the construct chain, i.e., בית צל מות comparable to בית להם “Bethlehem” and compound nouns are extremely rare in biblical Hebrew, if any (בליעל?), except for personal or ethnic names (e.g., עזמות, חצרמות).<sup>170</sup> If the root “to be black, dark” is admitted, the meaning of צלם may be “darkness” that symbolizes probably confusion and lostness.<sup>171</sup> Alternatively, one can posit semantic development from the same root with צלם as “image.” Manfred Oeming postulates the development of the meaning of this word from *Abbild* (image, copy) through *Traumbild* (dream vision) to *Trugbild* (illusion) in light of Platonic philosophy that εἰκόων (image) is not true reality but merely a copy of it, which was anticipated previously by Nöldeke in 1897 without drawing on the Greek idea.<sup>172</sup> Oeming’s argument for this linear development and Greek influence depends on his dating of Ps 39 to the second or the first century BCE, taking into account the psalm’s Wisdom background and affiliation to Job and Qoheleth.<sup>173</sup> While Pss 39 and 73 share some words with the Wisdom literature, this does not mean that they are

<sup>169</sup> Pace D. Winton Thomas, “צִלְמוֹת in the Old Testament,” *JSS* 7 (1962): 191–200.

<sup>170</sup> Even Barr, “Philology and Exegesis,” 3:735–739 does not deny that the consonantal צלמות was originally *šalmūt*. Yet he seems to posit that the etymological *šalmūt* (“darkness”) had been identified with a (though not actually attested in our data) personal or place name *šalmāwet* (“the shadow of Mot” or “the shadow of death” -> “very deep shadow”) early enough and some (even early) biblical authors may have used the consonantal צלמות with *šalmāwet* in mind. While this is not impossible, it is barely demonstrable that the tradition existed before LXX, especially because the meaning “darkness” fits well in the places where Barr argued otherwise: see Chaim Cohen, “The Meaning of צלמות ‘Darkness’: A study in Philological Method,” in *Texts, Temples, and Traditions: A Tribute to Menahem Haran*, eds. Michael V. Fox et al. (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1996), 287–309 who prefers *šalmōt* over *šalmūt*; Thomas, “צִלְמוֹת,” 196, 197–198. For a recent response to Barr, see H. G. M. Williamson, *Isaiah 6–12*, ICC (London: T&T Clark, 2018), 363–366 with a helpful introduction of recent scholarship.

<sup>171</sup> Rather than “shadow” signifying ephemerality.

<sup>172</sup> Nöldeke, “צִלְמוֹת und צֶלֶם,” 186.

<sup>173</sup> Manfred Oeming, *Das Buch der Psalmen: Psalm 1–41*, Neuer Stuttgarter Kommentar Altes Testament 13/1 (Stuttgart: Verlag Katholisches Bibelwerk, 2000), 213–217 (esp. 216). See Nöldeke, “צִלְמוֹת und צֶלֶם,” 186.

necessarily from the second century or later. In light of Jer 12, Ps 73 could have been written at least anytime from the late sixth century on if not earlier.<sup>174</sup>

That said, there is reason to regard the pragmatic development as more favorable than to posit the rare root for these two psalms. First of all, it is tempting to think Ps 39:6–7 compares humankind to the statue. The man (אִישׁ) walks as a statue (בְּצִלְמֵם) in 39:7.<sup>175</sup> Humankind and צִלְמֵם are both also paralleled with הַבֵּל in 39:6b–39:7a. While הַבֵּל means “vain, transience,” it frequently refers to the idols in the Bible especially in D and Dtr (e.g., Deut 32:21; 1 Kgs 16:13, 26; 2 Kgs 17:15). The word may have been primarily employed to stress human “transience” but at the same time to evoke the inferiority of the idols. If this psalm is indeed exilic or postexilic (not necessarily of the second century or later),<sup>176</sup> Ps 39:7 could be potentially echoing and parodying the *canonical* creation account of humankind, assuming that the poet read the combined Pentateuch. Humankind cannot be rivalled with the true God (כֹּהֵן נִגְדָד in Ps 38:6) in contrast to the fact that humans are to each other (i.e., man and woman) the perfect counterpart (עֶזְרָא כֹהֵן in Gen 2:18, 20), especially in terms of the duration of their life (Ps 39:6a). They stand in vain for a short time like an idol that has no real effect but wears out (Ps 39:6b). The (hu)man moves as (the manner of)<sup>177</sup> the statue (cf. בְּצִלְמֵם in Gen 1:26) but their vain effort is only the making of noise like the tumultuous yet vain moving of the statue (Ps 39:7a)—possibly in the context of cultic processions. If this is right, the extension from the statue to the ephemeral image does neither demand the Greek concept of εἰκὼν nor the extended, abstract meaning. The

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<sup>174</sup> Hans-Joachim Kraus, *Psalms 60–150: A Continental Commentary*, trans. Hilton C. Oswald (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 86.

<sup>175</sup> I take the preposition ב of בְּצִלְמֵם in this verse as *beth essentiae*. Ernst Jenni, *Die hebräischen Präpositionen*, 3 vols. (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1992–2000), 1:82. For *beth essentiae* in general, see Jenni, *Präpositionen*, 1:79–89; JM, 458 (§133c); GKC, 379 (§119i); WO, 198 (§11.2.5e).

<sup>176</sup> Note that גַּר and תּוֹשֵׁב appear together in Ps 39:13. This combination is otherwise peculiar to H (Gen. 23:4; Lev. 25:23, 35, 47; Num. 35:15) except for 1Chr 29:15, which are all considered exilic or postexilic.

<sup>177</sup> There are a few other possibilities for the meaning of the preposition, but they are not crucial for my argument. Regarding the preposition in Gen 1:26–28, see below.

elevated creation of humankind in Gen 1–2<sup>178</sup> over the other creatures became the humiliation of humanity before the deity by the psalmist’s poetic overturn.

The morpho-syntax is difficult, if not corrupted, in Ps 73:20.<sup>179</sup> The letter ה must be syncopated between ב and ע in בעיר, which is not unusual. Würthwein suggests reading the word after the preposition ב as the intransitive verb: either so-called internal hiphil or qal with the consonantal change (בעור). I prefer to read it as hiphil in the usual, causative sense. The object may have been gapped because of the following object of the main verb (צלמם), which the infinitive shares to some degree; that is, the pronominal suffix of צלמם (their image) may be the object of the infinitive. It is worth noting that the state of the enemies of the poet changed. Their appearance was gaudy like the rich (Ps 73:4–6) and yet now is (or will have become) ruined and appalling (Ps 73:18–19). Their old prosperous appearance was only a fancy dream, and the present state is the reality after the dream. God arouses them from the illusion that they would prosper forever and mocks their present horrific appearance (i.e., convince their miserable reality) in Ps 73:20. Therefore, the meaning of the צלם in Ps 73:20 is comparable to that in Dan 3:19: the “form,” i.e., the present appearance, of their reality.

It is noteworthy that even this later development does not go beyond the form and appearance toward abstraction. The instances in Ps 39:7 and Dan 2–3 continue the old meaning. The extended usage of צלם in Ps 73:20 and Dan 3:19 is understandable and does not affect the conclusion of the overall physical meaning of צלם in the Hebrew Bible. In other words, (most of) the referents of צלם in the Bible converge upon one thing: the physicality and form often implying resemblance.<sup>180</sup>

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<sup>178</sup> J’s creation account in Gen 2:4b–2:24 describes that any other animal deserved to match Adam except the woman, another human being. For the elevated language of P’s creation of humankind, see below.

<sup>179</sup> See the reconstruction suggested by *BHS*, 1155 and Würthwein, “Erwägungen zu Psalm 73,” 169.

<sup>180</sup> Contra Garr, *In His Own Image*, 134.

## 2.5 The Priestly *Imago Dei*

Previously, I have tried to show that many biblical scholars who have varying opinions about the image of God are still reluctant to admit that it implies the bodily similarity in Gen 1:26–28 even after they discovered ancient Near Eastern parallels in the latter’s royal ideology. I argued that the image language in the ancient Near Eastern parallels cannot skip from the image of god who has an anthropomorphic shape to the king without the mediation of the bodily resemblance. I also argued that the word צלם in Hebrew throughout the Bible (and Aramaic in Daniel) is related to material forms and shapes implying resemblance. Now, I am going to argue that the observations from the ancient Near East and other biblical texts are generally applicable to the Priestly *imago Dei* with some contextual modifications.

First of all, the Priestly *imago Dei* is not metaphorical, but rather posits an external semblance. Admittedly, it is obvious from Gen 1:28 that humans are created to rule functionally over the animal world, and human dominion is based on their special dignity that is expressed as “the image of God.” Yet what is this dignity and where is it from? Many scholars turn to comparing Ps 8:6–7 with Gen 1:26–28 for the near idea underlying the creation of humankind<sup>181</sup>:

Ps 8:6 ותחסרהו מעט מאלהים וכבוד והדר תעטרהו  
Ps 8:7 תמשילהו במעשי ידיך כל שתה תחת רגליו

You made him (collective human beings) a little inferior to divinity; but with honor and dignity you crowned him.

*You made him rule over the works of your hands; you put all under his feet.*

The relationship with Gen 1:26–28 and Ps 8:6–7 stands out in the expression “under his feet” (תחת רגליו) in this psalm that corresponds nicely with רד”ה “to rule” in Gen 1:26 and 28 whose

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<sup>181</sup> Among others, Wolff, *Anthropology*, 160, 161, 163; Wildberger, “Das Abbild Gottes,” 481–501; Schmidt, *Schöpfungsgeschichte*, 41–42, 140–142.

basic meaning is “to tread.” The psalm’s answer to the above question is that this is how God created humanity. Thus, the psalm does not really shed light on the interpretation of Gen 1:26–28. As a matter of fact, how and for what P presents the royal understanding of humanity with its peculiar language such as צלם אלהים among others is to be examined first and foremost within P. The two texts may share a common tradition of ancient Israelite anthropology (and royal ideology), or one borrows the royal idea from the other. Whatever the relationship is, the similarity does not guarantee that an insight from the psalm can exhaust the interpretation of P’s anthropology. Early modern biblical critics already realized that the rulership of humanity is the consequence of the image of God, not its content.<sup>182</sup> In other words, the royal function of humanity should not explicate “the image of God” as metaphorical, but rather the other way around. P’s answer for the above question, thus, is that dominion was given to humanity *because* they resemble the physical appearance of the deity, which is the meaning of “the image of God.” In the Priestly narrative world, the image of God was a literal expression as much as the human dominion over the creation was literally meant. Further references of “the image of God,” the wording and the concept of which appear only in P, are to be considered to find the further content and implication of the Priestly *imago Dei*.<sup>183</sup> We have two more cases of צלם אלהים in P: Gen 5:1–3 and 9:1–7.

### 2.5.1 Genesis 5:1–3

Gen. 5:1 זה ספר תולדת אדם ביום ברא אלהים אדם בדמות אלהים עשה אתו<sup>2</sup> וזכר ונקבה בראם ויברך אתם ויקרא את שמם אדם ביום הבראם<sup>3</sup> ויהי אדם שלשים ומאת שנה ויולד בדמותו כצלמו ויקרא את שמו שת

<sup>182</sup> Franz Delitzsch, *A New Commentary on Genesis*, 2 vols., trans. Sophia Taylor (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1899), 1:100 and Dillmann, *Genesis*, 1:81.

<sup>183</sup> Contra Köhler, *Old Testament Theology*, 147, which excludes Gen 5 and 9 because the latter do not have דמות or a like modifier.

Gen 5:1 This is the book of the generation of Adam. When God created humankind he made it according to the likeness of God. <sup>2</sup>Male and female he created them. And he blessed them. And he called their name “humankind” when they were made. <sup>3</sup>Adam lived 130 years and begot (a son) according to his likeness, like his image. And he called his name Seth.<sup>184</sup>

What stands out in Gen 5:3 is that it uses almost the same expression for *imago Dei* in Gen 1:26 with the transposition of צלם (image) and דמות (likeness). As the deity created humankind according to his image and his likeness, Adam (with his wife) procreated his son in his likeness after his image. How is Seth like Adam? It may refer to the continuation of the human shape from Adam to his descendants.<sup>185</sup> Yet it is much more likely that the narrator has in mind “facial resemblance, namely, features that distinguish a family from the rest of humanity.”<sup>186</sup> The collective אדם (*adam*) in the proclamation of *imago Dei* in Gen 1:26–27 and 5:1–2 does not seem to distinguish the subsequent generations as more distant from the deity than the first generation one of whom is Adam as archetypal humankind.<sup>187</sup> Also, the third-

<sup>184</sup> My translation. I will explain below the reason for my interpretation of the two prepositions כ “according to” and כ “like.”

<sup>185</sup> Gunkel, *Genesis*, 137; Phyllis A. Bird, “‘Male and Female He Created Them’: Gen 1:27b in the Context of the Priestly Account of Creation,” *HTR* 74 (1981): 129–159, esp. 138n22 and 139n24. Probably also, von Rad, *TDNT*, 2:391.

<sup>186</sup> Simeon Chavel, “The Imagined Beginnings of the World and of Humanity in Genesis 1–3” (unpublished lecture delivered at *Imagined Beginnings: The Poetics and Politics of Cosmogony, Theogony and Anthropogony in the Ancient World, The Center for the Study of Ancient Religions at the University of Chicago and the Midwest Consortium on Ancient Religions, April 8–10, 2011*), 16n17. Also, remember another instance in the Bible that צלם refers to the facial form, i.e., Dan 3:19. It may be more relevant if one considers Adam is only one of the humans who was created according to the image of God in Gen 1:26–28. Yet the meaning that Chavel suggests is still valid without this condition. Even if one thinks Adam and his wife were the only ones meant by collective אדם, the facial resemblance would still be appropriate for the subsequent generations in the genealogy. The instance of כדמותו כצלמו in 5:3aβ must be implied in the subsequent generations, though not explicit. See below.

<sup>187</sup> Somewhat comparable to Hesiod’s anthropogony that differentiates human races by a sequential order. Cf. Hesiod’s *Works and Days*, lines 106–201 in Catherine M. Schlegel and Henry Weinfield, *Theogony and Works and Days* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006), 60–63. See the interpretation of Hesiod’s anthropogony in Jenny Strauss Clay, *Hesiod’s Cosmos* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 81–99. Cf. Tryggve ND. Mettinger, “Abbild oder Urbild? »Imago Die« in traditionsgeschichtlicher Sicht,” *ZAW* 86.4 (1974): 403–424 (esp., 406–411). Mettinger interprets צלם אלהים in Gen 1:26 as the heavenly archetype of humankind in P. In other words, “the image of God” is neither humanity nor even the first human generation but has separate referents in heaven; humankind was created to resemble these heavenly beings, not God himself. In his tradition-historical approach, P does not imply royal ideology by the image language though the tradition P received did; the human function that P intended by the image language is not kingship, but rather servanthip (i.e., worship and praise to God). This hardly fits in P’s plot and thought: see below.

person singular possessive suffixes on צלם and דמות refer to Adam, not to the deity in Gen 5:3. Therefore, the continuation of the divine image throughout generations is neither denied nor affirmed in 5:3, but assumed from the generic humanity in 5:1b–2.<sup>188</sup> The genealogy in Gen 5 accomplishes a dual purpose: 1) it demonstrates the fulfilment of the divine blessing in Gen 1:28 for generic humanity; 2) simultaneously, it traces a certain family line, which will end up with Abraham and their descendants, Israel.

What I find promising from 5:3, nevertheless, is that the use of the same expression (בצלמנו כדמותנו in Gen 1:26–27 and בדמותו כצלמו in 5:3) at least advocates the significance of the expression as “formal resemblance” between the צלם and the referent of its *nomen rectum* in P. One may conclude: as a familial resemblance vis-à-vis other families, צלם and דמות of God in Gen 1:26 simultaneously expresses humanity’s morphological similarity to the deity and distinction from the rest of the creatures, especially the animals. The formal difference of humankind from other living creatures is not explicitly specified in the text. Some scholars provide an insightful suggestion: the upright stature<sup>189</sup> standing on two legs with two free hands that enables one to do creative works like the deity.<sup>190</sup> This is likely, considering that Mesopotamian and Canaanite main deities had the anthropomorphic forms. Therefore, Eichrodt’s view of P’s spiritualization of the image language is to be rejected:

His (P’s) stress on the fact that Seth was conceived in the likeness and after the image of his father, thus placing *dēmūt* first, may not be without significance. In so careful a stylist this inversion must spring from a deliberate intention of turning the reader’s thoughts away from physical similarity toward a spiritual definition of the human image. . . . The writer is certainly not thinking primarily, or even at all, of the difference between human

<sup>188</sup> Similarly, Clines, “Image of God,” 99 and 78n117. Cf. Wilson, *Genealogy and History*, 164.

<sup>189</sup> Köhler, *Old Testament Theology*, 147; Köhler, *Hebrew Man*, 34–35; Köhler, “Imago-Dei-Lehre,” 19–20.

<sup>190</sup> Chavel, “Imagined Beginnings,” 8 and Chavel, *Oracular Law*, 74n190. Cf. Eichrodt, *Theology*, 2:125. As mentioned above, one can avoid the naïve opposition that “male and female” discredits the formal understanding of the image of God in this way.



and animal bodies, but of the psychophysical totality of human existence, which bears the stamp of a fundamentally different kind of life, and thus has reference to its creator.<sup>191</sup>

I have no objection to his term “psychophysical” as far as it includes and extends from “physical,” as I have argued above. But his “psychophysical” is nothing but “psychological” as the entire quote discloses.

Yet some may reject this inference, pointing out the difference between *צֶלֶם* and *דְּמוּת*. Even though their different order in Gen 5:3 against 1:26 suggests to some scholars that the two terms are largely synonymous,<sup>192</sup> many others try to overstate their subtle difference by noting that Gen 1:26 deals with the divine-human relationship, while Gen 5:3 addresses the father-son relationship as in Eichrodt’s quote above.<sup>193</sup> A close reading of the text does not allow this objection. We can begin it from the instances of *אָדָם* in Gen 5:1–3 that cannot have the same referent. The instance in Gen 5:3 is obviously Adam as a proper noun since the verse talks about a certain person’s life information. Also, the position of *אָדָם* takes the position of PN in the formula that repeats throughout the chapter—to list a few, Gen 5:7, 9, and 11. The meaning of *אָדָם* in 5:2 is as well apparent since that *אָדָם* is the designation for the male and female and is referred to by the third-person, masculine, plural pronominal suffix. This *אָדָם* cannot be an individual, but rather, collective humankind. Gen 5:1 introduces a genealogy. Since the heading begins with “the genealogy of PN (PN תולדת)” when a genealogy is introduced in P, the first *אָדָם*

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<sup>191</sup> Eichrodt, *Theology*, 2:125 (my parentheses).

<sup>192</sup> Gunkel, *Genesis*, 113; Schmidt, *Schöpfungsgeschichte*, 143; McDowell, *Image of God*, 125–126; Gertz, *Genesis*, 65 and 65n129. Garr, who strongly argues that *צֶלֶם* and *דְּמוּת* refer to the different aspects of the divine-human relationship and, thus, are to be distinguished, conceded that their semantic fields largely overlap in Garr, *In His Own Image*, 117–176 (esp. 165–166).

<sup>193</sup> Also, Clines, “Image of God,” 78n117; Garr, *In His Own Image*, 167–168; and Schellenberg, “Humankind,” 108. Admittedly, Clines and Schellenberg bring this contextual difference when differentiating the senses of the prepositions *ב* and *כ*, prefixed on each noun respectively. But this is not separate from the argument for the distinction between *צֶלֶם* and *דְּמוּת*. They indeed think that the two nouns as well as the two prepositions are distinct enough to specify the other or each other (see below).

in Gen 5:1—"the genealogy of אדם (תולדת אדם)"—is more likely the personal name, Adam.<sup>194</sup> Yet the second instance of אדם in 5:1 seems somewhat problematic. It may seem to refer to the same individual who just preceded in the same verse since this אדם takes the third-person, masculine, singular suffix. However, if one notices that Gen 5:1b–2 is an almost verbatim—but a little more poetic—version of Gen 1:27–28aα<sup>195</sup> and thus there is a closer relationship between 5:1b and 5:2 than 5:1b and 5:1a, one can safely conclude that אדם in 5:1b refers to humankind. The *inclusio* in 5:1b–5:2 (ביום הבראם "when God created humankind" and ביום הבראם "when they [humankind] were created") supports that 5:1b–5:2 is a carefully structured unit. This *inclusio* not only summarizes God's creation of humankind, but also clearly distinguishes it from the following genealogical formulae that repeat the human biological cycle—live, beget, and die—not only by the content but also by the *inclusio* form. So, the structure sharply demarcates the description of the divine action from that of the human action.

Having said that, it should be noted that this demarcation is not to contrast the divine and the human but to compare them. I said above that Gen 5:1b–2 is an "almost" verbatim version of Gen 1:27–28aα because there are a few minor variants. Some instances of בר"א in Gen 1:27–28aα changes into עש"ה in Gen 5:1b–2, but these two words are clearly interchangeable in Gen 1. The last phrase ביום הבראם ("when they were made"), which is not in Gen 1:27–28aα,<sup>196</sup> is to make an *inclusio* that is to tie the unit tight and demarcate it from 5:3. And this addition is also

<sup>194</sup> For some obvious cases, Gen 6:9; 10:1; 11:10; 11:27; 25:12; 36:9.

<sup>195</sup> Cf. Horst Seebass, *Genesis I: Urgeschichte (1,1–11,26)* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1996), 180; Gertz, *Genesis*, 196–197. Yet see Peter Weimar, *Studien zur Priesterschrift*, FAT 56 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 165–171. His claim that אדם in 5:1b must be Adam due to the following singular pronominal suffix while that in 5:2 means "humankind" because of the plural suffix is unlikely. He also avers that 5:1b, apart from 5:2, does not correspond to 1:26–28, which is also untenable. See Sven Tengström, *Die Toledotformel und die literarische Struktur der priesterlichen Erweiterungsschicht im Pentateuch*, ConBOT 17 (Lund: CWK Gleerup, 1982), 66–69n50 (esp. 67–68). Tengström refutes Weimar in a generally correct way. But Tengström sees אדם 5:1a in addition to that in 5:1b as collective, which can be hardly right.

<sup>196</sup> But בהבראם appears in Gen 2:4a.

verbatim with the beginning (of course, it is *inclusio*) and the grammatical inversion (from active to passive) only adds a poetic flavor. More important is the second addition, which is not in Gen 1:27–28aα: ויקרא את שמם אדם “he called their name ‘humankind.’” This addition repeats in the genealogy once when Adam names his son Seth: ויקרא את שמו שת “he called his name ‘Seth.’” The insertion of this form to the otherwise verbatim repetition of Gen 1:27–28aα is an evident sign that the *inclusio* structure of Gen 5:1b–2 is not to contrast with the following but just for demarcation. And the aim of the demarcation is to compare the deity and the human. This is supported by בדמותו כצלמו “in his likeness, like his image” in 5:3, which resonates בדמות אלהים “in the likeness of God” in 5:1b and simultaneously alludes to בצלמנו כדמותנו in 1:26.

To be consistent, I may have to vindicate this apparent insertion as belonging to P. The well-structured repetition is often a seam of redaction. And there is a reason, apparently at first sight, to require this redaction; the continuity of the Priestly narrative was long interrupted by the compiler inserting Gen 2:4b–4:26. While a short *inclusio* form in the midst of otherwise unbroken *waw*-consecutive clauses may be often a sign of a later interpolation, the question is who did this. This redactional skill was also available to the author using various sources and so a seemingly redactional seam should not be automatically ascribed to a later hand. In our case, the supposition that the compilational or a post-compilational interpolator after him inserted Gen 5:1b–2 does not make good sense.<sup>197</sup> First, the inserted form and content is only P (Gen 1:27–28aα).<sup>198</sup> Second, individual “אדם Adam” was already introduced by inserting Gen 2:4b–4:26

<sup>197</sup> I use the terms related to “compilation” and “compiler,” following Baden, *Composition*, 214–229 and Joel S. Baden, *J, E, and the Redaction of the Pentateuch*, FAT 68 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 255–286.

<sup>198</sup> A potential exception might be ויקרא את שמם אדם “he called their name ‘humankind’” since this form (יקר"א + שם-[את]) with pronominal suffix on שם + PN seems more typical to J’s genealogy as in 4:25, 26; 5:29. However, P uses this syntactic form in Gen 16:15; 17:5, 15, 19; 21:3 among others. And this is fairly unmarked a construction, so that it appears elsewhere in J, even in E (e.g., Gen 28:19; 41:51, 52), and many other places throughout the Hebrew Bible. Above all, this construction appears in Gen 5:3b. If this form in 5:2 is a later insertion, so is 5:3b. Yet 5:3a cannot be separated from 5:3b if not entire 5:3 is later, which is highly unlikely. The presence of this form in

between Gen 2:4a and Gen 5:1. The insertion of generic “אדם” (humankind) and the third person plural pronominal suffix only arouses confusion in the present form.<sup>199</sup> But P does need Gen 5:1b–2.<sup>200</sup> Before the Pentateuchal sources were compiled, Gen 5:1 followed directly 2:4a or 2:3 in P, depending on how one regards the position and role of 2:4a.<sup>201</sup> Individual Adam was not introduced until 5:1, and the genealogy of “Adam” would make a literary gap. It is someone who is associated with P tradition that had to bridge the gap by relating אדם (Adam) in the genealogy with אדם (humankind) in the creation account to make the narrative smoother. Also, the genealogy follows the creation because human procreation demonstrates that divine blessing in Gen 1:28 is being fulfilled.<sup>202</sup> Meanwhile, the differing form of the beginning of the genealogy in Gen 5:3, which did not have to repeat but was implied in the rest of the genealogy, was to make an analogy between divine creation of humanity and human procreation of themselves. Yet after the creation and blessing of humankind in Gen 1:26–28, there come two differing motifs in Gen 1:29–2:3 before Gen 5:1: 1) the prescription of the vegetarian diet and 2) divine Sabbath on the seventh day. To begin with the genealogy in Gen 5:1, P might have needed to resume

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both J’s and P’s genealogies may suggest their relationship in a previous stage before the present form. For more about noticeable reasons to relate the two genealogies, see Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 348–351.

<sup>199</sup> In Hebrew writing, the personal name “Adam” and the common noun “humankind” are indistinguishable. LXX’s rendering of the first אדם in Gen 5:1 is its interpretative choice, not the original intent of the Hebrew *Vorlage*. Cf. Susan Brayford, *Genesis*, Septuagint Commentary Series (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 257; John William Wevers, *Notes on the Greek Text of Genesis*, Septuagint and cognate studies Series 35 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993), 68–69.

<sup>200</sup> Apart from Weimar’s two questionable observations mentioned above, his claim in Weimar, *Studien*, 170 is again dubious that 5:1b–2 is meaningful only in the post-Priestly editorial stage. Also, the last conclusion does not necessarily follow as far as he maintains אדם in 5:2 as collective.

<sup>201</sup> So-called Toledot (תולדות) formula appears as a heading except in Gen 2:4a. There are largely two options for source critics. One is that a redactor moved the heading from the front of Gen 1:1 to 2:4a for some reason: Gunkel, *Genesis*, 103. The other is that P used the existing style to make a literary unit with Gen 1:1: Noth, *Pentateuchal Traditions*, 17n41 and Jason M. H. Gaines, *The Poetic Priestly Source* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2015), 317n67 among others. As the third option, those who do not see P as a source but as a redaction assign another function to the formula in addition to the genealogical heading, i.e., a superscription introducing non-Priestly narrative sections: Cross, *Canaanite Myth*, 302; Erhard Blum, *Die Komposition der Vätergeschichte*, Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament 57 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1984), 451–452n29.

<sup>202</sup> Cf. Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 356; Gertz, *Genesis*, 196–197.

specifically the theme of the creation of humankind with its scribal expertise, i.e., *Wiederaufnahme* (resumptive repetition).

Even so, the question still remains: who? In the introductory chapter, I posited two layers in the Pentateuchal Priestly history: P and H. Though H is redaction, I see no particular flavor of H in either language or thought in this particular insertion. When H edits the text of P, its peculiarity is usually discernable even with its minor supplements. And I do not know any case that H edits P for a purely literary purpose. Therefore, more probable in my view is either that P itself added the supplements to the independently existing genealogy or that a minor interpolator added to the genealogy composed by P or even Pentateuchal P before the compilation. I am inclined to the former as it seems to me that both ויקרא את שמם אדם (“he called their name ‘humankind’”) and ויקרא את שמו שת (“he called his name ‘Seth’”) are the work of P’s author to link the creation and the genealogy. Furthermore, it is suggested that the unique heading זה ספר תולדות (“this is the book of generations”) in Gen 5:1a, compared to usual אלה תולדות (“these are generations”), may have come from the source itself and suggests that the entire genealogy was a separate scroll.<sup>203</sup> If this is correct, a genealogy was included at the compositional level with the author’s redactional skill. The author may not have wanted to compose a radically new beginning even if he could because minor supplements could well accomplish his purpose. In this case, one may better assume that at least “בדמותו כצלמו” in 5:3 is also a supplement by P to its source genealogy. I would reconstruct Gen 5:3a $\beta$ –b to be consistent with the following generations: ויולד את שת “And he fathered Seth.” Even if the other is the case, Gen 5:1b–2 may

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<sup>203</sup> Among others, von Rad, *Genesis*, 70; von Rad, *Priesterschrift*, 33–40 (esp. 34–35).

still be considered as P since there is no sign of H or other influence, and what I said about the analogy between deity and human beings would not be severely affected.<sup>204</sup>

If my observation is accurate, some long-time debates to clarify the meaning of צלם אלהים in Gen 1:26 can be better understood. First of all, there is more reason not to bother to identify the subtle differences of צלם and דמות and draw a far-fetched conclusion that one is added to attenuate the other's theological problem. Humbert, Köhler, and Schellenberg argue that דמות tones down צלם that connotes too much of a materialistic, specific, or religious signification, respectively.<sup>205</sup> Not so far from them, Barr and D. J. A. Clines argue דמות specify or define ambiguous צלם.<sup>206</sup> On the contrary, as indicated above, J. Miller thinks צלם defines and specifies דמות that is not only abstract but also potentially misleading the ancient readers to a popular, Mesopotamian-originated belief that humans are created partly from divine blood because of the aural similarity of דמות ("likeness") with דם ("blood").<sup>207</sup> To address all these briefly, there is no reason that some form too concrete and specific is problematic, except for some modern theologians.<sup>208</sup> And I showed the meaning of צלם is not so ambiguous to be defined and clarified by another word both in biblical and extra-biblical texts. For J. Miller, why דמות is to be maintained after צלם is added cannot be explained. The best solution is not to find different explanations in each and every case of צלם in Gen 1:26–27 and 5:1–3—why one has only צלם, another has only דמות, another has both צלם and דמות, and still another changes the sequence of

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<sup>204</sup> I open this possibility only because P's author would not think the sudden appearance of individual Adam as a problem. This is exactly what he did for Moses in Exod 6:2. This is only problematic to those who do not acknowledge P as an independent narrative, such as Cross, *Canaanite Myth*, 317–318; Rendtorff, *Problem*, 156–157; Blum, *Studien*, 240–242. For an objection to them, see Baden, *Composition*, 181–183.

<sup>205</sup> Humbert, *Études*, 160 and Köhler, "Imago-Dei-Lehre," 21, which are also cited in Clines, "Image of God," 91n173. Köhler is followed by Eichrodt, *Theology*, 2:123. See also, Schellenberg, "Humankind," 107–109 (esp. 108).

<sup>206</sup> Barr, "In Genesis," 2:64; Barr, "Study of Terminology," 76; and Clines, "Image of God," 90–92.

<sup>207</sup> J. Miller, "God," 299–304. Also, Sarna, *Genesis*, 62.

<sup>208</sup> Cf. Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 146–147 and Clines, "Image of God," 91.

צֶלֶם and דְמוּת—but to find the simplest answer, if possible, that can explain the different cases consistently from the text. The remaining option is that צֶלֶם and דְמוּת are used as largely synonymous. See the following comparison between Gen 1:27aβ and 5:1bβ:

בְּצֶלֶם אֱלֹהִים בָּרָא אֹתוֹ Gen 1:27aβ  
בְּדְמוּת אֱלֹהִים עָשָׂה אֹתוֹ Gen 5:1bβ

Gen 1:27aβ According to the *image* of God he *created* him (humankind)  
Gen 5:1bβ According to the *likeness* of God he *made* him (humankind)

The citation of 1:27 in 5:1 suggests that as בָּרָא (to create) and עָשָׂה (to make) are only stylistically different, צֶלֶם and דְמוּת are only the author’s choice.<sup>209</sup>

The Akkadian-Aramaic bilingual inscription on a statue from Tell Fakhariyah that is widely agreed to be from the ninth century BCE offers extra-biblical evidence.<sup>210</sup> As the comparison between Gen 1:27aβ and 5:1bβ shows that צֶלֶם and דְמוּת are interchangeable, so does the parallel between דְמוּתָא זִי הַדִּיסְעִי (“the likeness of Had-yiṭ’ī”) in line 1 and צֶלֶם הַדִּיסְעִי (“the image of Had-yiṭ’ī”) in line 12 of the Aramaic version.<sup>211</sup> It is further supported by the fact that the Akkadian parallel lines 23 and 26 use the same word *šalmu* (“image” written logographically with NU sign) for דְמוּת (“likeness”) in the Aramaic line 15 and צֶלֶם (“image”) in the Aramaic line

<sup>209</sup> With Barr, “Study of Terminology,” 76–77, followed by John F. A. Sawyer, “The Meaning of בְּצֶלֶם אֱלֹהִים (‘In the Image of God’) in Genesis I–XI,” *Journal of Theological Studies, New Series* 25 (1974): 418–426, esp. 422–423.

<sup>210</sup> The pronunciation of the place name varies slightly among scholars and is of no importance: for example, Tell Fekheriyeh, Tell Fakhariyeh, Tell Fakhriyah, and Tell Fakhariya. Both Akkadian and Aramaic inscriptions consist of two independent texts respectively. Yet the line numbers are numerated continuously in each inscription; the second text begins in the same line where the first text ends in the Aramaic inscription. Many previous studies related this inscription to the biblical *imago Dei*: e.g., Jónsson, *Image of God*, 206–207; Garr, *In His Own Image*, 121–122; and 150–151; Middleton, *Liberating Image*, 106–107; and McDowell, 125–126.

<sup>211</sup> Holger Gzella, “צֶלֶם,” *TDOT* 16 (electronic edition). The two phrases are the headings of the two Aramaic texts, respectively. Regarding the transliteration of the personal name, the orthographic peculiarity of *samekh* in this inscription is well known. It represents the etymological *l*, which is represented by *šin* in other Old Aramaic texts: see A. R. Millard and P. Bordreuil, “A Statue from Syria with Assyrian and Aramaic Inscriptions,” *Biblical Archaeologist* 45 (1982): 135–141, esp. 138; Stephen A. Kaufman, “Reflections on the Assyrian-Aramaic Bilingual from Tell Fakhariyeh,” *Maarav* 3 (1982): 137–175, esp. 146–147; Victor Sasson, “The Aramaic Text of the Tell Fakhriyah Assyrian-Aramaic Bilingual Inscription,” *ZAW* 97 (1985): 86–103, esp. 92. The correct pronunciation of the theophoric element (*hd*) of this name is hard to decide, whether “Had,” “Hadd,” or “Haddu.”

16. The Akkadian cognate of דמות and its verbal root are at best rare admittedly.<sup>212</sup> Yet it is widely acknowledged among scholars that the priority lies in the Akkadian versions and the Aramaic versions are their translation and not vice versa, while it is moot when the translations were made.<sup>213</sup> Many scholars neglected this fact, while they frequently compare דמות in the Aramaic line 1 and צלם in the Aramaic line 12. Dohmen is a rare one who deals with it. He argues the two Aramaic renderings (דמות and צלם) for the single Akkadian word (*šalmu*) supports the distinction of the two words in Aramaic. This implies the translator's intent to distinguish the wide range of meaning of the Akkadian noun by rendering its instances differently with the two distinct Aramaic words.<sup>214</sup> Yet I see no sign of the different connotations in Akkadian. There is no reason to emphasize resemblance only for *šalmu* in the Akkadian line 23 (= דמות in the Aramaic line 15) from the translator's point of view. His argument is subtle and to some degree circular since he already assumes that צלם does not include, though not exclude, resemblance while דמות does. Both words in Aramaic and Hebrew, thus, refer to the *statue* of Had-yiṭ'ī and nothing more.<sup>215</sup>

In sum, the different order of דמות and צלם in Gen 5:3 is of no significance. The concrete meaning of דמות is also found in 2 Kgs 16:10 and 2 Chr 4:3 and דמות is not present to provide an

<sup>212</sup> Hayim ben Yosef Tawil, *An Akkadian Lexical Companion for Biblical Hebrew: Etymological-Semantic and Idiomatic Equivalents with Supplement on Biblical Aramaic* (Jersey City, NJ: Ktav, 2009), 78; *CAD D*, 74 (s.v. *damtu B*). *AHW* has no entry for this word.

<sup>213</sup> E.g., Millard and Bordreuil, "A Statue," 137; Kaufman, "Reflection," 139, 155. See also a helpful concise literary review of the various views on the compositional history of the four texts in this statue and their own conclusion, see Jan Dušek and Jana Mynářová, "Tell Fekheriye Inscription: A Process of Authority on the Edge of the Assyrian Empire," in *The Process of Authority: The Dynamics in Transmission and Reception of Canonical Texts*, eds. Jan Dušek and Jan Roskovec, *Deuterocanonical and Cognate Literature Studies 27* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2016), 9–39, esp. 20–28.

<sup>214</sup> Christoph Dohmen, "Die Statue von Tell Fekherije und die Gottebenbildlichkeit des Menschen. Ein Beitrag zur Bilderterminologie," *Biblische Notizen* 22 (1983): 91–106, esp. 96–98.

<sup>215</sup> Pace Dohmen, "Die Statue," 96–98; Garr, *In His Own Image*, 150–151; Andreas Schüle, "Made in the Image of God: The Concepts of Divine Images in Gen 1–3," *ZAW* 117 (2005): 1–20, esp. 9–10 (who distinguishes צלם as a "material object" from דמות as "likeness").



abstract flavor to צלם.<sup>216</sup> This conclusion is by no means new, but the strong connection between Gen 1:27–28aα and 5:1b–2, as well as the observation of the Aramaic translation of the Akkadian lines 23 and 26 in Tell Fakhariyah inscription, make it much more persuasive.

One advantage of the equation of צלם and דמות is that one may not have to be concerned about the different sequence; בצלמנו כדמותנו “according to our image, i.e., like our likeness” in Gen 1:26 and בדמותו כצלמו “according to his likeness, i.e., like his image” in 5:3 may be also equivalent in light of “Seidel’s law” by which the original word order is inverted in the citation.<sup>217</sup> That said, the meanings of the phrases and their relationship are yet to be decided. Is not the difference of the two prepositions on the nouns crucial? This consequently leads us to searching for the right meaning of the prepositions: כ (ba) and כ (ka). The meaning of the second preposition כ is relatively clear: “like, as” to express comparability and similarity. More challenging is the meaning of the first preposition כ and its relationship to the former. Basically,

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<sup>216</sup> Contra Eichrodt, *Theology*, 2:125 and Schellenberg, “Humankind,” 108 among others.

<sup>217</sup> Bernard M. Levinson, *Deuteronomy and the Hermeneutics of Legal Innovation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 18–20. The author could well have been using this scribal skill.

two possibilities have won popularity. One is so-called *beth normae* (ב of norm)<sup>218</sup> and the other so-called *beth essentiae* (ב of essence).<sup>219</sup> Typical examples of *beth essentiae* are:<sup>220</sup>

וַאֲרָא אֶל אַבְרָהָם אֶל יִצְחָק וְאֶל יַעֲקֹב בְּאֵל שַׁדַּי Exod 6:3a

I showed myself to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob as El-Shaddai

כִּי אֱלֹהֵי אָבִי בְעֹזְרִי Exod 18:4ba

For God of my father is my help.

This ב marks the essence, identity, attribute, or capacity and is usually rendered as “as.” Though this interpretation is predominant presently for Gen 1:26–27,<sup>221</sup> it has been occasionally rejected by some scholars for a couple of reasons. First of all, the juxtaposition of the two prepositional phrases suggests an apposition to some, so that בצלם and כדמות must be equivalent. The interchangeability of the nouns with the prepositions in Gen 1:26, 5:1 and 5:3 supports this.<sup>222</sup> However, some of those who advocate *beth essentiae* distinguish each phrase and preposition by arguing that they are not appositional, but rather asyndetic relative; namely, כדמותנו specifies

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<sup>218</sup> Dillmann, *Genesis*, 1:79; Eichrodt, *Theology*, 2:122n6; Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, Word Biblical Commentary 1 (Waco, TX: Word, 1987), 28–29; Humbert, *Études*, 159; Schmidt, *Schöpfungsgeschichte*, 133–134 and 133n3; Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 145–146; Bird, “Gen 1:27b,” 138n22. Only the first two explicitly designate this usage as ב of norm or normative ב. However, the translations of the rest are close to *beth normae* though not explicit.

<sup>219</sup> Among others, see Hehn, “Zum Terminus,” 45n4; Wildberger, “Das Abbild Gottes,” 491–492; Clines, “Image of God,” 75–80; Garr, *In His Own Image*, 95–115 and 169; Jenni, *Präpositionen*, 1:83–84; Ernst Jenni, “Philologische und linguistische Probleme bei den hebräischen Präpositionen,” in *Studien zur Sprachwelt des Alten Testaments*, 3 vols. (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1997–2012), 1:174–188, esp. 1:183–187; Schellenberg, “Humankind,” 106–109; Christo H. J. van der Merwe, Jacobus A. Naudé, and Jan Kroeze, *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), 342 (§39.6.3f). See also the previous edition of von Rad, *Genesis*, 56 (translated and published in English in 1961), which supports *beth essentiae*: “That the prepositions vary (in Gen. 5.3 they are exactly reversed!) makes the exposition difficult. One should not make too much of this, yet one must understand the *b<sup>e</sup>* before *selem* (“image”) in v. 26 as the so-called *b<sup>e</sup> essentiae*, and one can translate it simply “as our image.” The revised edition does not mention *beth essentiae*. This revised edition says that the change of prepositions is ignorable in light of Gen 5:3: von Rad, *Genesis*, 58 (translated and published in English in 1972). Note von Rad’s remark: “There is no particular significance in the change of prepositions (‘in’ our image, ‘according to’ our likeness).” It may suggest that he was persuaded by those who insist *beth normae*, though he does not say it explicitly.

<sup>220</sup> For more instances of *beth essentiae*, see JM, 458 (§133c); GKC, 379 (§119i); WO, 198 (§11.2.5e); Clines “Image of God,” 76–77; Garr, *In His Own Image*, 109–110; Jenni, *Präpositionen*, 1:79–89.

<sup>221</sup> Garr, *In His Own Image*, 169 claims that this is the consensus. It is interesting that Bird, “Gen 1:27b,” 138n22 asserts more than twenty years before Garr that the rejection of this was the consensus.

<sup>222</sup> Humbert, *Études*, 159 and Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 28–29.

צלמנו, not בצלמנו, as if בצלמנו אשר כדמותנו “as our image that is like our likeness.”<sup>223</sup> Yet this is untenable if my equation of צלם and דמות is right; there is no way that דמות can specify and modify largely synonymous צלם. I maintain that the juxtaposition of בצלם and כדמות is stylistic and makes them almost a hendiadys.<sup>224</sup>

Therefore, I think *beth normae* is a better candidate for the meaning of ב in Gen 1:26–27 and 5:1–3. *Beth normae*, which is often closely related to ב of instrument, “can introduce a standard, whether concrete or abstract, according to which an action is performed.”<sup>225</sup> It may be translated “according to,” “in the manner of,” “after,” and “by.” For example:<sup>226</sup>

על כן אבכה בבכי יעזר גפן שבמה Isa 16:9

Therefore, I will weep *according to* the weeping of Jazer for the vine of Sibmah.

The prophet says that the manner that he laments is that of Jazer. For this use of ב, there is a very close instance to Gen 1:26–27 in P:

Ex. 25:40 וראה ועשה כתבניתם אשר אתה מראה בהר

And look and make (them) *according to* their<sup>227</sup> pattern that you are shown on the mountain.

Here Moses is commanded to make the furniture for the Tabernacle as he has been shown on Mount Sinai. The text has the same verb עשה “to make” followed by ב of norm. Even though the

<sup>223</sup> Clines, “Image of God,” 77. Also, apparently independently Ernst Jenni, “Pleonastische Ausdrücke für Vergleichbarkeit (Ps 55,14; 58,5),” in *Neue Wege der Psalmenforschung: Für Walter Beyerlin*, eds. Klaus Seybold und Erich Zenger, Herders Biblische Studien 1 (Freiburg: Herder, 1994), 201–206 (esp. 205–206) followed by Schellenberg, “Humankind,” 108. Jenni, especially, offers two separate suggestions to understand בצלמנו כדמותנו in Gen 1:26: First, כדמותנו (as our likeness) is a pleonastic prepositional phrase equivalent to כמונו (like us); דמות (likeness) almost loses its semantics when prefixed by כ. Second, כדמותנו is not adverbial to the main verb עשה, but rather attributive (i.e., conceptually asyndetically relative) to צלמנו. The first suggestion cannot be applied to כצלמו in Gen 5:3. Thus, Schellenberg draws only on Jenni’s second suggestion.

<sup>224</sup> Cf. Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 145–146.

<sup>225</sup> Garr, *In His Own Image*, 108–109. See also WO, 198 (§11.2.5e) and Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze, *Reference Grammar*, 343; Jenni, *Präpositionen*, 1:148–149. By this definition, I do not see that *beth normae* is particularly difficult only in Gen 5:3, while admissible in Gen 1:26–27 *pace* Jenni, “Philologische,” 1:184.

<sup>226</sup> This example is cited from WO, 198 (§11.2.5e).

<sup>227</sup> The third-person masculine plural suffix may designate either all the furniture of the inner sanctum mentioned in Exod 25 rather than merely the decorations of the lampstand in 25:31–39. Cf. Exod 25:9: תבנית כל כליו “the pattern of all its (the Tabernacle’s) furniture. *Pace* William H. C. Propp, *Exodus 19–40*, Anchor Bible 2A (New York: Doubleday, 2006), 327.

object of the verb is elliptical, one should conceptually add the object “them”—as is obvious by the third-person masculine plural suffix on תבנית and by the parallel structure in Exod 25:9—and this is not uncommon in Biblical Hebrew.<sup>228</sup> Clines’ observation is helpful in seeing the potential of *beth normae* not only in Exod 25:40 but also in 30:32.<sup>229</sup> Exod 30:32 is equally relevant:

ובמתכנתו לא תעשו כמהו Exod 30:32aβ  
 And *according to* its measurement you shall not make (anything) like it.

Here, Israelites are commanded not to make anything comparable to the anointing oil that is produced according to a specific direction. Though Clines refused eventually to compare this with Gen 1:26 due to the absence of the object of the verb, here also the ellipsis of the object is not untypical, and the wording is strikingly similar to Gen 1:26. The verb עשׂיה “to make” takes the same two prepositions, ב of norm and כ of similarity, at the same time.<sup>230</sup> It is noteworthy if one considers that Exod 25:9 and 30:32aβ not only belong to P but also to the account of the construction of the Tabernacle, since the construction of the Tabernacle is often compared to the creation of the universe. Therefore, it is very likely that we have the same ב of norm in Gen 1:26–27 and 5:1–3.

The comparison with Exod 25:40 has been cautioned by many scholars who reject the ב of norm and prefer כ of essence. They argue that בתבנית (“according to the pattern”) assumes a preexisting, intermediary archetype between the artist and the artifact, which is not appropriate

<sup>228</sup> See the parallel structure in Exod 25:9, which has hiphil and the double direct objects of the causative vis-à-vis hophal in 25:40. For the parallel structure, see below.

<sup>229</sup> Clines, “Image of God,” 76–77. Also, Jenni, *Präpositionen*, 1:149 (§1797). If I am right in the following discussion, this is another counter example to Jenni’s rejection of *beth normae* in Gen 1:26–27.

<sup>230</sup> I admit a possibility here that כמהו can be understood as a nominalized prepositional phrase as אדם בני אדם in Dan 10:16 (see Schellenberg, “Humankind,” 107) and כבר אנוש in Dan 7:13 (Aramaic) and used as the direct object of the verb, not as an adverbial phrase. So translated in Propp, *Exodus 19–40*, 318 and 360 (my italics): “You shall not make *its like*.” However, the ellipsis of the object is more likely since it occurs more frequently in P (especially in the building instructions as in Exod 25:9, 40) and throughout the Hebrew Bible than the nominalized כ. Cf. a translation in Cornelis Houtman, *Exodus*, 3 vols., trans. Johan Rebel and Sierd Woudstra, Historical Commentary on the Old Testament (Kampen: Kok, 1993–2002), 3:575 (my italics): “You shall not make *anything else like it* in composition.”

for the Priestly account of the creation of humanity.<sup>231</sup> However, this is not necessary in light of my inference of the more inclusive meaning of צלם (“form”) and the discussion of its referents from Dan 3:9 above. If one accepts my differentiation between the two cases—the referent of צלם inside the *nomen rectum* and the referent outside of it—and agrees that צלם אלהים in Gen 1:26 does not refer to the divine form assumed in the humanity outside the deity but to the divine bodily shape of the deity himself, there is no problem of the intermediary archetype in Gen 1:26.<sup>232</sup>

Even though the precise meanings of כ of norm and כ of similarity are different, the difference should not be exaggerated. As the text reveals no intention to attenuate the materiality of צלם by adding דמות, the preposition כ does not attenuate the exact similarity; כ can communicate “a relation of perfect or imperfect similarity.”<sup>233</sup> Some scholars contend that the two prepositional phrases are almost a hendiadys and are not to be sharply distinguished. They point out that כ and כ converged in later Hebrew on the meaning “according to” or “like.” And it is supported by the fact that LXX and Vulgate “use only one preposition, κατά and ad respectively.”<sup>234</sup> The Priestly text itself supports this idea.<sup>235</sup> Compare Exod 25:9 and 25:40:

Exod 25:9 ככל אשר אני מראה אותך את תבנית המשכן ואת תבנית כל כליו וכן תעשו  
*As all that I am showing you, the pattern of the Tabernacle and the pattern of all its furniture, thus shall you make (them).*

Exod 25:40 וראה ועשה כתבניתם אשר אתה מראה בהר  
*And look and make (them) according to their pattern that you are shown on the mountain.*

<sup>231</sup> Hehn, “Zum Terminus,” 45n4; von Rad, *TDNT*, 391; Wildberger, “Das Abbild Gottes,” 492n114; Clines, “Image of God,” 79–80; Garr, *In His Own Image*, 168–169; and most recently, Gertz, *Genesis*, 64n121.

<sup>232</sup> Thus, *pace* Mettinger, “Urbild,” 403–424 (esp., 406–411).

<sup>233</sup> Humbert, *Études*, 159: “elle exprime toujours un rapport de similitude parfaite ou imparfaite.”

<sup>234</sup> Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 145. See also Humbert, *Études*, 159 and Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 28–29.

<sup>235</sup> It does not mean P is late, but rather this harmonization began earlier.

Exod 25:9 and 25:40 obviously correspond to each other with modest variation and frame together the instruction for the production of the inner sanctum furniture in Exod 25:10–39.<sup>236</sup> The inverted word order between the two verses suggests their close relationship (e.g., *Wiederaufname* and Seidel’s law): briefly paraphrasing, “as what you saw / make (them)” in 25:9 and “make (them) / according to what you saw” in 25:40.<sup>237</sup> When Exod 25:40 summarizes “as all that I am showing you the pattern of the Tabernacle and the pattern of all its furniture” into “according to their pattern that you were shown,” the preposition כ becomes כ of norm and the sense of the entire sentence remains unchanged. Barr would add that this is semantically a natural consequence: “One may translate with ‘as’ and one may say that *b<sup>e</sup>* and *k<sup>e</sup>* have the same meaning. . . . The reason for this, however, is not the idea of the *beth essentiae* but the fact that *b<sup>e</sup>*, commonly ‘in’ when combined with nouns of the semantic junction ‘likeness’, is thereby brought to have almost the same effect as the preposition *k<sup>e</sup>* ‘like, as.’”<sup>238</sup> In my own words, what is made in standard of X is like X. The same is also true with the same two prepositions in Exod 30:32.

In sum, the distinctions both between כ and כ and between צלם and דמות are subtle. One word or even one phrase does not try to modify, attenuate, or define the other. The text does not intend to convey a theological message from the subtle differences. The meaning of צלם, “image,” does not necessarily refer to a statue; rather it means “form” in Gen 1:26–27 and 5:1–3. However, “form” should not be thought of as an abstract noun. It always has a particular, vivid appearance or image in mind. Also, כ is not of essence, but rather of norm. Therefore, it is true that humans are the representations of God in the world and may be compared to statues in some

<sup>236</sup> Cf. Nihan, *Priestly Torah*, 42n114, 44, and 44n125.

<sup>237</sup> Also, the grammatical symmetry of hiphil-hophal in both sides of *inclusio* (מִרְאָה and מִרְאָה) reminds me of that of the qal-niphal pair in Gen 5:1b–2 and 9:6a. P likes to use this morphological parallelism as an aesthetic effect.

<sup>238</sup> Barr, “In Genesis,” 61.

aspect.<sup>239</sup> But that does not mean that they are made as statues of the deity in the cosmos-temple as  $\square$  of essence suggests. P has no intention of implying that the world is created as a temple, and the humans are its divine statues.<sup>240</sup> Rather, the genealogical genre that is explicit in Gen 5 is to be considered here to understand “the image of God.” The royal-like nature of this genealogy in light of the Sumerian King List suggests that “the image of God”—implying the facial resemblance in the literal sense—was an apt choice to assert the legitimate succession of the human appearance, action, ability, and rulership over the animal world in the subsequent generations.<sup>241</sup> (See further below.)

### 2.5.2 Genesis 9:1–7

Though the predominant opinion about the meaning of the image of God in Gen 1:26–28 is functional, Schellenberg argues that the exhaustive connection of the idea of the image of God

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<sup>239</sup> See a likewise reserved suggestion in McDowell, *Image of God*, 3n8, 137, and 137n110.

<sup>240</sup> Pace Levenson, *Creation*, 78–99 (esp. 86). He compares the creation of the world and the construction of the Tent of Meeting in P by developing the ideas of Joseph Blenkinsopp, “Structure of P,” *CBQ* 38 (1976): 275–292; Peter J. Kearney, “Creation and Liturgy: The P Redaction of Ex 25–40,” *ZAW* 89.3 (1977): 375–387; and Moshe Weinfeld, “Sabbath, Temple and the Enthronement of the Lord: The Problem of the Sitz im Leben of Genesis 1:1–2:3,” in *Mélanges bibliques et orientaux en l’honneur de M. Henri Cazelles*, eds. A. Caquot and M. Delcor (Kevelaer: Butzon & Bercker; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1981), 501–512. While admitting the philological correspondences and certain connection between the two constructions, I do not think P describes the world in Gen 1 as a quasi-temple. The deity had no intention to live within this created world at this narrative point, which means the world was not considered his home. It is only after the flood that he decided to dwell in the world and he needed a carefully designed residence (see Chapter Four). The significance of the parallel between the creation and the construction is to be found in the coherent character of the deity as an architectural maestro. He has a certain know-how for the construction of the world as well as of his own house.

<sup>241</sup> The legitimacy of the kingship has been always an important element in the royal ideology in most dynasties such as the United Monarchy, Israel, Judah, and Neo-Assyria. Many Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions and the so-called “Succession Narrative,” identified in 2 Sam 9–20 and 1 King 1–2, reveal this fact. Cf. Rost, *The Succession to the Throne of David*, trans. Michael D. Rutter and David M. Gunn, Historic texts and interpreters in Biblical scholarship 1 (Sheffield: Almond Press, 1982), though the theme of succession in this story is now debatable. That said, I am not suggesting that facial resemblance had ever been a standard for royal succession. There is simply no such evidence, to my knowledge, that either Israel or Mesopotamia were ever concerned about the prince’s resemblance to the king. Yet it is not difficult to suppose that a king is indeed expected to resemble his predecessor in that the royal ideology assumes a common standard in shape, actions, and character from the kings (see above). Note that Assurbanipal was the image of Marduk (Bēl) as his father Esarhaddon was, which means that they share the merciful character as said above: Parpoal, *LAB*, 181, #228 lines 18–19 = *LAS*, 1:98–99 (#125).

to the human dominion is untenable in light of the flood narrative and, especially, Gen 9:1–7. First of all, according to Schellenberg, the flood itself suggests that divine initiative brought the animals to the ark, not Noah’s rulership over them. And the fact that P does not repeat רד”ה “to rule” in Gen 9:1–7 where the deity blesses humans as in Gen 1:26–28, though רד”ה characterizes human rulership in Gen 1:26–28, suggests to her that the relationship between the humans and the animals altered. This is supported by the addition of such military terms as מורא “fear” and חת “terror” to the human-animal relationship.<sup>242</sup> Her last indication of the divine redefinition of the human-animal relationship is that it is the deity who punishes the murderer (i.e., the deity himself, not humans, restores the order of the world). Rulership is now an inaccurate definition of the human-animal relationship, and the divine mission for humanity to maintain peace and order is no longer required after the flood. With all these reasons, she points out the still lasting use of צלם אלהים in Gen 9:6 after the altered relationship between humans and animals.<sup>243</sup> To her, this means that צלם אלהים must be independent from the human-animal relationship. In other words, a “purely” functional understanding cannot exhaust the meaning of צלם אלהים in P.

Her insistence that צלם אלהים must be independent from royal ideology is beneficial to correct the predominant, overly functional view in the present scholarship. Yet it needs some modification. As she has to append the modifier “purely” to “functional,” Gen 9:1–7 does not abandon the human-animal hierarchy as she herself has to concede: “It is not human rulership that changes in Gen 9 but the human-animal relationship itself. It is crucial that this relationship is no longer defined as rulership—as much as humans remain privileged and animals subordinated.”<sup>244</sup> She agrees with the views of those such as Lohfink who suggests that the

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<sup>242</sup> For the same reason, Lohfink, *Theology*, 11–13 similarly argues that מורא “fear” and חת “terror” suggest the altered relationship between humans and animals.

<sup>243</sup> Schellenberg, “Humankind,” 101–103. Cf. J. Miller, “God,” 297.

<sup>244</sup> Schellenberg, “Humankind,” 102 (my italics).



unprecedented hostility between the human and the animal begins when the deity permits meat-eating and the world actually changed (of course, in P’s narrative) after the flood.<sup>245</sup> However, the relationship itself did not really change after the flood except for the addition of מורא “fear” and חת “terror.” As a matter of fact, it was the killing of one another—that is, a human being killing another, an animal another, a human being an animal, and an animal a human being—already in Gen 6:11–13, that caused the flood, not the other way around. The enmity had emerged and the world that the deity had expected to be peaceful in order and harmony among the creatures under human dominion turned out unrealistic and impracticable without fear and terror already before the flood. What is new in Gen 9:2–3 is that the deity licensed meat-eating, which should not have been practiced before the flood. But this change is not to attenuate or even annul human rulership as Schellenberg argues, but rather to secure it. What would be more characteristic of rulership than the right to kill and eat, i.e., the right to utterly exploit the body of others? When the deity promised the fear and the terror of humans would fall over the entire animal world, the hostility that had been there already was not the main concern of the allegedly new relationship *pace* Lohfink and Schellenberg.

The intended nuance of מורא (fear) and חת (terror) in Gen 9:2 is revealed by the context that like expressions appear elsewhere. Lohfink and Schellenberg are correct in recognizing these words belong to the language of war,<sup>246</sup> though the context in which the words are often used seem to have escaped them. These words of fear connote the awe that *deactivates* an enemy, whether physically, mentally, or both. Among many such instances, here is one example from the Hebrew Bible and another from the Neo-Assyria inscriptions. In Gen 35:5 (E), Jacob’s

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<sup>245</sup> Lohfink, *Theology*, 13.

<sup>246</sup> Cf. Gerhard von Rad, *Holy War in Ancient Israel*, trans. Marva J. Dawn (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 46–47.

sons killed all the males of Shechem's town in E's story of Gen 34.<sup>247</sup> The terror of God (חַתָּה אֱלֹהִים) fell upon the surrounding towns when they depart the town toward Bethel (cf. Gen 35:1, 5–6), so that they did not pursue Jacob to avenge the victimized town.<sup>248</sup> One of Esarhaddon's royal inscriptions shows a similar function of the terror: "The Elamites (and) Gutians, obstinate rulers, who used to answer the kings, my ancestors, with hostility, heard of what the might of the god Aššur, my lord, had done among all of (my) enemies, and fear and terror [*hattum u puluhtum*] poured over them. So that there would be no trespassing on the borders of their countries."<sup>249</sup> It should also be noted that the war aims at the restoration of the world order in the ancient Near East. Therefore, the deity had to put fear and terror upon the animals in order to continue (or not to repeat the failure of) the human dominion: domesticating and, now also, hunting animals. In sum, human rulership was not revoked; rather fear and terror reinforced the peace of the world controlled by humanity (*Pax Humana!*)<sup>250</sup>

My point that Gen 9:1–7 actually continues human rulership of Gen 1:26–28 even without רַדְדָה is revealed by the divine sanction in Gen 9:6:

Gen 9:6  
שִׁפְךָ דַם הָאָדָם בְּאָדָם דָּמוֹ יִשְׁפָךְ  
כִּי בְצַלֵּם אֱלֹהִים עָשָׂה אֶת הָאָדָם

<sup>247</sup> For a source division of Gen 35 and a brief reconstruction of different Dinah's stories in Gen 34 of J and E respectively, see Baden, *Composition*, 230–245 (esp. 233–234, 239–240).

<sup>248</sup> Even if the reason for the assumption of the potential assaults by surrounding cities is not directly related to the previous massacre, my argument is still valid.

<sup>249</sup> Leichty, RINAP 4, 22 (Esarhaddon 1, col. v, lines 26–30; his parentheses, my brackets). Similarly, Grayson, RINAP 3/2, 316 (Sennacherib 223, line 41).

<sup>250</sup> A similar conclusion in H-J Zobel, "רַדְדָה," *TDOT* 13:330–336, esp. 13:334.

Whoever sheds the blood of a human being,<sup>251</sup> on account of<sup>252</sup> that human being<sup>253</sup> his blood shall be shed  
Because according to the image of God he made humankind<sup>254</sup>

Here, the G-stem active participle of שפ"ך "to shed" includes animals in light of Gen 9:5 where God explicitly announces that the bloodguilt will be attributed to the wild animals as well as to the human; but the animals that were newly given as food cannot be victims, and the victims that deserve the privilege of divine vengeance are only the humans. These two important facts were

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<sup>251</sup> I.e., a certain human being if not same האדם at the end of Gen 9:5 (see below), rather than the humans in general. For this usage of the definite article, see "nouns definite in the imagination" in WO, 243–244 (§13.5.1e) and "imperfect determination" in JM, 479 (§137n).

<sup>252</sup> This must be *beth pretii* (ב of price/exchange). So translated in LXX ("ἀντὶ τοῦ αἵματος αὐτοῦ"). For a similar use of the preposition ב, see Deut 19:21; 2 Sam 3:27; 14:7; 23:17; 1 King 10:29; 16:34; 21:6; Lam 1:11; and Neh 5:15. Many modern studies, commentaries, and grammars take it for granted that ב in Gen 9:6 is of agent or of instrument/means: "by a human": to list a few, GKC, 389 (§121f); WO, 197 (§11.2.5d 17); JM, 454 (§132e); Sarna, *Genesis*, 62; Garr, *In His Own Image*, 160; McDowell, *Image of God*, 120 and 120n20; Gaines, *Priestly Source*, 52–53; Yitzhaq Feder, "The Mechanics of Retribution in Hittite, Mesopotamian and Ancient Israelite Sources," *JANER* 10 (2010): 119–157, esp. 148–149; and the translations of many other commentaries that do not even feel necessary to discuss the preposition. Some who choose this line think that באדם in the beginning of Gen 9:6aβ assumes an establishment of human judiciary: already anticipated by Tg.Ok, Tg.PJ, and R. Hanina in *Genesis Rabbah* §34.14 (trans. H. Freedman, *Midrah Rabbah: Genesis*, 2 vols., [London: Soncino, 1983], 279), and many medieval Jewish commentators who read witnesses, judges, or both from באדם (M. Cohen, *Mikra'ot: Genesis Part I*, 100–101, esp. Rashi, Ibn Ezra, Kimhi, Bekhor Shor, and Gersonides). The idea of a legal procedure is followed by many modern scholars: Gunkel, *Genesis*, 149; von Rad, *Genesis*, 132; Sarna, *Genesis*, 61–62; Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 193–194; and Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 466–469. Cf. Sean E. McEvenue, *The Narrative Style of the Priestly Writer*, *Analecta Biblica* 50 (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1971), 67–71, who argues for a proverbial origin. Yet the agentive meaning cannot be right because Hebrew passives "with a specified agent are virtually non-existent": see Thomas O. Lambdin, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1971), 176 (§140); also, Jenni, "Philologische," 1:182–183. And the implicit avenger is the deity himself rather than a human being in light of Gen 9:5. (Cf. McDowell, *Image of God*, 120n22; she tries to save both divine and human agents, preferring ב of agent.) In this aspect, the instrumental ב is a little better grammatically and semantically. However, once one is free from the pressure to pursue a form-critical meaning of Gen 9:6a separate from its literary context and realizes the text extends the potential offender to the animals in Gen 9:5, the legal or proverbial origin, even if true, should not dominate one's interpretation. A more probable grammatical cue may be found in the talion laws (Exod 21:23–25; Lev 24:19–20; Deut 19:21), whose form and ideology correspond to Gen 9:6: see Wolff, *Anthropology*, 19; especially Chavel, *Oracular Law*, 67–80 (esp. 73–80). See also a more syntactic study for *beth pretii* in Jenni, "Philologische," 1:179–183. Those who recognize the animals, in addition to the humans, as potential offenders understand ב in 9:6 usually as ב of price/exchange (Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 705 citing Pedersen, *Israel*, 1:533–534; Wolff, *Anthropology*, 19; Chavel, *Oracular Law*, 78; Gertz, *Genesis*, 282; cf. Sarna, *Genesis*, 356–357n2 and). For ב of price/exchange, see WO, 197 (§11.2.5d 20–21, though WO classifies ב in Gen 9:6 as that of agent); Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze, *Reference Grammar*, 342 (§39.6.3d); Jenni, *Präpositionen*, 1:150–160. Having said this, Gen 9:6 says nothing about the manner of the execution by *beth pretii*. It may be any means such as a juridical punishment, a kinsman's revenge (גאול הדם), or a supernatural retribution.

<sup>253</sup> I.e., the certain human being who was just mentioned. See Pedersen, *Israel*, 1:533–534 and Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 705.

<sup>254</sup> I.e., the generic humans. For the generic use of the definite article, see WO, 244–245 (§13.5.1f) and JM, 476–477 (§137i). Or conceptually, that particular האדם so far mentioned as a representative of the human species.

not sufficiently noticed when Lohfink and Schellenberg suggested that rulership is no longer part of the human-animal relationship. As for Lohfink, the connection between Gen 9:5 and 9:6 might have been of no significance in relation to Gen 1:26–28 because he follows those who exclude Gen 9:4–6 from P<sup>g</sup>.<sup>255</sup> But Westermann correctly argues that Gen 9:4 and 5 are important restrictions to 9:3, which should be read together.<sup>256</sup> A poetic analysis of Gen 9:5 supports a close connection between Gen 9:5 and 9:6 and the universal responsibility for human blood:<sup>257</sup>

	ואך Gen. 9:5	Gen 9:5 And surely:
A	את דמכם לנפשתיכם	Your blood of your life
B	אדרש	Will I demand
C	מיד כל חיה	From every animal.
B'	אדרשנו	I will demand it!
C'	ומיד האדם מיד איש אחיו	And from a human being, <sup>258</sup> (i.e.,) from one another <sup>259</sup>
B	אדרש	Will I demand
A'	את נפש האדם	The life of the human being.

As is shown, Gen 9:5 is no less chiasmic than Gen 9:6 even though it is a bit redundant: A-B-C-B'-C'-B-A'.<sup>260</sup> The grammatical parallelism between A and A' that frames the entire structure

<sup>255</sup> Lohfink, *Theology*, 104n30. Only a few scholars support this: among others see McEvenue, *Narrative Style*, 67–71. P<sup>g</sup> is the original narrative layer of the Pentateuchal Priestly history, which is assumed by some scholars, and more or less corresponding to my “P.”

<sup>256</sup> Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 463–464.

<sup>257</sup> Gaines reconstructs a poetic text of Gen 9:4–5 (Gaines, *Priestly Source*, 225 and 233–235). What stands out is his exclusion of אדרשנו מיד כל חיה אדרשנו “from every beast I will demand a reckoning of it” (his translation) as secondary. This omission is based on an unfounded assumption that “surely God does not demand *human* life in return for an act of *animal* violence” (p.234, his italics). Exactly the opposite was the reason why all the animals suffered from the flood along with the humans.

<sup>258</sup> A certain human being. See “nouns definite in the imagination” in WO, 243–244 (§13.5.1e) and “imperfect determination” in JM, 479 (§137n).

<sup>259</sup> Cf. Zech 7:10; GKC, 447–448 and 448n1 (§139c) and JM, 512 (§147c). It is possibly a later insertion for the clarification of האדם in C' as one killing another human being in contrast to האדם as a victim in A'.

<sup>260</sup> My translation and sentence division present the structure of Gen 9:5 as bicola separated by אדרשנו in order to stress more vividly the grammatical *chiasmus* and *inclusio* between A and A'. Alternatively, the structure can be analyzed as tricola: AB-CB'-C'BA', which is close to Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 466:

“Your own blood	will I demand,
from all animals	will I demand it,
and from human in turn	
the life of a person	will I demand.”

Whichever one prefers, the lexical and grammatical parallels between the cola are still valid.

reveals that “your blood of your life” and “the life of the human being” should be equivalent.<sup>261</sup> Since it is clear that the deity demands to bear the responsibility for murdering the victim, literally, “your blood of your life” as the object of *שׂר״שׁ* in B, from (*מִיָּד*) the killer animal in the A-B-C, we can expect that *הָאָדָם* in C’ from (*מִיָּד*) whom the deity demands to bear responsibility as the object of *שׂר״שׁ* in B’ refers to the murderer of C’-B-A’. Likewise, *הָאָדָם* is the victim in A’ by parallelism with A. If this is right, it suggests a stronger connection between Gen 9:5 and 9:6. Both share the chiasmic structure. The chiasmic structure in 9:5 contributes to the preparation of 9:6 from the end of 9:5; *הָאָדָם* in A’ separates the first two instances of *הָאָדָם* in 9:6 from *הָאָדָם* in C’; the chiasmic structure in 9:6 continues in A and A’ of Gen 9:5.<sup>262</sup> This prevents the reader from potentially confusing the referents of *הָאָדָם* in 9:6 with *הָאָדָם* in C’ of 9:5 and, at the same time, links more closely Gen 9:5 and 9:6.

Thus, Gen 9:4–6 cannot be separate from 9:1–3. I would say Gen 9:5–6 along with 9:2 are reaffirmation of the initial hierarchy of the world in Gen 1:26–28 and, possibly, in addition, the security of human dominion from the rebellion of the wild animals. The motive clause in Gen 9:6b, then, may be claiming that the divine punishment for murder in 9:6a applies to *every creature* because of the image of God shared among humanity. So, I admit that human rulership changed after the flood, and the deity decided to intervene in the world. As Schellenberg and Lohfink think, this is not what the deity initially intended. Yet this suggests by no means that the rulership is deprived.

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<sup>261</sup> Alternatively, one can understand *נֶפֶשׁ* as “throat”—i.e., “your blood of your throats” (A) and “the throat of the human being.” A throat is understood as a critical organ to maintain life, and thus to represent the entire body in that it is “the means of consumption” and “the bloodiest body-part.” For this, Chavel, *Oracular Law*, 73n188. The connection between the throat and the blood is not immediately perceptible. Yet remember Milgrom’s suggestion that P’s exclusive term for ritual slaughter, *שַׁחֵט*, means precisely “to slit a throat” in Milgrom, “Ethics and Ritual,” 172–174. This method of animal slaughter may be related to the draining of blood, which Chavel mentions. If *נֶפֶשׁ* really refers to “throat” here, my structural analysis offers (or receives) an additional support for the close relationship between blood and the throat (namely, A and A’).

<sup>262</sup> For the last point, see the structural analysis of Gen 9:5–6 together in Chavel, *Oracular Law*, 74.

## 2.6 Synthesis and Implication for Priestly Morality

I think Gen 9:5–6 poses an exegetical and, also, a potential theological and ethical question. On what basis does the deity take the initiative? It is understandable that the deity punishes the animals shedding human blood, which are below humanity in terms of the world hierarchy. But why does the image of God matter when a human being kills another? Generally speaking, the life-reducing act, i.e., the murder, “undercuts the deity’s life-producing essence and work.”<sup>263</sup> Procreation was what humans were supposed to do as corresponding to the deity’s life-producing work in light of Gen 5:1–3. Yet more specifically, the association of murder with the concept of *lex talionis* suggests that it is considered to be wrongdoing against the deity. This is because the agent of the punishment is the deity (אֲדַרְשֶׁנוּ “I will demand it”), not humans, whatever means (plague, accident, or civil court among others) he would eventually use in each case. The shedding of human blood is closely related to the disfigurement of divine image in humans.<sup>264</sup> What is in the background for regarding the disfigurement of divine image outside the deity’s own body as if a direct threat to the deity? There are a couple of options.

First of all, some scholars relate humans as the image of God in P to the ancient Near Eastern statues. They say the ancient Near Eastern kings (and sometimes priests or high officials) installed their statues to represent themselves and proclaim their domination in the provinces from where they were physically remote.<sup>265</sup> The fate of these statues and that of their referents appear more or less related. In the epilogue of the Law of Hammurabi, Hammurabi strongly

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<sup>263</sup> Chavel, *Oracular Law*, 73.

<sup>264</sup> Chavel, *Oracular Law*, 73–74.

<sup>265</sup> Gerhard von Rad, “The Divine Likeness in the OT,” *TDNT* 2:392; von Rad, *Genesis*, 60; von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, 146; Clines, “Image of God,” 82–83 and 87–88; Wolff, *Anthropology*, 160–161; Middleton, *Liberating Image*, 104–108; Gertz, *Genesis*, 63–67.

warns not to change his engraved images (*uṣurātu*) along with other prohibitions of erasing his name or changing his pronouncements.<sup>266</sup> Similarly, the two Aramaic (as well as the two corresponding Akkadian) texts on the statue from Tell Fakhariyah strongly warn not to erase the name of the inscription, Had-yiṭ'ī (lines 11–12 and 16–18). The obsessive concern for the name is because Had-yiṭ'ī was anxious that the statue be identified properly as him. Two more relevant texts are found in two Aramaic reliefs of the seventh century from Nerab, each of which has the image of the speaker of the attached inscriptions.<sup>267</sup> The first inscription (of Sinzeribni) curses anyone who would move the image away. There is an interesting parallel between the two inscriptions:

מִן אֵת תְּהַנֵּס צִלְמָא זְנָה וְאַרְצָתָא מִן אֲשֶׁרָה  
Whoever you are, should you remove *this image* and *the grave* from its place<sup>268</sup>

. . . לְמַעַן לֹא־חָרָה לְתַהַנֵּס אֲרִצְתִּי מִן אֵת תַּעֲשֶׂק וְתַהַנְסִנִּי  
. . . so that in the future *my grave may* not be removed. Whoever you are, should  
you do harm to and remove *me*<sup>269</sup>

In this parallel, the image in the first inscription corresponds to the first-person singular objective suffix, ךַּ “me.” This supports that an image and its referent were thought to have a shared fate. By analogy, the disfigurement of the divine image would have been reckoned tantamount to the direct attack on the deity in P.

<sup>266</sup> Roth, *Law Collections*, 136 (LH xlix 18–44). Admittedly, the images on the stele is not his portrait but presents a scene of him receiving legislative authority, symbolized by the rod and the ring, from Shamash. Yet he might have thought this scene as its entirety represented *him*, nothing else. He is mainly concerned about himself in this paragraph as elsewhere.

<sup>267</sup> For the inscriptions from Nerab, see H. Donner and W. Röllig, *Kanaanäische und Aramäische Inschriften*, 3 vols. (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1962–1964), 2:274–276 (§225–226); John C. L. Gibson, *Aramaic Inscriptions, Including Inscriptions in the Dialect of Zenjirli*, vol. 2 of *Textbook of Syrian Semitic Inscriptions*, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1975), 93–98 (§18–19); and Ilsung Andrew Yun, “A Case of Linguistic Transition: The Nerab Inscriptions,” *JSS* 51 (2006): 19–43.

<sup>268</sup> Nerab 1, lines 5–7

<sup>269</sup> Nerab 2, lines 7–9.

This thinking is not without restrictions when applied to P's "image of God." This idea is germane not only to the image-bearing inscriptions but also, more broadly, to any monuments bearing no external similarity. Second, in terms of the form, Gen 9:6a resembles *lex talionis* and is not similar to the curse formula on statue inscriptions. More importantly, most of those who compare the Priestly "image of God" to the royal or divine statues concede that P neither identifies humans with the deity nor understands humans as divine. The divine spirit does not dwell in humans as it abides within the ancient Near Eastern divine statues.<sup>270</sup> What they mean is that humans so *represent* the deity as the statue represents the king. Even so, J. Miller points out that the purpose of royal statues is debatable. The accompanying inscriptions on statues seem to aim more at memorials than at representations. As I argued above, the disclaimer of *beth essentiae* and the meaning that "God made the humanity *according to* the image of God" makes the statue option less likely.<sup>271</sup> Also, the reference of צלם is not necessarily a statue or a representation but external resemblance in P, if I am right. It may be further extended to any object that bears external resemblance according to the context: "relief," "picture," or "statue." Yet it is somewhat striking that such a context that specifies צלם as a statue is rare in P.<sup>272</sup> Thus, I would say that if P really borrowed the concept of the royal statue, it is only one vague aspect of "the image of God," which cannot exhaust P's concept of the term.

McDowell adds another aspect to the question of the direct involvement of the deity in the murder case in Gen 9:6 in relation to Gen 5:1–3. She argues that in light of other biblical texts, Gen 9:6 may present the deity as "the avenger of blood" (גאל הדם). It is because the divine-

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<sup>270</sup> See, among others, Wildberger, "Das Abbild Gottes," 494–496 and Clines, "Image of God," 89.

<sup>271</sup> J. Miller, "God," 296.

<sup>272</sup> A possible exception is Lev 19:4 (H), but there the image cult is not defined by צלם but by אליל and מסכה. According to Schwartz, "Reexamining," 160–164 (esp. 163–164), Num 33:52 that includes צלם is redational.



human relationship implies that of the father-son.<sup>273</sup> Indeed, many texts that express royal ideology employs both image and father-son expressions at the same time.<sup>274</sup> Ramesses' response begins with "I am thy *son*. . . . Thou hast fashioned me as the *image* of thy likeness, while thou assignest to me that which thou hast created."<sup>275</sup> This is telling because it involves the divine image, the divine son, and the commission of the authority.<sup>276</sup> Likewise, after the above cited section of *Tukulti-Ninurta Epic* that says Tukulti-Ninurta is "the eternal image of Enlil," it is said: "Enrill raised him like a natural father, after his first-born son."<sup>277</sup> More directly, a few lines before describing Ramesses III as his image, Ptah begins his blessing to him with "I am thy father. I begot thee."<sup>278</sup> The father-son relationship in royal ideology is not necessarily foreign by the first millennium in Israel and Judah. The idea is well preserved in Ps 2:7, Ps 89:27–28, and 2 Sam 7:14. It is more generally applied in Exod 4:22 and Jer 31:9, where Israel or Judah—not all of humanity—is the first-born son of God, respectively.<sup>279</sup> This argument is still supported by my comparison between Gen 5:1b–2 and 5:3 above. Here, the divine-human relationship is comparable to the father-son relationship.<sup>280</sup> Both relationships are defined by the image and the likeness, i.e., the form. As the formal resemblance entails the performative similarity in the ancient Near East, as I argued above, the same is true in the Priestly narrative. The deity *creates*

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<sup>273</sup> McDowell, *Image of God*, 120–122 and 131–137.

<sup>274</sup> Cf. McDowell, *Image of God*, 134–136.

<sup>275</sup> Edgerton and Wilson, *Ramses III*, 127 (my italics).

<sup>276</sup> Gertz, *Genesis*, 65–66 points out that this sort of Egyptian ideology continued and was appropriated by Darius I of Persia (549–486 BCE). Likewise, I am not saying P knew the text of Ramesses III but suggesting a possibility that such an Egyptian idea, if it indeed originated in Egypt, could come in through Mesopotamia at some point in the first millennium.

<sup>277</sup> Machinist, "Epic of Tukulti-Ninurta," 69 (his translation). This royal ideology continues in the later period. Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal are considered as son, whether explicitly or implicitly by goddess Mullissu in many Assyrian prophecies: see Simo Parpola, *Assyrian Prophecies*, SAA 9 (Helsinki: Helsinki University Press, 1997), e.g., 8 (text 1, lines iv.5, iv.20); see a helpful discussion in the introduction (XXXVI–XLIV).

<sup>278</sup> Edgerton and Wilson, *Ramses III*, 121.

<sup>279</sup> Cf. Frank Lothar Hossfeld and Erich Zenger, *Psalms 2*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005), 410–411.

<sup>280</sup> Th. C. Vriezen, "La création de l'homme d'après l'image de Dieu," *Oudtestamentische Studiën* 2 (1943): 87–105, esp. 96–98; McDowell, *Image of God*, 131–132 and 133–134; Schüle, "Image of God," 7–8.

humans in his own *image*, and the humans *procreate* sons in their own *image*. God gives a name to what he created in his own image, and humans likewise give names to those whom they procreated. Admittedly, procreation of species is not a privilege limited to humankind. What is so special for the author that human procreation is singled out and related to צלם, while the animal procreation is unmarked? We need some imagination here because the text is silent. The author might have assumed that conveying the image of father to son as facial resemblance means distinctiveness among families and individuals. This may have been considered to be something that other animal species cannot have, when in reality it was human inability to distinguish animals' faces.

It should be noted that P does not use father-son language for the divine-human relationship explicitly as in Deut 14:1, 2 Sam 7:14, and Ps 2:7. Pointing out this fact, Wildberger may be right when he says that “image” and “son” are distinct concepts even though they belong to the same royal ideology.<sup>281</sup> In this light, I do not think that the image language entails in itself the father-son relationship in P already from Gen 1:26–28. Yet the two motifs become connected literarily in P. P intentionally appends the father-son concept to “the image of God” by combining human creation with the genealogy (Gen 5:1b–3). This makes the divine-human relationship in Gen 5:1b–2 as the beginning of the genealogy and, consequently, analogous to the father-son relationship in Gen 5:3.<sup>282</sup> This may have been an indication for McDowell to draw on the concept of the blood avenger (גאל הדם).<sup>283</sup> Yet we are dealing with the P narrative while the legal text (Num 35:9–34) that mentions the blood avenger, within which two even later layers

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<sup>281</sup> Wildberger, “Das Abbild Gottes,” 493–494.

<sup>282</sup> Though the image language is absent after Adam, it is unthinkable the image of the father is not transferred to the son; the image language must have been assumed in the subsequent generations.

<sup>283</sup> McDowell, *Image of God*, 122–123.

may be discernable, is in its entirety H.<sup>284</sup> Even if we read Gen 5 within the purview of the Pentateuchal Priestly history, more problematic is the fact that God is a kinsman as close to the murderer as to the victim in Gen 9:6, if this concept should work. It is noteworthy that the relationship between the deity and humanity is not defined by the father and the son, but still by “the image of God.” Therefore, I think it is more consistent to consider the implicit father-son relationship still within more comprehensive royal ideology, instead of associating it with the blood avenger. It is supported by the subsequent genealogies, which seem to be in some way related to the Sumerian King List as I mentioned earlier.

That said, I think P chooses צלם אלהים “the image of God” as a basis and, at the same time, as a catchall phrase for its presentation of humanity in light of royal ideology. P expands the implication of the image of God from Gen 1:26–28 through 5:1–3 to 9:6, adding more elements of royal ideology. He understood “the image of God” as first and foremost founded on the formal resemblance between the deity and the king. Since this royal ideology was distributed to all humanity, it should have had its basis not on an ideal physical beauty that only a certain person (i.e., king) is considered to have, but rather on some concrete feature that all human beings share.<sup>285</sup> The human bodily structure and upright posture were a plausible option since they are distinct from the animals<sup>286</sup> and yet shared by the deities in Levant as well as in Mesopotamia, from where P borrowed this royal expression. As royal ideology, the humans are commissioned to realize the *peaceful* dominion in the world. They were considered (by the deity) to do as God would do *because* they share the divine shape. It is true that the words for ruling

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<sup>284</sup> Jeffrey Stackert, *Rewriting the Torah: Literary Revision in Deuteronomy and the Holiness Legislation*, FAT 52 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), 61–68.

<sup>285</sup> This beauty also could be attributed to all humanity as in Ps 8:6. Yet it is only reserved for the priests later in P that already had the dispensationalist hierarchy of the Mosaic time in his plot. Cf. Köhler, *Hebrew Man*, 34–35.

<sup>286</sup> Most of the animals, if not all. One may think of the primates as comparable to human appearance, but they are, and must have been, easily distinguishable since they usually walk on all fours.

(רד"ה) and subduing (כב"ש) were frequently used in hostile situations dealing with war, enemies, or sexual assault among others. Yet Lohfink noted that the words themselves without an extra qualification are not necessarily considered severe and brutal.<sup>287</sup> Othmar Keel further suggests that רד"ה and כב"ש can connote the meaning of protection in light of two Neo-Assyrian cylinder seals; there, a man places his foot on a calf while defending it against an attacking lion.<sup>288</sup> Above all, P's creation account itself suggests a peaceful dominion. Humans, as well as animals, were only allowed to consume a vegetarian diet. Ruling (רד"ה) and subduing (כב"ש) in P mean to prevent violence in any form to exist and promote the well-being of the created world, a duty of good Near Eastern kings. When they (and the animals too) ruined the earth and corrupted its world order (שח"ת) with violence (חמס), a punishment was inevitable in the flood narrative, which will be discussed in Chapter Five in detail. Human dominion was intended to be a blessing, not a calamity, by bringing peace and thereby securing well-being to the animal world as well as for themselves.<sup>289</sup>

P adds the family notion, however implicitly, by adding a genealogy to the creation account. The concept of the image and that of the son were relevant, as they were in other ancient Near Eastern cultures, in that both assume external resemblance. The image concept in Gen 5:1b–3 suggests an analogy of the deity and the humans in both form (familial resemblance) and action (e.g., creation and procreation). The subsequent genealogy bolsters it by tying the deity to human generations as if he were the *paterfamilias* of the genealogy and, thus, of all humanity.<sup>290</sup> This royal family concept prepares the interdiction of human bloodshed in 9:5–6. In

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<sup>287</sup> Lohfink, *Theology of the Pentateuch*, 11–13. Similarly, Barr, “Man and Nature,” 3:352–354; C. Wright, *Old Testament Ethics*, esp. 120–121.

<sup>288</sup> Keel, *Symbolism*, 58–59 and figs. 60–61; also, Othmar Keel and Silvia Schroer, *Creation: Biblical Theologies in the Context of the Ancient Near East*, trans. Peter T. Daniels (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2015), 144–145.

<sup>289</sup> Zobel, *TDOT* 13:334–336.

<sup>290</sup> McDowell, *Image of God*, 122, while her designation of the blood avenger might be too tenuous to be founded.

9:5–6, all humans are conceptually members of the royal family in light of the genealogy in Gen 5.<sup>291</sup> They were not only to be honored by the lower rankers (i.e., the animals), but the family was also to be in peace and order within itself. Yet in reality, royal families often suffer from machinations, fratricides, patricides, or usurpations. Absalom usurped his father David (2 Sam 15). Solomon executed his brother Adonijah (1 King 2:13–25). Political feuds within royal families were particularly perennial in the Sargonid Dynasty of Neo-Assyria. Sennacherib was assassinated by his sons. As the youngest son, Esarhaddon had to fight with his older brothers to succeed the kingship following Sennacherib’s death, even though he had already been appointed as the crown prince.<sup>292</sup> The hostility between brothers repeated in the next generation.

Assurbanipal, king of Assyria, suppressed the rebellion of his older brother, Šamaš-šuma-ukīn,

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<sup>291</sup> It is unclear to me how many people were meant to have been created since P’s author employs a collective singular אדם (humankind) in Gen 1:26–28. In Mesopotamian myths, the number was high enough to replace the manual job of the lower gods. P’s story needs as many as the number of humanity to fulfil their royal/divine mission/blessing in Gen 1:28 to control the earth. Yet it is clear, by the divine blessing for population growth, that the number of people created was yet to increase; a purpose of the genealogy in Gen 5 was to show the course of its fulfilment. It is possible that the collective singular אדם only meant one couple (a man and a woman) in that there is only a single genealogy from one man; polygamy might not have been an option for P (cf. Gen 7:11). Even if Gen 1:26–28 presuppose more than a couple, the single genealogy seems to suggest the family unity of humanity at least to some degree. That said, there needs to be a caveat. As part of royal ideology, this family analogy is not similar to cosmopolitanism in the modern sense though it may initially sound so. P’s well-known tendency to constantly classify and hierarchize the world should be borne in mind. Later, the laws given at Sinai concern mainly the Israelites, and thus marginalize the foreigners in P, at least implicitly. The classificatory if not hierarchic distinction between the native Israelites (אזרח) and the outsiders (גר) is unmistakable in H, not to mention its abhorrence toward Egypt and Canaan. I think the genealogy in Gen 5, together with the subsequent genealogies in P’s portion of Gen 10–11, does the spadework for setting the Israelites apart from the foreigners early within the plot; the genealogies continuously single out one son among other descendants in each generation only to arrive at Abra(ha)m. In light of the royal-like nature of the genealogies, Israel, a national and ethnic group as Abraham’s descendants, becomes the legitimate successor of human kingship among the nations as royal members, which explains its privileged proximity to the deity when the deity comes down to dwell on earth later in P.

<sup>292</sup> Leichty, RINAP 4, 2. Cf. Sarah C. Melville, “Neo-Assyrian Royal Women and Male Identity: Status as a Social Tool,” *JAOS* 124 (2004): 37–57, esp. 45–46, 48. Esarhaddon was not only the youngest but also even not one from the first wife. Being the first son did not guarantee the royal succession anyway in the Sargonid Dynasty. See also Parpola, SAA 9:XLIII. The assassination of Sennacherib and Esarhaddon’s exile “was interpreted as a manifestation of divine wrath resulting from the upheaval of cosmic harmony.” It was Esarhaddon, the newly invested king, that was to restore the order. P reverses the cause and effect. It was humans who brought the upheaval to the royal family as well as to the world. It is the deity as royal family that is willing to restore the order. By this, I do not mean that P had a specific historical situation in mind.

king of Babylonia.<sup>293</sup> As the head of his family, the king is responsible to mediate the inner-familial struggles to secure his kingship and maintain the order of the world.<sup>294</sup> If this analogy stands, it is well understood that the deity exercises the right to interfere and punish the most severe crime among humans: i.e., the flood for violence. Again, צלם אלהים “the image of God” is not a pure metaphor of royal ideology. Even if the family analogy expanded somewhat figuratively, “the image of God” is fundamentally based on bodily resemblance between the deity and humanity, which is imagined as real in the narrative world.

## 2.7 Conclusion

In sum, my study of “the image of God” in Gen 1–9 reveals the moral themes and values of the Priestly history from the very beginning of its plot: the maintenance of peace of the world and the high esteem of human life. P values human life above all except for the deity by designating them as “the image of God.” With this privileged position, humanity was expected to be responsible to act, not merely to appear, like the deity. P requires humanity to maintain the peace, which includes the proper operation of the order of the world as the deity created and intended. This harmonious state of the world in order is an aspect of P’s שלום of the world that human actions are supposed to aim at. They should avoid, or at least minimize, violence between humankind and the animal world as well as among humanity themselves. It should be noted that this responsibility was first and foremost given to humankind, which means that they were the

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<sup>293</sup> Jamie Novotny and Joshua Jeffers, *The Royal Inscriptions of Ashurbanipal (668-631 BC), Aššur-etāl-ilāni (630-627 BC), and Sîn-šarra-iškun (626-612 BC), Kings of Assyria*, RINAP 5/1 (University Park: Eisenbrauns, 2018), 22–23.

<sup>294</sup> Consider the background of Esarhaddon's Succession Treaty, though the treaty itself is not an ideal example in that it was intended for the vassals and aristocrats. Yet it anticipates potential factions between the royal family (e.g., lines 62–82). Esarhaddon's clever decision to appoint two crown princes, one for Assyria and the other for Babylonia, must have been his effort to prevent a potential feud between his sons, though it eventually failed. For the text of the treaty, see Simo Parpola and Kazuko Watanabe, *Neo-Assyrian Treaties and Loyalty Oaths*, SAA 2 (Helsinki: Helsinki University Press, 1988), 28–58.

moral agents in the Priestly history. Yet by labelling them with “the image of God” and indicating the resemblance between the deity and humans in appearance, action, and even character—which is at least supposed by the deity in the narrative world—the Priestly history presents the deity as the moral archetype of the moral agents. Even after they foil the divine expectation in Gen 6:11–12, God still required and expected the same, though now a little more lenient, moral obligation in Gen 9:1–7. This means that P still expects humans to resemble the deity in being and doing at least in some aspect and to some degree. And, according to P’s narrative world, the still remaining “image of God” in humans enables humanity to do so. Therefore, P’s moral ideal should be found first in P’s characterization of God, which I will delve into in the fourth chapter. Before that, however, I have to debunk a long-standing, theological presupposition that the Priestly deity is transcendent and qualitatively different from the human being. The Priestly moral exemplar is not something beyond human reach in P’s presentation. The divine character is the suffused guidance of the moral actions, which P presents for humanity as possible to discern and act accordingly.

## Chapter Three

### Divine Nature in P: Transcendence versus Immanence

#### 3.1 A Need for Further Justification of the Character Analysis of the Priestly Deity

Before beginning the character analysis of the Priestly deity, I think it is necessary to establish a foundation for it against potential oppositions. One may ask whether the divine characterization should be considered and analyzed differently from the other characters. Meir Sternberg argues that this is the case:

Though God is the Bible's hero, his portrayal may yet appear a special case. After all, most dimensions associated with character—physical appearance, social status, personal history, local habitation—do not apply to him at all. They are meant to be conspicuous by their absence, which impresses on the reader from the very beginning the message that the whole Bible will dramatize with variations: the qualitative distance that separates God from humans and pagan gods, both existing in matter and time and space and society. So nothing "material" is told, by way of preliminaries or retrospect, because for once there is nothing to tell; and the mind must attune itself to radically new coordinates of divinity.<sup>1</sup>

Yet I do not see that the Hebrew Bible assumes the “qualitative difference” that Sternberg points to between divine and human characters. Sternberg's general assertion sounds theologically presupposed before being literarily (and historically) analyzed from the biblical texts. Even if he were right with respect to some parts of the Bible, only the exact opposite (especially to the underline) is true at least for the Priestly history, as well as for many other parts of the Bible. In the previous chapter, I argued that the image of God that defines human creation refers first and foremost to the physical appearance of the deity. The image language in P adopts and adapts royal ideology. All humans who are made according to the image of God have dominion over the other creatures. Thus, the image of God, which was an idiom to praise the outstanding beauty of

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<sup>1</sup> Sternberg, *Poetics of Biblical Narrative*, 323 (my underlines, his italics).



the royal body (considered as unique among human bodies) in other ancient Near Eastern texts, now indicates the anthropomorphic shape (considered as common to every human being) of the deity in P: namely, two eyes, one nose, one mouth, two arms and free hands, two legs and feet, and standing upright. There is no reason to assume distinct criteria for the character analysis of the Priestly deity. Nonetheless, my discussion on P's divine anthropomorphism revolved around predominantly the image language in Gen 1:26–28 and its relevant biblical and non-biblical texts. A presumption that made scholars deviate from a rather literal reading did not come from these texts. Some scholars read “qualitative difference” between humanity and divinity from other parts of P such as Gen 1:2 or the story after the primeval and patriarchal history (i.e., the Priestly layer in Exodus–Numbers). This, in turn, was pro- and retrojected to the interpretation of the image language in my mind. In this chapter, I will argue that P's anthropomorphic deity is immanent, instead of being transcendent, to the earthly world. I will also argue that P's characterization of the divine based on human-like senses was meant to bear a significant moral implication to its readers.

### 3.2 The Body of the Priestly God

My claim in the previous chapter that the significance of *imago Dei* in P is first and foremost in the external resemblance assumes necessarily that the Priestly deity has a body. Scholars have avoided this physical, anthropomorphic understanding of the image of God (צלם, אלהים), and many of them shared the presupposition that P's deity is transcendent and, thus, has no body. To discuss this matter is necessarily related to how divine manifestation is presented in P (and H). Eichrodt divides the biblical *kābôd* as a designation for divine appearance into two types: the prophetic *kābôd* and the priestly—which includes Priestly—*kābôd*. The prophetic

*kābôd* stresses “the absolute transcendence of the *kābôd*, so that mortal man had always to be kept apart from it.”<sup>2</sup> In contrast, the priestly *kābôd* reduces *kābôd* “to a spatially and temporally limited medium of Yahweh’s self-manifestation, a means by which the transcendent God made his personal presence visible to his own.”<sup>3</sup> The difference between the two is whether the *kābôd* has a form or not. The prophetic *kābôd* certainly has a visible form, even though it is not allowed to be seen because of its “absolute transcendence.” Yet Eichrodt’s priestly *kābôd* is “the likeness of a mass of fire veiled in cloud,” i.e., “a formless brightness of light.”<sup>4</sup> The latter is some kind of visual cue to mark the divine *location* even though it does not help grasp the divine *form*. On this matter, Eichrodt anticipated Michael B. Hundley, who says: “The glory (P’s *kābôd*) ensures proximate presence and makes its benefits available to the people. At the same time, the deity himself is more elusive, more other, more transcendent than his ANE counterparts.”<sup>5</sup> While it is formless and so enigmatic, Hundley’s *kābôd*, as in Eichrodt’s, marks the location of theophany.<sup>6</sup>

For a different reason from Eichrodt and Hundley’s, Mark S. Smith declines to call *kābôd* a body as well. He explicitly states the reason for his reservation by providing his definition of a body, though it seems that he does not reject that the *kābôd* is the divine self. With the help of English lexicons, he claims that one should have a form in order to be called a body. However, it does not mean that he defines a body narrowly as natural. M. S. Smith distinguishes three types of the divine body in the Hebrew Bible: 1) natural human, 2) superhuman liturgical, and 3)

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<sup>2</sup> Eichrodt, *Theology*, 2:31 (his italics). He does not distinguish “priestly” and “Priestly.”

<sup>3</sup> Eichrodt, *Theology*, 2:31.

<sup>4</sup> Eichrodt, *Theology*, 2:32–33 (the quotations from 32).

<sup>5</sup> Michael B. Hundley, *Keeping Heaven on Earth: Safeguarding the Divine presence in the Priestly Tabernacle*, FAT 2/50 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 50 (my parentheses). Though Eichrodt is not cited in Hundley, this echoes Eichrodt, *Theology*, 1:408: “But it is precisely this priestly technical term of the *kabôd* which most clearly betrays the effort to play down any sensorily perceptible manifestation of God as far as possible into a mere symbol of his presence.” It is also quoted in Barr, “Theophany and Anthropomorphism,” 2:52 with his own translation from the German original.

<sup>6</sup> Hundley, *Keeping Heaven*, 43. The correspondence between Hundley and Eichrodt is also found in the idea that the Priestly *kābôd* is a divine garment. Compare Hundley, *Keeping Heaven*, 40–43 and Eichrodt, *Theology*, 1:277.

cosmic mystical bodies.<sup>7</sup> These are distinguished by their locations and sizes. God manifested in the natural body is not distinguishable from humans by form. In this body, God visits humans exactly as one visits a friend in Gen 18 and elsewhere in the Bible.<sup>8</sup> The second divine body is superhuman because it is much bigger than the humans and liturgical because it is imagined appearing in relation to the large temple such as one in Ain Dara.<sup>9</sup> The superhuman size of the divine house necessarily suggests a homological size of the deity.<sup>10</sup> The third divine body straddles the heaven, the divine, mythological locations, beyond the earth. This body is even bigger than the second divine body and the biblical examples can be found in Ezek 1 and Dan 7.<sup>11</sup> The three bodies are formally analogical and more quantitatively than qualitatively different. M. S. Smith reconstructs a non-linear, historical development of the Israelite thought of the divine body. The human and superhuman divine bodies existed contemporaneously but in different settings as their attributives—“human” and “divine”—already suggest: the former in the family setting and the other against the backdrop of ancient temples. The Ugaritic literature and other northwest Semitic religious artifacts demonstrate that these two traditions were widespread in the Levant at least from the Late Bronze Age. Yet the third divine body, the texts about which reveal the influence of Mesopotamian cosmology in vocabulary and concepts, seems to come from the foreign culture in the seventh-sixth century.<sup>12</sup> An argument regarding the body of the Priestly deity, more relevant to my interest, follows. The third body was not the

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<sup>7</sup> Mark S. Smith, “Three Bodies of God in the Hebrew Bible,” *JBL* 134 (2015): 471–488, esp. 473.

<sup>8</sup> M. S. Smith, “Three Bodies,” 473–478.

<sup>9</sup> M. S. Smith, “Three Bodies,” 478–481.

<sup>10</sup> Mark S. Smith, “Like Deities, Like Temples (Like People),” in *Temple and Worship in Biblical Israel*, ed. John Day (London: T&T Clark, 2005), 3–27, esp. 17. Note that the Akkadian word for the temple, *ekallu*, which was loaned in many northwest Semitic languages (e.g., Hebrew *היכל* and Ugaritic *hkl*), was etymologically derived from Sumerian É.GAL: literally, a “large house.”

<sup>11</sup> M. S. Smith, “Three Bodies,” 482–484. M. S. Smith is inclined to regard the deity in Gen 1 having this body (cf. pp.485–487).

<sup>12</sup> M. S. Smith, “Three Bodies,” 484–487.

only development from the seventh-sixth century onward. Some texts began to refrain the representation of the divine body. M. S. Smith's Priestly *kābôd* was part of this attempt. Unlike the cosmic body in Ezekiel, it lacks, and so is not, a body.

The common assumption of Eichrodt, Hundley, and M. S. Smith is that the divine (non-)body of the Priestly deity should be analyzed with its unique presentation of the divine *kābôd*. For them, the *kābôd* in P is transcendent and of no form. Yet this is untenable. First of all, the divine character revealed by the Priestly divine *kābôd* is to be considered with the representation of the Priestly deity in the context of the entire Priestly history. Thusly do Moshe Weinfeld and Benjamin D. Sommer support their argument that the divine *kābôd* in P refers to the divine body. For this, they mainly rely on Gen 1 that proclaims the divine-human similarity in appearance.<sup>13</sup> While Eichrodt, M. S. Smith, and others would not deny Gen 1 is P, they think the divine form in Gen 1 is symbolic as many whom I showed in the previous chapter do.<sup>14</sup> It is not necessary here to restate the previous chapter's argument. I only add that the biblical texts addressing divine *kābôd* did not have to describe the divine body in detail because the human bodily form is too obvious for both the author and the reader.

As just mentioned briefly, there has been a stream of voices opposing the transcendent and non-physical reading of the Priestly *kābôd* for other reasons. Weinfeld among others suggests that the Priestly God is corporeal. He says “*kabod* literally means ‘body’ or ‘substance.’”<sup>15</sup> He concedes that the Priestly *kābôd* is somewhat later than J's or other biblical *kābôd* tradition and so takes a more static form.<sup>16</sup> Yet the basic concept did not change:

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<sup>13</sup> Weinfeld, *Deuteronomistic School*, 201 and Sommer, *Bodies of God*, 68–70. While I agree with them, I do not think the divine form in Gen 1 is *kābôd*: see below.

<sup>14</sup> Eichrodt, *Theology*, 2:123 and Mark S. Smith, *The Priestly Vision of Genesis 1*, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2010), 135. M. S. Smith thinks the purpose of Gen 1:26–27 is to attenuate anthropomorphism of Gen 2:7. Hundley does not talk about Gen 1 regarding the *kābôd*.

<sup>15</sup> Moshe Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic School*, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1972), 202.

<sup>16</sup> Weinfeld, *Deuteronomistic School*, 204.

The difference between the Priestly conception of the Deity and that of the earlier sources is not in the essence of the conception but in the response which the divine apparition evokes. The corporeal imagery of a somewhat mythologically tinged Deity that characterizes the earlier sources is carried over into the Priestly theology, but in a systematized and glorified version befitting learned priests of a speculative bent of mind.<sup>17</sup>

Thus, the Priestly corporeal *kābôd* that dwells on earth in the Tabernacle suggests an immanent deity in Weinfeld's reading.<sup>18</sup> While largely acknowledging Weinfeld, Sommer hesitates to call the Priestly *kābôd* matter. The divine body in the Hebrew Bible and in the broader ancient Near Eastern culture may be physically and ontologically different, which is also the case in P, according to him.<sup>19</sup> Yet he can still call the Priestly *kābôd* as a divine body, i.e., corporeal, since his definition of a body is free of matter and fixed forms: namely, "something located in a particular place at a particular time, whatever its shape or substance."<sup>20</sup> So, Sommer thinks that the Priestly deity is originally transcendent in that his *kābôd*, i.e., his body, is not of matter but of energy, but nonetheless is now immanent since he obtains a permanent dwelling place on earth.<sup>21</sup>

In spite of the apparent divide of scholars between transcendence and immanence regarding the Priestly deity and his *kābôd*, confusions and overlaps exist among them. For example, Hundley's idea of the divine appearance with the *kābôd* is surprisingly similar to Weinfeld's. For Weinfeld, the Priestly *kābôd* is the deity himself. But this *kābôd* barely reveals itself to the mortals in P except for Lev 9:23. In most of the instances, the divine *kābôd* requires

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<sup>17</sup> Weinfeld, *Deuteronomistic School*, 205. For his discussion of the Priestly and biblical *kābôd* in general, see 200–206 and Moshe Weinfeld, "כבוד *kābôd*," *TDOT* 7:22–38.

<sup>18</sup> Weinfeld, *Deuteronomistic School*, 197. Strictly speaking, when Weinfeld mentioned "immanence," his interest was in the manner of God's presence more than the nature of God himself. But the former is not unrelated to the latter. A similar Priestly immanent theology continues in the reading of Tryggve N. D. Mettinger, *The Dethronement of Sabaoth: Studies in the Shem and Kabod Theologies* (Lund: CWK Gleerup, 1982), 97, while he talks more about the location and permanence of the divine dwelling in P than the material or bodily form of the *kābôd*.

<sup>19</sup> Benjamin D. Sommer, *The Bodies of God and the World of Ancient Israel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 12–13 and 71.

<sup>20</sup> Sommer, *Bodies of God*, 2, 71, and 80. While he consistently uses the term such as 'nonmaterial' and 'energy' his real point by using this definition that includes 'substance' anyway is to stress the *difference* between the divine and the human body rather than the former's *non-matter*.

<sup>21</sup> Sommer, *Bodies of God*, 71, 74, 136–137.

a camouflage to hide from the eyesight: the cloud or the Tabernacle.<sup>22</sup> The Priestly deity in Weinfeld's version remains *enigmatic*. The function of Hundley's *kābôd* is distinct from Weinfeld's. Hundley's *kābôd* is neither a divine body nor the deity himself. As said above, it is a divine cloak to protect him from the human eyes. Not only does it function as a camouflage of the divine essence, but also is it a location marker that confirms the deity is "there." Namely, it is like a package box. If you receive a package from an online shopping mall, you know the item you ordered is inside the box even though you do not confuse the box with the item. The more an item is expensive and prestigious, let's say Prada, the more so is the package. Or if the item is too dangerous, let's say a dagger, the package should be sturdier, or even double. The cloud that has the same functions—of hiding and confirming—as *kābôd* is the double package, according to Hundley.<sup>23</sup> Thus, the Priestly God becomes *enigmatic*, abstract, and transcendent, as Eichrodt and M. S. Smith would think, because it is hidden inside the *kābôd* which is abstract and of no specific form.

### 3.3 Transcendence and Immanence in Hebrew Bible Scholarship

It is necessary to clarify what it means that the deity is transcendent or immanent. It seems that many, such as Eichrodt and M. S. Smith, who argue for the transcendent deity in P think that the deity is abstract or spirit. Hundley implies that the deity is transcendent if the divine form is indeterminable. Sommer's distinction between transcendence and immanence seems to be related to the permanent location of the deity (whether the deity obtains his abode on earth or merely visits the earth only shortly), in addition to the nature of the divine body

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<sup>22</sup> Weinfeld, *Deuteronomic School*, 202–203.

<sup>23</sup> Even though I agree with Hundley that the divine *kābôd* functions as the divine garment, I do not think it is a camouflage. Also, the function of the cloud that he explains is unnecessary. He says the deity has the dimmer to adjust his *kābôd*. Why would he need an extra dimmer? Cf. Hundley, *Keeping Heaven*, 43–44, 44n29, and 46–47.

(material or non-material). The terms “transcendence” and “immanence” are assumed to be obvious in many of the scholarly works without explicit definitions. Even when their understanding is more explicit, the usages and descriptions seem to vary. This is understandable because the definitions of transcendence and immanence have experienced historical change, as well as because they are used somewhat differently in various disciplines.<sup>24</sup> Lexicon-wise, all the usages that the scholars above employ, whether theoretical or not, can be legitimately called “transcendent.”<sup>25</sup> Divergent understandings of the term have distracted scholars from the accurate comprehension of the character of the Priestly deity and, consequently, the moral dimension of the Priestly history. There have been some attempts to define the common scholarly usage of “transcendence” more explicitly and precisely to improve our understanding of the Priestly God. In this section, I will survey some of these efforts and try to look for what the transcendence of the Priestly deity means and why it matters.

Israel Knohl begins with the two types of the Tent of Meeting. The Priestly Tent contains the immanent presence of the deity, while the deity only occasionally visiting the Elohist Tent from his heavenly abode is transcendent.<sup>26</sup> He rightly notes, however, that this is counterintuitive: P’s divine *kābôd* whose anthropomorphism is suppressed and impersonalized is immanent,<sup>27</sup> whereas E’s deity who is fully anthropomorphic is transcendent. Knohl’s solution is to disentangle allegedly unduly conflated categories: “It is important to stress that the opposition between God’s immanence in the priestly tradition and His transcendence in the prophetic

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<sup>24</sup> For a brief introduction of the terms’ history and receptions in varying disciplines, see Niels Henrik, Gregersen et al., “Transcendence and Immanence,” *Religion Past and Present*. Accessed June 7, 2021. doi:[http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1877-5888\\_rpp\\_COM\\_025165](http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1877-5888_rpp_COM_025165). (esp. 64–65).

<sup>25</sup> “Transcendent, adj. and n,” *Oxford English Dictionary Online*. June 2021. Oxford University Press. <https://www.oed-com.proxy.uchicago.edu/view/Entry/204609?redirectedFrom=transcendent> (accessed June 07, 2021).

<sup>26</sup> Israel Knohl, “Two Aspects of the ‘Tent of Meeting,’” in *Tehillah le-Moshe: Biblical and Judaic Studies in Honor of Moshe Greenberg*, eds. Mordechai Cogan, Barry L. Eichler, Jeffrey H. Tigay (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1997), 73–79. For the Elohist Tent of Meeting, see Exod 33:7–12 and Num 12:1–15 (esp. 12:5, 10).

<sup>27</sup> Knohl, *Sanctuary*, 128–137 (esp. 129–130).

approach has no connection to the issue of abstraction and corporeality.”<sup>28</sup> It is clear that Knohl’s anthropomorphism includes corporeality, while non-anthropomorphic form is abstract: “On the contrary, as I have shown in my book” (i.e., Knohl, *Sanctuary*, 128–137), “it is precisely the priestly tradition, which stresses the Divine immanence, that reached heights of abstraction and distancing from anthropomorphism unparalleled in the Bible. The transcendent God of the prophetic tradition, in contrast, is described in terms of anthropomorphism and incarnation.”<sup>29</sup> In other words, corporeality (presumably assuming materiality) and anthropomorphism are conceptually interrelated for Knohl, whereas the idea of transcendence and immanence depends on where the permanent divine dwelling place is regardless of the nature of the divine body.

Sommer provides a slightly different alternative to Knohl’s understanding as a part of his attempt to replace “more familiar polarities such as ‘monotheism vs. polytheism’ and ‘immanence vs. transcendence’”<sup>30</sup> with a different categorical pair—namely, fluidity of the body vs. non-fluidity—in order to explain more cogently the varying concepts of the deity in the religions of the ancient Near East including those of Israel and Judah. He eliminates the aspect of materiality from the concept of anthropomorphism and the aspect of non-anthropomorphism from the concept of transcendence, as we have seen above regarding his idea of the divine body in P.<sup>31</sup> In other words, his idea of transcendence is compatible with anthropomorphism but should not embrace materiality. Thus, the Priestly *kābôd* is anthropomorphic (*pace* Knohl and many others, correctly I think) and yet transcendent because it is not material. With this view, transcendence and immanence are not incompatible: the transcendent deity achieves immanence

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<sup>28</sup> Knohl, “Two Aspects,” 76–77.

<sup>29</sup> Knohl, “Two Aspects,” 77.

<sup>30</sup> Sommer, *Bodies of God*, 12–13.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Sommer, *Bodies of God*, 64. He is talking about the Deuteronomic *šēm* (“name”) but it is also relevant to the Priestly *kābôd*.



by his permanent dwelling on earth.<sup>32</sup> This is not that the transcendent deity becomes non-transcendent, but rather that the transcendent nature of the presence of the deity whose nature is always transcendent becomes immanent. This immanent presence seems to render the deity being transcendent and immanent at the same time to some degree as far as he pleases to dwell on earth. In this way, Sommer's idea of transcendence does not constitute the polarity vis-à-vis immanence unlike Knohl's and most of the others', even though he shares a spatial understanding of immanence with Knohl. Nevertheless, it seems that Sommer is not completely free of the conventional dichotomy between transcendence and immanence. His explanation seems to still assume that a transcendent deity is by definition separate from, thus should not belong to, this material world and it is unusual for such a god to dwell on earth.

I think it is Robert S. Kawashima who presents divine transcendence and immanence in a clearer and more consistent manner theoretically. Refashioning an old fashion in biblical and ancient Near Eastern studies, Kawashima emphasizes a fundamental "epistemic break" that "separates pagan myth from biblical narrative" in a way similar to Yehezkel Kaufmann's distinction between the religion of Israel and pagan religions.<sup>33</sup> This epistemic break reflects a fundamental rupture between their thoughts regarding the cult, the deities, and the world. He traces the break in two pairs of dichotomies: immanence versus transcendence and myth versus history. In his mind, the Priestly deity is still transcendent even on earth just as E's and D's deity; this is different both from Knohl holding that the deity is only immanent (i.e., non-transcendent) on earth and from, closer though he is to, Sommer saying that the deity is simultaneously transcendent and immanent. The stimulus of the break is "the emergence of the metaphysical

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<sup>32</sup> Sommer, *Bodies of God*, esp. 74.

<sup>33</sup> Robert S. Kawashima, "The Priestly Tent of Meeting and the Problem of Divine Transcendence," *Journal of Religion* 86 (2006): 226-257, esp. 231, 236. Cf. Kaufmann, *Religion of Israel*, 21-121.

dualism of spirit and matter.”<sup>34</sup> He considers P’s deity is “God-as-spirit,” having nothing to do with the body and materiality. He argues that the anthropomorphic description should not be considered to decide whether a deity is transcendent or immanent as Sommer insists. He goes one step further than Sommer. He thinks anthropomorphism is a mode of description as if the author and the reader would not have thought it as real but recognized it as a metaphorical, literary conceit.<sup>35</sup> From the beginning (Gen 1), he thinks, P sharply bifurcates the deity as spirit and the world as material. This dualism of P brings essential modification to metaphysical monism of the Mesopotamian myths that influenced P’s contents. In the Mesopotamian monism, the cosmos is one shared by humans, gods, and nature; deities belong to the world by nature. Conversely, in P, the physical universe is separate from the deity and his realm.<sup>36</sup> Moreover, P is marked with the epistemic break between history and myth according to Kawashima. The mythical past is not qualitatively distinguished from but underlies the present in Mesopotamian religion. The mythic time is circular and so repeated in the ordinary time. That means, the mythic time is paradigmatic, essential, and eternal. On the contrary, the historical time in P is linear time that is unrepeatable and, most importantly, contingent. It has no contacting point with eternity that corresponds to the mythic time.<sup>37</sup> In other words, there is a complete dualism between eternal and ordinary (historical) time in P. On the one hand, the spiritual-material dualism in P results in the sharp dichotomy of its space: divine, holy vs. secular, profane. On the other, it leaves P only with one single linear time: the ordinary, historical time. It is because the mythic time is completely separate and ignored in P’s plot after Gen 1:2 on. The relationship between

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<sup>34</sup> Kawashima, “Priestly Tent,” 231.

<sup>35</sup> In contrast, Sommer thinks neither that P’s anthropomorphism is metaphorical nor that its deity is a spirit without a form.

<sup>36</sup> Kawashima, “Priestly Tent,” 237–238.

<sup>37</sup> Kawashima, “Priestly Tent,” 239–256.

the deity and the world is thus summarized: “There is no substantive interchange between the two, for they are mutually incompatible.”<sup>38</sup> This means that the intrusion of the Priestly deity to this present time and space is artificial, alien, and volatile in essence.<sup>39</sup>

How can this totally “other” deity interact with the world before and after he resides on earth? The only connection between the two realms in this dualism is the divine will:<sup>40</sup>

P’s creation history does not offer an incipient theory of nature, as does *Enuma Elish*. That is, the distinctions and divisions God draws within matter are not mythic “manifestations” of the divine nature, nor does God personify or otherwise symbolize the physical universe as a system. Rather, the symmetry and order of the created world are “inscriptions” of divine will onto material world—an external rather than internal relation. As a result, this nature can be “read,” as when P interprets the rainbow as a “sign” (’ôî) of the Noahic covenant (Gen. 9:8–17)—not the natural manifestation of divine paradigm but the conventional signifier of God’s intention.

This reminds me of the Protestant Old Testament theologians in the last century who make the “covenant” concept as the center of Old Testament theology—among others, Eichrodt.<sup>41</sup>

If this separation of the divine Being from all that is not God leads, in this context, to the use of the divine Name to describe the way in which God exists as a transcendent personality supreme over this world, the Priestly writer finds another equally suitable means of expressing the same idea in *his picture of the Word of Creation*. It is by this means that the Lord of the universe regulates his relationship with our world without in any way becoming involved in its laws, or tied to its order. Here God's transcendence of the material world is set in the sharpest possible contrast to any pantheistic conception of interfusion or evolutionary development. The divine will invades this world in the form of the most super sensory reality our experience can conceive. The Godhead stands over the cosmos in independent fullness of life; but its inaccessible majesty derives from its essential nature of purely transcendent being.

Eichrodt is saying that since the transcendent divinity and the world are so completely split, there is no correlation between them. Only the divine will undertake initiatives, not the other way

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<sup>38</sup> Kawashima, “Priestly Tent,” 251.

<sup>39</sup> Kawashima, “Priestly Tent,” 256–257.

<sup>40</sup> Kawashima, “Priestly Tent,” 251 (his italics, my underlines). This necessity of the covenant due to the radical break between the deity and Israel is more explicit in Robert S. Kawashima, “Covenant and Contingence: The Historical Encounter Between God and Israel,” in *Myth and Scripture: Contemporary Perspectives on Religion, Language, and Imagination*, ed. Dexter E. Callender, Jr. (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2014), 51–70, esp. 63.

<sup>41</sup> Eichrodt, *Theology*, 1:410. (his italics, my underlines)

around. Only his revelation, when he wills, can connect the divine and the human; it is because humans can neither feel God with their natural senses nor affect God with any natural means.

This divine revelation is epitomized in the Law, i.e., the acme of the (Sinaitic) covenant in Eichrodt's mind:<sup>42</sup>

The Law also accorded admirably with the exposition of the priestly concept of God, for it allowed them to present the reality of God's sovereignty without prejudice to the yonside quality of the divine nature. In the Law the will of God becomes concrete and emerges from the transcendence of his personality into the world of the Here and Now. As spiritual power expressing itself in word the Law witnessed both to the fact that God was inaccessible to earthly sense, and to that personal quality of God which the human spirit could comprehend.

Do these scholars really intend disparate understandings of the deity by employing the different definitions of "transcendence" and "immanence" respectively? I think they do not, in spite of their differing points. One can see that their definitions of the terms and reasoning of the texts more or less overlap. It seems that most of them, if not all, are trying to imply at least one common aspect by "transcendence": qualitative rather than quantitative difference. A transcendent deity is wholly "other" from the creature. Namely, he is in essence independent of this material world; the world cannot affect the deity by any means; it is just not fit for the divine nature. In sum, the definition of "transcendence" in this work, which I drew from the scholars above and will problematize in applying it to the Priestly God subsequently, is as follows: What is transcendent does not belong to this material world, while what is immanent belongs to this world.

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<sup>42</sup> Eichrodt, *Theology*, 1:411. It should be noted that Eichrodt is constructing a biblical theology not only out of the Priestly history but also out of the Hebrew Bible in general. Many scholars agree that at least P has nothing equivalent to the non-Priestly Sinaitic Covenant (ברית) appearing in the other Pentateuchal sources. E.g. relatively recently, Christophe Nihan, "The Priestly Covenant, Its Reinterpretations, and the Composition of 'P,'" in *The Strata of the Priestly Writings: Contemporary Debate and Future Directions*, eds. Sarah Shectman, Joel S. Baden (Zürich: TVZ, 2009), 87–134; and Stackert, "Distinguishing," 369–386. Stackert argues that the rendering of Hebrew ברית invariably with "covenant" produces the confusion of H's ברית in Lev 26 with the conditional, so-called Sinaitic covenant. Stackert employs the "Sinaitic/Horeb" covenant since the covenant was made at Horeb, not Sinai, in E and D.

### 3.4 A Critique of the Scholarly Opinions about P's Transcendence

The tendency that one can see from the scholarly discussions above is that they appear to assume *a priori* the conclusion that the Priestly deity is qualitatively distinct from this world. Then, they strive to defend that conclusion by explaining the opposing textual evidence in various ways: namely, the anthropomorphic deity takes his permanent abode on earth. Some had to redefine the terms such as anthropomorphism, transcendence, and immanence (e.g., Knhol and Sommer). Others had to avoid reading the consistent narrative description of the divine manifestation such as *kāḥôḏ* (e.g., Hundley and Eichrodt). Still others had to distort the mode of permanent divine dwelling on earth in P as occasional divine visitation<sup>43</sup> or even non-visitation at all.<sup>44</sup>

It sounds very odd that the ancient author imagines the divine body “made of energy but not matter,” as Sommer himself admits its anachronistic flavor.<sup>45</sup> It is possible that the author (and the reader) would have thought the divine body is not exactly the same as human flesh if it shines; yet, it is doubtful that the ancient might have thought of a body as anything non-material. One of the main reasons that Sommer argues for the non-material body is the variable size of the divine body.<sup>46</sup> But I do not think it requires the body to be a non-material shape. The ancient people, as well as the modern, could imagine a mutable fleshly body. We have many traditional tales all around the world that even the natural body can not only adjust the size but also alter the form and the matter of the body. Remember Aaron’s rod changed into תנין (whether it means

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<sup>43</sup> Von Rad, *Theology*, 1:238–239; Gerhard von Rad, “כבוד in the OT,” *TDNT* 2:238–242, esp. 2:240; Eichrodt, *Theology*, 2:32 and 2:34n1; Cross, *Canaanite Myth*, 245–246 and 298–300.

<sup>44</sup> R. E. Clements, *God and Temple* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1965), 113–114. He seems to suggest that the appearance of the divine *kāḥôḏ* does not entail the physical and personal presence of the deity himself.

<sup>45</sup> Sommer, *Bodies of God*, 71. Again, Sommer does not deny P’s anthropomorphism *per se*, but his definition of it is different from others.

<sup>46</sup> Sommer, *Bodies of God*, 71–72.

“serpent,” “crocodile,” or “cobra”) and the Egyptian sorcerers did the same in Exod 7:10–12 (P!); the change entails the shape, material, and probably the size. *Ant-man* just adds a modern scientific flavor to this old motif.

Kawashima’s sharp contrast between Mesopotamian myths and the Priestly history, which was anticipated by Eliade and Kaufmann in a broader purview (between Mesopotamian and Israelite religions), is doubtful.<sup>47</sup> Kawashima is to be acclaimed that his theoretical lens of the archaeology of knowledge and its epistemic break offers a good example of a better comparative study not holding on to an unnecessary assumption of many previous ones—that is, the Priestly creation narrative directly depends on and responds to Enuma Elish, as if the former intends to subvert the latter. Several scholars have pointed out philologically and literarily the shortcoming of this belief in direct influence: among others, W. G. Lambert, Åke W. Sjöberg, and David Toshio Tsumura. According to them, the cognate words (i.e., *Tiamat* and *tehom*) or the corresponding *Chaoskampf* motif (the battle between a storm-god and the primordial water or a watery dragon) are too tenuous to infer their direct relationship since they are pervasive in the ancient Near East.<sup>48</sup> Kawashima’s model bypasses this criticism, while still justifying the benefits of the comparison between the two different narratives. He aims to search the evolutionary point of the ancient Near Eastern intellectual history reflected in the available literature. The alleged contrast between Enuma Elish and the Priestly Creation account is not necessarily the point but at least evidence for the existence of such a point, which happened to

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<sup>47</sup> Cf. Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*, trans. Willard R. Trask (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1959), esp. 104–113 and *passim*; Kaufmann, *Religion of Israel*, 7–149.

<sup>48</sup> W. G. Lambert, “A New Look at the Babylonian Background of Genesis,” in *I Studied Inscriptions from before the Flood”: Ancient Near Eastern, Literary, and Linguistic Approaches to Genesis 1–11*, eds. Richard S. Hess and David Toshio Tsumura (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1994), 96–113; Åke W. Sjöberg, “Eve and the Chameleon,” in *In the Shelter of Elyon: Essays on Ancient Palestinian Life and Literature in Honor of G. W. Ahlström*, eds. W. Boyd Barrick and John R. Spencer, JSOTSup 31 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1984), 217–218; David Toshio Tsumura, *Creation and Destruction: A Reappraisal of the Chaoskampf Theory in the Old Testament*, (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2005), 36–57 (esp. 38–41).

remain available to us. My question is, in spite of this constructive aspect of his study, whether the break really exists if ever in the very spot where Kawashima located it.<sup>49</sup> And my answer is negative as I will argue now.

The alleged epistemic break of P's dualism that goes apart from Mesopotamian monism stands on tenuous ground. The only evidence of the Priestly metaphysical dualism that Kawashima offers is Gen 1:1–2, the beginning of P before creation. This brief remark exhausts the entire primordial epoch in P, while the corresponding time in Enuma Elish covers more than a half of its story—namely, the mythic or eternal time before creation. In that text, Kawashima emphasizes the description that the wind of God (רוח אלהים) 'hovers' over the matter, in order to support P's dualism. He seems to build on two points to justify the ultimate break between the deity and this material world. First of all, he stresses that the wind itself is not God. The Hebrew phrase רוח אלהים reveals that the wind is "a manifestation 'of' or 'from' God, but . . . not equivalent to God."<sup>50</sup> Second, even this wind is differentiated from the preexisting water because it 'hovers' over the surface of the water, which means they never mingle but oppose. This opposition, thus, is not such that the wind and the Deep 'fought' each other as Marduk and Tiamat did in Enuma Elish. Rather, it signifies that there was no involvement between them. God was wholly independent from the material world.<sup>51</sup> He says that the wind is not a second material element in relation to the waters, but "a second, wholly other principle, outside of and opposed to matter."<sup>52</sup> His understanding of רוח becomes highly ambivalent. Synthesizing the two points, it seems that this רוח rendered as "wind" is a representative of the deity though not the deity

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<sup>49</sup> It could also have covered the origin of any dualistic frame in P such as holy vs. profane and purity vs. impurity, if only the break were true.

<sup>50</sup> Kawashima, "Priestly Tent," 250

<sup>51</sup> Kawashima, "Priestly Tent," 250–251.

<sup>52</sup> Kawashima, "Priestly Tent," 251.

himself. What is this ‘divine wind’ on earth in his reading of the story? Why and how is this wind divine? Is it divine because he thinks (as many do) it is such one that a storm-god wields? Even if he does, does it make the wind different from a natural aerial phenomenon? If I understood him correctly, “divine breath” might have been a better rendering of רוח for his understanding of Gen 1:2 to distinguish it from the natural wind, though he does not suggest it. Even so, God’s breath is not necessarily distinct from the natural wind, if one posits the ancient mind believing that every meteorological phenomenon is actually from the deities. I am not sure how this “divine wind,” if it actually was some type of wind, could be so radically distinguished from the natural wind in his reading as well as in the ancient mind.

His reasoning is not enough to make his reading compelling. The transition from the first (i.e., the wind is not God himself) to the second point (i.e., God’s wind is transcendent) seems to me a rather circular reasoning if not a non sequitur. What he says is: the wind is God’s and so divine; the divine is transcendent and so the divine wind is too; therefore, Gen 1:2 describes the dualism of spirit and matter.<sup>53</sup> What he has to prove first is that the divine is transcendent. But he takes it for granted and goes directly to aver that this divine wind is not of nature but of the spiritual realm without further explanation or justification.<sup>54</sup> Also, Kawashima’s rigorous dualism is based on the prevailing translation of Hebrew רח"ף as “to hover,” which I think differently (see below). He is right when he said this verb has nothing to do with the battle between the deities in Enuma Elish. Yet his translation as “to hover” misleads him to imagine that there is no contact between רוח and תהום. That “the opposition of divine wind and primordial

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<sup>53</sup> My reconstruction of the logic in Kawashima, “Priestly Tent,” 250–251.

<sup>54</sup> Similar confusion also appears in earlier scholars, among others, Dillmann, *Genesis*, 1:58–59 and Gunkel, *Genesis*, 105–106; and more recently, M. S. Smith, *Priestly Vision*, 49–57 (esp. 56–57). This confusion is partly due to the fact that they assume that the etymological correlation guarantees the conceptual correlation. In other words, they think that the Hebrew word רוח can signify wind, breath, and spirit all at the same time. While this is possible, this cannot be determined lexically, but rather contextually.



Deep is a hypostasis of the dualism of spirit and matter”<sup>55</sup> is still unfounded, therefore. The Priestly plot does not seem to allude to the dualism at all.

To argue that P’s characterization of its deity is relevant to its moral vision for the readers, I will try to demonstrate in the rest of this chapter that P’s presentation of the deity in both Gen 1:2 and his *kābôd*-manifestation is not wholly other from this world.

### 3.5 רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים in Gen 1:2

This phrase is not as easy to understand as it appears at first sight. The difficulty arises from the ambiguity of both רוּחַ and אֱלֹהִים respectively. The latter should be translated with the upper case “God” if it designates the deity identified with Yahweh later in P, and yet it can otherwise refer to plural deities, “gods.” It is even more obscure when it could have an attributive function in construct chains—for example, “divine,” or “mighty.”<sup>56</sup> Hebrew רוּחַ also has several meanings such as “wind,” “breath,” and “spirit.” Moreover, it can have more specific connotations: to list a few, a life-sustaining force, a soul, a genius, and a faculty.<sup>57</sup> In this background, רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים is frequently considered, either “the mighty wind,” “the wind of God,” “the breath of God,” or “the spirit of God.”<sup>58</sup>

Usually, the meaning of a phrase is to be first sought from the usages of that phrase and its equivalents within the literary contexts where they appear, rather than from the usages of the two individual components respectively. When רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים and רוּחַ יְהוָה is translated as “the spirit

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<sup>55</sup> Kawashima, “Priestly Tent,” 251. Note that his understanding of transcendent *kābôd* depends on his reading of dualism in Gen 1:2 and elsewhere in P: Kawashima, “Priestly Tent,” 253–257 (esp. 256–257).

<sup>56</sup> Already from Benedict de Spinoza, *Theological-political Treatise* (= *TTP*), ed. Jonathan Israel, trans. Michael Silverthorne and Jonathan Israel, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 21–22.

<sup>57</sup> S. Tengström and H.-J. Fabry, “רוּחַ *rûah*,” *TDOT* 13:365–402.

<sup>58</sup> Cf. Sarna, *Genesis*, 6. Sarna suggests: “Still a third possibility lies in its use as a term heralding the arrival of God, expressing His immanence, or symbolizing His presence.” I think this understanding if beneficial, which I will mention more about below.

of God/Yahweh,” it frequently refers to some type of the charisma. It appears in various martial, prophetic, or artistic circumstances, especially in the Book of Judges. This meaning may be at first even more attractive because two more instances of רוח אלהים in P apart from Gen 1:2 have this meaning. In Exod 31:3 and 35:31 (likewise in Exod 28:3), God fills Bezalel with רוח אלהים that includes wisdom, intelligence, knowledge, and craftsmanship in order to construct the Tabernacle. Here, the connotation of the phrase is the intellectual and artistic charisma. One may be tempted to relate this building skill of רוח אלהים to the creation skill in Gen 1:2 as the same expression. However, there are still difficulties. What does it mean that the creative charisma flies on the surface of the earth? Why does this move disturbingly (רח"ף) in the beginning, rather than filling (מל"א) the earth as it fills (מל"א) the gifted persons? Furthermore, the רוח חכמה filling Joshua in Deut 34:9 (P), which is probably the same divine רוח, is not artistic, but rather executive if not martial. That is, רוח אלהים is not necessarily a creative skill. It is difficult to associate רוח אלהים in 1:2 with the paucity of its instances elsewhere in P. In fact, this phrase is not developed enough to be found as a consistent theme in P.

Thus, one cannot but consider various semantic options of the two components and their combinations as listed above, in light of other biblical texts if necessary. Among the interpretative options of the phrase, I took out one of the most popular options, “the mighty wind.”<sup>59</sup> D. Winton Thomas argues, I think correctly, that there is no clear textual evidence in the Bible for the mere superlative usage of אלהים with no religious significance.<sup>60</sup> Also, considering

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<sup>59</sup> For the purely superlative sense of אלהים, see J. M. Powis Smith, “The Use of Divine Names as Superlatives,” *The American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures* 45.3 (1929): 212–213, esp. 212–213; followed by von Rad, *Genesis*, 49 and Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 107–108. The superlative function of the divine name was already pointed out by Spinoza, *TTP*, 21. Cf. P. A. H. de Boer, “יהוה as Epithet Expressing the Superlative,” *VT* 24 (1974): 233–235; de Boer argues for the same function of יהוה, which is already noted by J. Smith, “Superlatives,” 212–213.

<sup>60</sup> D. Winton Thomas, “A Consideration of Some Unusual Ways of Expressing the Superlative in Hebrew,” *VT* 3 (1953): 209–224, esp. 209–219. This is also cited and followed by Tengström and Fabry, *TDOT*, 13:382 and William P. Brown, *Structure, Role, and Ideology in the Hebrew and Greek Texts of Genesis 1: 1-2:3*, SBL Dissertation Series 132 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993), 76. However, D. Winton Thomas, “Some Further Remarks

that אלהים in Gen 1:1 and 1:3 is obviously “God,” of רוח אלהים in Gen 1:2 is probably “God” as well.<sup>61</sup> Thus, one cannot disconnect this great wind completely from God.<sup>62</sup> I suggest three most plausible and more or less popular options, among which the latter two seem more plausible: 1) the wind of God, 2) the breath of God, and 3) the spirit of God in the sense of “God himself.” My purpose of considering all these alternatives is to show that none of them support a transcendent deity, whichever is correct.

### 3.5.1 The Wind of God or the Mighty Wind

It should be noted that P has no intention of describing the complete otherness, which Kawashima argues among others, between the divine and the material realms in Gen 1:2b: “רוח אלהים was moving to and fro on the surface of the water.” Many of those who blur the distinction between the wind and the spirit when discussing רוח אלהים think Gen 1:2b to be a link between Gen 1:2a and 1:3: i.e., the preparation for Gen 1:3 and רוח אלהים as the divine creative power.<sup>63</sup> They tend to equate the divine speech in Gen 1:3 and רוח אלהים in light of the following verse.

Ps 33:6

בדבר יהוה שמים נעשו  
וברוח פיו כל צבאם

By the word of Yahweh the heavens were made,

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on Unusual Ways of Expressing the Superlative in Hebrew,” *VT* 18 (1968): 120-24 seems to admit the mere superlative meaning of the divine name, though not explicit.

<sup>61</sup> Steck, Odil Hannes. *Der Schöpfungsbericht der Priesterschrift: Studien zur literarkritischen und überlieferungsgeschichtlichen Problematik von Genesis 1, 1-2, 4a*, Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments 115 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1975), 234–235; Gertz, *Genesis*, 43; and W. Brown, *Structure, Role, and Ideology*, 76.

<sup>62</sup> Likewise, Schmidt, *Schöpfungsgeschichte*, 84, who tries to embrace both divine and superlative at the same time, saying that רוח אלהים is a *strong wind sent by the deity*. Yet it is unclear to me whether he imagines that the wind is emitted from the deity or merely dispatched. If he means the former, would it not be better understood as the breath?

<sup>63</sup> Cf. Dillmann, *Genesis*, 1:59; Gunkel, *Genesis*, 105; W. Brown, *Structure, Role, and Ideology*, 76–77; M. S. Smith, *Priestly Vision*, 56–57; and Tsumura, *Creation and Destruction*, 74–76.

And by רוח (“breath” or “wind”) of his mouth all their host (was made).<sup>64</sup>

Their interpretation of this verse may be right and insightful. But if the speech from Gen 1:3 on were equated with the divine breath-wind (רוח אלהים) in Gen 1:2 and if it were this breath-wind that affected the movement of the waters, one should expect that the windy character of the speech, not the commanding authority, made the trees, fish, and animals, which is highly unlikely. Also, the constructive role of the breath-wind, apart from the speech/command, should be discredited because the wind plays no role in the rest of the creation account in P.<sup>65</sup> Even though Ps 33:6 may have received the common creation tradition with Gen 1:1–2:4a, there is no reason to assume that they use the tradition in the same way. The narrative in Gen 1:1–2:4a is clearly uniquely planned, expanded, and ordered by P’s author in a more systematic way. The Priestly deity could use the wind for his purpose as he used it to dry the waters in Gen 8:1,<sup>66</sup> but P does not insinuate it here; the wind motif does not develop any more in the creation narrative.

One way to see רוח אלהים, if it is ‘the wind of God,’ is to understand it as a constituent of the disorderly state before creation, in light of entire Gen 1:2:

והארץ היתה תהו ובהו  
והשך על פני תהום  
ורוח אלהים מרחפת על פני המים

And the earth was mishmash,  
And darkness (was) on the surface<sup>67</sup> of the Deep (i.e., the primordial water),

<sup>64</sup> They also cite Ps 104:29–30. By resorting to both psalms and Gen 1, they associate, if not identify, the wind, the breath, the spirit, and the speech (word). See Tengström and Fabry, *TDOT* 13:386–387; R. Albertz and C. Westermann, “רוח *rúah* spirit,” *TLOT* 3:1202–1220, esp. 3:1209; M. S. Smith, *Priestly Vision*, 54–55; and Tsumura, *Creation and Destruction*, 76.

<sup>65</sup> Cf. von Rad, *Genesis*, 49–50; Schmidt, *Schöpfungsgeschichte*, 81–84; Steck, *Schöpfungsbericht*, 234; Seebass, *Genesis I*, 66–67. Gertz, *Genesis*, 42–44. Steck, Seebass, and Gertz prefer “breath” over “wind”. Their breath tends to be identified not with speech, but with silence before speech.

<sup>66</sup> Cf. M. S. Smith, *Priestly Vision*, 54 and 229n102. But see Gertz, *Genesis*, 43n60, who distinguishes רוח in Gen 1:2 and that in 8:1.

<sup>67</sup> This is a conventional, literal translation of the compound preposition, על פני. This compound preposition is largely synonymous with the single preposition על. The latter can by itself mean “on” connoting the contact. The addition of פנה (“face”) may specify the meaning and yet the degree of specification may not be high. Cf. Exod 16:14 (P). This may be a comparable case with the pleonastic prepositional construction in Jenni, “Pleonastische

And רוח אלהים (was) flailing on the surface of the water.

The close relationship among the three clauses in Gen 1:2 can be grammatically defended. The structure of the three clauses are almost the same. All the three begin with ‘*waw* + noun’ followed by the nominal predicates except for the first colon that contains a copula (היה). Yet this copula is used only to “specify the temporal sphere of a nominal clause.”<sup>68</sup> The other two verbless clauses are dependent on and continue the tense specified by the first clause. One of the functions of the so-called disjunctive-*waw* clause is explanatory and parenthetical, giving background information.<sup>69</sup> Thus, Gen 1:2 may consist of three inserted clauses that provide a background before the main story line with a *wayyiqtol* form.<sup>70</sup> This function of Gen 1:2 is of no difference at least conceptually, whether one sees Gen 1:1 as a subordinate temporal clause, whose main clause begin with a *wayyiqtol* form in 1:3<sup>71</sup>; as a self-standing headline of entire Gen 1:1–2:4a<sup>72</sup>; or as an independent clause that describes the first step of God’s creation work.<sup>73</sup>

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Ausdrücke,” 201–206. The literal translation should not be so emphasized to suggest that this is a border line of the wind as spiritual and the waters as material.

<sup>68</sup> JM, 542 (§154m). Also, GKC, 454 (§141i) and 455 (§142c). Cf. J. M. Powis Smith, “The Syntax and Meaning of Genesis i. 1-3,” in *Old Testament Essays: Papers Read Before the Society for Old Testament Study At Its Eighteenth Meeting, Held At Keble College, Oxford, September 27th to 30th, 1927* (London: Griffin, 1927), 163–171, esp. 165.

<sup>69</sup> Lambdin, *Introduction*, 164; WO, 650–652 (§39.2.3)

<sup>70</sup> Cf. Jan Joosten, *The Verbal System of Biblical Hebrew: A New Synthesis Elaborated on the Basis of Classical Prose*, Jerusalem biblical studies 10 (Jerusalem: Simor, 2012), 165; WO 650–652 (§39.2.3).

<sup>71</sup> Pace Ibn Ezra who thinks the main clause begins with Gen 1:2. He is followed by only a few according to Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 95. Yet, see Cassuto, *Genesis*, 1:19–20, Speiser, *Genesis*, 5, 11–12; Baasten, “First Things First,” 169–188, esp. 178–179 and 185–186. They argue correctly that Gen 1:2 should have begun with *wayyiqtol*, not with *wə-X qatal*, if it were the beginning of the main clause.

<sup>72</sup> Schmidt, *Schöpfungsgeschichte*, 73–95 (esp. 73–76, 88–95); Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 93–101; Seebass, *Genesis I*, 64–65; Gertz, *Genesis*, 34–37 (also 37–44). For this view, a potential question needs to be answered: why a heading is a full, independent verbal sentence unlike the headings of the Prophets. Westermann’s view of the heading as reshaped as praise is unconvincing (p.94). Westermann supports this view by arguing that the content of Gen 1:2 corresponds better with that of the initial sentences of other creation accounts “when there was not yet” (pp.93–94). But syntactically, the “subordinate” temporal clause in Gen 1:1 (if one admits) corresponds better to the Akkadian counterparts than the independent clauses in Gen 1:2 do. No matter how they translate the syntactic relationship of Gen 1:2 to 1:3, whether as subordinate or as coordinate, Gen 1:2 is conceptually the pre-condition of Gen 1:3.

<sup>73</sup> For those who argue that Gen 1:1 is neither a heading nor a subordinate clause, see Sarna, *Genesis*, 5; von Rad, *Genesis*, 48–49; Nathan Chambers, “Genesis 1.1 as the First Act of Creation,” *JSOT* 43 (2019): 385–394. The difference between those holding on to Gen 1:1 as the heading and those to it as an initial main clause is that the former does not necessarily assume *creation ex nihilo* because of the pre-existing matters in Gen 1:2 as the

Also, the almost identical predicates of the second and the third lines (“on the surface of the primordial water” and “on the surface of the water”<sup>74</sup>) suggest רוח אלהים is as much a component of disorderliness as the earth and the darkness.<sup>75</sup>

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beginning. Yet the latter understands Gen 1:1, 2, and 3 to constitute a sequence. But they are not different in regarding Gen 1:2 as the pre-condition for God’s (second) ordering creation work from Gen 1:3 on.

The syntactic relationship of Gen 1:1–3 is notoriously a difficult one. For a summary of the problems and debates, see Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 93–98 and more recently Chambers, “Genesis 1.1,” 385–387. Chambers is one of the most recent defenders for the sequential relationship of the clauses in Gen 1:1–3. He posits the combination of the two different worldviews (bipartite vs. tripartite) in the Priestly creation account and accordingly interprets the different usages of the words “heaven (שמים)” and “earth (ארץ).” He is influenced by David Tsumura, “šmym,” *NIDOTTE* 4:160–166 (esp. 160–161) and Tsumura, *Creation and Destruction*, 58–72 (esp. 63–69). In this view, the tripartite worldview consists of the physical heaven (שמים), the dry land (ארץ), and the sea (ים), whereas the bipartite world consists of the theological heaven (still the same Hebrew word שמים yet with a different sense of ‘the divine realm’) and the physical universe (still the same ארץ, yet not restricted to the dry land but referring to ‘the earthly realm’ including the aerial heaven). In Chambers’s view, P’s author imposed the bipartite worldview (Gen 1:1 and 2:1) on the tripartite cosmological tradition (the rest of the Priestly creation account). Gen 1:1 speaks about the fact that God created his own abode and the entire (soon-to-be) human realm; Gen 1:2 focuses on the initial state of the non-divine realm yet to be complete. Consequently, the *waw* that introduces Gen 1:2 makes the whole verse serve Gen 1:1 epexegetically. (For this function of *waw*, see WO, 652–653 [§39.2.4]). This was already somewhat anticipated by Julius Wellhausen, *Die Composition Des Hexateuchs Und Der Historischen Bücher Des Alten Testaments*, 3. aufl. (Berlin: Reimer, 1899), 185n1, who admitted the inchoate creation in Gen 1:1. Yet slightly differently, Wellhausen argued that “the heaven and the earth” together refer to the chaos, neither to the cosmos nor to the divine and human realms. This idea is similar to what W. Brown, *Structure, Role, and Ideology*, 31 and 35 presents as the meaning of Gen 1:1–2 of LXX. Nonetheless, the acceptance of the inchoate, a formal heaven and earth in LXX does not necessarily imply that LXX already entertained the possibility of *creatio ex nihilo* (see W. Brown’s excursus in pp.32–35).

Chambers may be right when he argues that the relationship of Gen 1:1–3 cannot be resolved “on strictly philological grounds” (p.387), which is also noted by the previous scholars: among others, John Skinner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary On Genesis*, ICC (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1910), 12–13; Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 94; Levenson, *Creation*, 157n12; Baasten, “First Things First,” 186–188. Even if I concede that treating Gen 1:1 as an independent sentence (and also 1:2 as continuous as Chambers does) is grammatically no less possible, I am inclined to the subordinate relationship of Gen 1:1–3, which I presented above, due to comparative and narrative reasons. Comparatively, the similar syntactic beginning with a subordinate temporal clause of the Akkadian creation narratives and Hos 1:2 are suggestive if not definitive. (This opposition is equally applicable to those supporting Gen 1:1 as a heading.) Narratively, the motif of the theological heaven, i.e., the transcendent divine abode, is never picked up later not only in the creation account but also in the entire Priestly history. I do not see P distinguish a theological heaven from the natural one in its uses of שמים. Gen 17:22 might be considered as one of the few instances suggesting that the deity dwells in heaven. But the deity physically goes up from (above) Abraham. The destination of God’s ascension is of no interest here and elsewhere in P (and so is the division of the heavens by the expanse). There is no indication that the deity heads to a place beyond the aerial heaven. Chambers himself concedes that ‘the heaven’ of the binary phrase can refer to the physical sky in some places (p.389). Then, even the ancient readers might have not been able to recognize the theological heaven automatically by the word pair, “the heaven and earth.” This is not to completely deny the heaven as a divine abode in P’s pre-Sinaitic time. The deity might have been assumed to dwell somewhere in the sky, which is not sharply separated from the aerial sky.

<sup>74</sup> The Deep (תהום) and the water (מים) are identical. Cf. Skinner, *Genesis*, 19; Cassuto, *Genesis*, 1:25; Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 106; Gertz, *Genesis*, 43.

<sup>75</sup> Also noted by Schmidt, *Schöpfungsgeschichte*, 84 and Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 106–107.

The predicate of the motion of רוח אלהים, i.e., רח"ף, supports this understanding. Its basic meaning in G-stem may be “to flail, flounder” in light of Jer 23:9. The D-stem feminine singular participle of רח"ף, which is usually translated as “to hover,” implies an unstable, precarious, and stirring move.<sup>76</sup> And the other instances of D-stem in Deut 32:11 and also in the *Aqhatu* epic from Ugaritic literature are all interestingly related to the vulture (נשר) and its provoking move.<sup>77</sup> In other words, the wind of God that moves to and fro (מרחפת) is a disorderly move, probably “beating upon the surface of the waters.”<sup>78</sup>

While this is a generally well-suited picture for the narrative, a potential weakness of this dynamic understanding of the wind is that it may also fall into the same criticism as the creative wind does. That is, the wind is never dealt with in God’s creation, at least explicitly, whereas the other messy elements are controlled and ordered: the darkness on the first day of the creation (Gen 1:4–5) and the waters on the second and the third days (Gen 1:6–10). To avoid this narrative problem, one may still want to consider the other alternative understandings of רוח אלהים.

### 3.5.2 The Breath of God

<sup>76</sup> Cf. von Rad, *Genesis*, 49–50; Schmidt, *Schöpfungsgeschichte*, 83–84 (esp. 83n2); Gertz, *Genesis*, 43–44 (esp. 43n58).

<sup>77</sup> For the cognate word, see *KTU* 1.18:IV:20, 21, 31, 32 and 1.19:I:32 (pp.55–57). The situation in the *Aqhatu* epic is obviously hostile and offensive; cf. Wilfred G. E. Watson, “The Falcon Episode in the Aqhat Tale,” *JNSL* 5 (1977): 69–75 (esp. 73). In theory, the Ugaritic consonant clusters (*trhpn*, *arhp*, *trhp*) can be analyzed as G-stem. But in light of Hebrew, the D-stem is more plausible. Cf. Tropper, *Ugaritische Grammatik*, 551 (§74.412.26).

<sup>78</sup> J. Smith, “Genesis i. 1-3,” 168–169 (quoted from 169). Among his supporting data, we do not have sufficient evidence to take LXX understood רח"ף as aggressive. It is true that the LXX’s rendering of the Hebrew verb, ἐπιφέρω, may connote a hostile attitude with both active and consequently passive voices in Classical Greek (see LSJ). Yet it is hard to decide whether the inflected form, ἐπιφέρετο, is middle or passive, which occurs only in Gen 1:2 and Gen 7:18 (J. Smith’s 7:11 must be a mistake) in LXX. In Gen 7:18, ἐπιφέρετο, whether it is middle or passive, means floating without any aggressive connotation. Otherwise, his argument is cogent enough in my view.

As some scholars I mentioned above have attempted to identify the wind with the breath because of other biblical traditions that parallel divine רוח with divine speech, this wind of God could be the breath of God. This is not a new understanding of רוח אלהים and yet the implication of this translation in the story has often escaped scholars. It is important to note that the presence of the breath implies the presence of the one who breathes. This breath-wind cannot be equated with the natural wind; it is not just an owned item like the bow and arrows, which can exist separately and independently from the deity. Logically, Gen 1:2, therefore, assumes the presence of God. Then, why does it not state outright that God was present? In my opinion, P would not have felt necessary to inform the presence of someone breathing since it is too obvious. If God breathes on the surface of the waters, he must be there. Horst Seebass offers an interesting scenario. He infers that רוח אלהים is shivering in cold since the basic meaning of רח"ף is ‘to tremble.’<sup>79</sup> While this is on the right track in my mind, the description that “der Atem Gottes (‘the breath of God’),” rather than the deity himself, shivers with cold is incomprehensible. Also, I do not find a theme of the cold. Rather, the deity owns a fiery and shining garment (*kābôd YHWH*, see below) and is presumably himself shining too, which all might imply heat. It is the deity’s sensory proclivity to cleanliness and orderliness that is a consistent theme in P, which will be treated more in the following chapters. With Gen 1:2, therefore, P rather exhibits its poetic dexterity to brilliantly picture both the intense messiness before the creation and the character of the deity who is disgusted by the disorderly condition. The expression, רוח אלהים מרהפת, if rendered “the breath of God was flailing,” depicts an irritated if not suffocated breathing of the deity in the midst of the primordial anomic space. While huffing and puffing, the deity could not but order the messy space.

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<sup>79</sup> Seebass, *Genesis I*, 67.



### 3.5.3 From the Spirit of God to the Person of God to God Himself

Alternatively, one might want to re-evaluate a traditional rendering, “the Spirit of God,” if it were not to refer to a meteorological phenomenon (whether the wind is brought about by the divine or natural cause). A more difficult question is what we mean by the “spirit.” This English word is as complicated as the Hebrew רוּחַ. The *Oxford English Dictionary* suggests its several meanings and usages, among others, “the animating or vital principle,” “incorporeal or immaterial being,” “disembodied soul of a (deceased) person,” and “supernatural, incorporeal, rational being or personality.”<sup>80</sup> One can see that these many usages are not very different from the various meanings suggested by biblical scholars regarding the Hebrew רוּחַ.<sup>81</sup>

The spirit may evoke to modern readers an immaterial, incorporeal, and/or abstract being like a soul or an apparition. This is one of the potential meanings of רוּחַ: most closely, Job 4:15–16 if רוּחַ is a “spirit” in this verse, for which I am positive:

וְרוּחַ עַל פְּנֵי יַחֲלֵף תִּסְמַר שְׁעֵרֶת בְּשָׂרֵי יַעֲמֵד וְלֹא אֶכִּיר מַרְאֵהוּ תְמוּנָה לִנְגַד עֵינַי דְּמָמָה וְקוֹל אֲשָׁמַע

A spirit passed by me; the hairs of my flesh bristled. It stood still (stopped) but I could not discern its appearance, a form before my eyes. A voice after silence I heard.

The spirit’s definite figure, i.e., appearance (מַרְאֵה), is not perceptible. But, however vague and mysterious, it possesses at least a certain form (תְּמוּנָה), intellect, and individuality in that this רוּחַ can speak and be heard.

Admittedly, my reading of these verses is open to some criticism as much as the present Hebrew text is difficult. The problem lies in the interchange of the gender of the verbs, יַחֲלֵף-

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<sup>80</sup> “spirit, n.” *Oxford English Dictionary Online*. June 2021. Oxford University Press. <https://www-oed-com.proxy.uchicago.edu/view/Entry/186867?rskey=CLRmuL&result=1&isAdvanced=false> (accessed June 07, 2021).

<sup>81</sup> Cf. Tengström and Fabry, *TDOT*, 13:365–402; Albertz and Westermann, *TLOT*, 3:1202–1220.

יעמד-תסמר (masculine-feminine-masculine) as well as the semantic and orthographic ambiguities of some nouns. First of all, many scholars prefer to understand this רוּחַ as wind.<sup>82</sup> They point out that שַׁעֲרַת, which is parallel with רוּחַ, cannot be the collective hair because it is a *nomen unitatis*—namely, a noun of unit that is made by the addition of the feminine ending הַ to the masculine collective correspondent.<sup>83</sup> It is argued that שַׁעֲרַת is a by-form of סַעֲרָה “storm.” Yet the construct chain שַׁעֲרַת בְּשָׂרִי “the storm of my flesh” is semantically improbable and the piel verb תסמר without an object is syntactically uncommon. To avoid these problems, C. L. Seow argues that the final הַ ending of שַׁעֲרַת is not a feminine construct ending but an archaic feminine absolute ending. This means that בְּשָׂרִי “my flesh” is an accusative rather than a genitive, as if the direct object marker אֶת were present: תסמר שַׁעֲרַת אֶת-בְּשָׂרִי “A storm-wind made my body bristle.” He adduces several such instances: 2 Kgs 9:17; Isa 33:6; Jer 8:9; Jer 48:36; Ezek 28:13; Ps 132:4; in addition to Job 27:13.<sup>84</sup> However, the alleged archaic הַ ending in many if not all of the texts he cited as evidence is the construct ending, or at least an open question.<sup>85</sup> Above all, נחלת ערִיצִים in Job 27:13 is certainly a construct chain. In other words, reading שַׁעֲרַת as a noun in the absolute state “storm” is not preferable, both orthographically and morpho-syntactically. I would rather reappoint שַׁעֲרַת to שַׁעֲרַת as a feminine plural form in a defective writing. The defective writing of the feminine plural ending is not infrequent in Job: e.g., Job 6:19; 17:11; 19:27; 24:11, 13; 27:15; 32:11; 34:36; 37:8, 12; 41:10; and 42:11.

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<sup>82</sup> Among others August Dillmann, *Hiob*, 4. Aufl. (Leipzig: Hirzel, 1891), 37; Naphtali H. Tur-Sinai, *The Book of Job: A New Commentary* (Jerusalem: Kiryath Sepher, 1957), 82–83; E. Dhorme, *A Commentary on the Book of Job*, trans. Harold Knight (London: Nelson, 1967), 50–52; Norman C. Habel, *The Book of Job: A Commentary*, OTL (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1985), 127–128; David J. A. Clines, *Job 1–20*, WBC 17 (Dallas: Word Books, 1989), 111; and C. L. Seow, *Job 1–21: Interpretation and Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013), 401–403. For a fuller bibliography, see the relevant footnotes in Ken Brown, *The Vision in Job 4 and Its Role in the Book: Reframing the Development of the Joban Dialogues*, FAT 2/75 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2015), 75–84.

<sup>83</sup> Cf. GKC, 394 (§122t); WO, 105 (§6.4.2d); and JM, 466 (§134p).

<sup>84</sup> Seow, *Job 1–21*, 402.

<sup>85</sup> Cf. JM, 247 (§89o).

Seow’s objection notwithstanding, there are some cases that the plural subject, whether masculine or feminine, took the singular verbal predicate.<sup>86</sup> Clines has been cited by many scholars that רוח always refer to “wind” when it is masculine.<sup>87</sup> But as Ken Brown refutes, there is a clear case that רוח as a spirit is masculine in 1 Kgs 22:19–23.<sup>88</sup> In this vein, the problem regarding the D-stem, feminine singular verbal form תסמר can be justified in a couple of ways. Paul adduces Job 1:19 and the interchange of the genders reflected in the verbs when the subject is רוח, though רוח means “wind” in this case.<sup>89</sup> Paul also suggests the present D-stem form of סמ״ר could function as intransitive as the G-stem form in Ps 119:120. A case with an Akkadian parallel expression with *zaqāpu* in D-stem is used as intransitive as the root is in G-stem.<sup>90</sup> More likely, Paul’s Akkadian evidence suggests that תסמר may be the true D-stem factitive verb as usual. In one prayer text he cited, *eṭemmu* “dead spirit”—which may partly overlap with the Hebrew רוח in the sense of “spirit,” however differently from the modern mind “spirit” was regarded in the ancient Near East—was so terrifying that it made the hair of the suppliant stand on end.<sup>91</sup> The synonymous expression with the causative stem of *uzzuzu* “to stand” is even closer in that it is *demons* that make *the hair on the body* stand on end.<sup>92</sup> If the interchange of the genders of רוח in Hebrew and the Akkadian parallel expressions are accepted at the same time, Job 4:15b can be translated more plausibly as follows: “It (“the spirit”) made the hair of my body

<sup>86</sup> GKC, 464 (§145k) *pace* Seow, *Job 1–21*, 401.

<sup>87</sup> Clines, *Job 1–20*, 111.

<sup>88</sup> K. Brown, *Vision in Job 4, 77*; previously anticipated by Bernhard Duhm, *Das Buch Hiob: Erklärt*, KHCAT 16 (Freiburg: Mohr, 1897), 28 even before Clines.

<sup>89</sup> Shalom M. Paul, “Job 4:15 – A Hair Raising Encounter,” *ZAW* 95 (1983): 119–121, esp. 120. He also cites 1 Kgs 19:11, where the genders of the adjectives that attribute the single noun רוח change.

<sup>90</sup> Paul, “Hair Raising Encounter,” 120.

<sup>91</sup> *CAD*, 21:54, quoted by Paul, “Hair Raising Encounter,” 120 (his example for *zuqqupu*). The original text cited by *CAD* (BMS 53:9) can be found in Leonard W. King, *Babylonian Magic and Sorcery: Being “The Prayers of the Lifting of the Hand”* (London: Luzac & Co., 1896), 119–121 for the transliteration, partial translation, and some comments; see plate 67 for the cuneiform text (#53, lines 6–9). For another transliteration and translation of this text, see Anastasius Schollmeyer, *Sumerisch-babylonische Hymnen und Gebete an Šamaš* (Paderborn: F. Schöningh, 1912), 129–131 (#36).

<sup>92</sup> Paul, “Hair Raising Encounter,” 120.

bristled.” To trace the exact relationship between the Akkadian and Hebrew expressions is beyond the scope of this work. Thanks to previous studies on the Book of Job as likely to have been influenced by Mesopotamian literature, nonetheless, I can say this relationship was not impossible.<sup>93</sup> If one is hesitant to accept the parallel, one may simply repoint תסמר, from piel *tasammēr* to qal *tismōr* (semantically, from transitive/factitive to intransitive) without emending the consonantal text, which is reflected in my translation.

More words of demurrals can be made against the interpretation as “wind” in Job 4:15. Even though it is true that הל"ף “to pass quickly” can be used with the “wind” as in Isa 21:1 and Hab 1:11,<sup>94</sup> it is to be noted that God is the subject of הל"ף within the Book of Job itself (e.g., Job 9:11 and 11:10).<sup>95</sup> Moreover, רוח if it means a wind is unlikely to be the subject of יעמד “to stand” in Job 4:16 and then the verb is left without a subject.<sup>96</sup> A few solutions have been suggested for this. Clines comments that “תמונה may be the subject.”<sup>97</sup> Even though the grammatical disagreement of תמונה with the third person masculine singular verb is permissible in biblical Hebrew,<sup>98</sup> the subject is way too far from יעמד and interrupted by a full verbal clause with a different subject (i.e., the first-person common singular of אכיר). Dillman’s excuse that תמונה is in apposition to the implicit third masculine singular subject of יעמד is also unlikely for the same reason.<sup>99</sup> Norman C. Habel and Seow contend that the subject is unexpressed on

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<sup>93</sup> Shawn Zelig Aster, *The Unbeatable Light: Melammu and Its Biblical Parallels*, AOAT 384 (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2012), 236–254 stresses the potential Neo-Assyrian influence regarding the concept of “radiance,” while Magdalene devoted her entire monograph to demonstrate the Neo-Babylonian juridical procedures present in the background of the Book of Job: F. Rachel Magdalene, *On the Scales of Righteousness: Neo-Babylonian Trial Law and the Book of Job*, BJS 348 (Providence, RI: Brown Judaic Studies, 2007). Cf. Boyd, “Contact and Context,” 298–302.

<sup>94</sup> Dhorme, *Job*, 51; Clines, *Job 1–20*, 111; and Seow, *Job 1–21*, 401.

<sup>95</sup> Cf. John E. Hartley, *The Book of Job*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 112n19; Clines, *Job 1–20*, 111 and 130–131.

<sup>96</sup> James Harding, “A Spirit of Deception in Job 4:15? Interpretive Indeterminacy and Eliphaz’s Vision,” *Biblical Interpretation* 13 (2005): 137–166, esp. 148; K. Brown, *Vision in Job 4*, 77.

<sup>97</sup> Clines, *Job 1–20*, 111

<sup>98</sup> GKC, 465 (§145o), also cited by Clines, *Job 1–20*, 131.

<sup>99</sup> Dillmann, *Hiob*, 37.

literary purpose.<sup>100</sup> They understand the verb as: “(Someone) stood.” It may be at best possible, but there is no good reason for that speculation. I would be rather sympathetic to E. Dhorme’s claim that a word for the subject such as אלהים “God” or “a god” might have been lost.<sup>101</sup> It is not unlikely that אלהים could be implied by רוּחַ (“spirit”), in light of the similar theme and language of Job’s own vision in Job 9 and Zophar’s in Job 11 in general and more specifically the use of רוּחַ with the spirit in 4:15 and with God in 9:11 (cf. אֱלֹהִים and אֱלֹהִים in 9:2, 13) and in 11:10 (cf. אֱלֹהִים in 11:5–7) as the subjects of the verb. Even so, there is no reason to suppose its original presence in this text. The language of the vision in Job 4:12–16 is, perhaps intentionally, elusive for the identity of the spirit and the conjectured presence of אלהים is unsupported by other textual traditions.<sup>102</sup> I think the רוּחַ understood as “the spirit” is good enough to be the subject of the verb עָמַד and fits well with the text.

Relatively recently, some scholars have begun to defend the traditional rendering of רוּחַ in Job 4:15 with “spirit,” attending to literary-thematic connection to other biblical texts, all including 1 Kgs 22:19–23.<sup>103</sup> James E. Harding and Esther J. Hamori observed the patterned cases that רוּחַ appears as a divine agent to deceive the rebellious. In these cases, the spirit is not merely an inclination that works in humans, but itself an individual commissioned by the deity. In 1 Kgs 22:19–23, “a certain spirit” (הַרוּחַ) that volunteered to deceive the prophets of Israel was a member of the host of the heaven (צְבָא הַשָּׁמַיִם), i.e., Yahweh’s own court personnel. That רוּחַ was not merely a psychic impulse or an impersonal power, but rather an independent divine

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<sup>100</sup> Habel, *Job*, 127–128; Seow, *Job 1–21*, 402. But Seow’s reliance on the idea of the impersonal (i.e., indefinite) subject is by definition incorrect for this case. The impersonal subject is used for a subject without a particular referent, whether or not unidentified and mysterious. The subject of עָמַד has a referent definite and specific enough (someone in front of Eliphaz, though not identified with certainty). Cf. GKC, 460 (§144d); WO, 70–71 (§4.4.2) and 376–377 (§22.7); JM, 523–524 (§152d–fa) and 543–545 (§155b–i).

<sup>101</sup> Dhorme, *Job*, 51.

<sup>102</sup> K. Brown, *Vision in Job 4*, 78, 79–80.

<sup>103</sup> Harding, “Spirit of Deception,” 137–166; Esther J. Hamori, “The Spirit of Falsehood,” *CBQ* 72 (2010): 15–30 (esp. 24–26). Cf. K. Brown, *Vision in Job 4*, 75–79, 79–84; Duhm, *Hiob: Erklärt*, 28.

being with its own personality.<sup>104</sup> However, the form of the being is uncertain. Considering that the court image is terrestrial, the court members including Yahweh whom Micha *saw* might have been anthropomorphic. Whether these anthropomorphic forms in Micha's vision were immaterial is not revealed in the text. They were possibly so in that the spirit (רוח) could set itself in the mouths of the prophets and bewitch them while the prophets were unaware of what was happening. Yet one cannot rule out another possibility that the heavenly being could have changed its bodily form and matter to complete its mission in whatever manner in the ancient narrator's mind.

What interests me most in Hamori and others with the above biblical texts is that רוח can be a designation for an individual divine being as נפש to a human being. This usage of רוח may have nothing to do with the spiritual in contrast to the bodily being in my view. The dead beings are rather “called רפאים, אוב, or even אלהים (2 Sam 28:13).”<sup>105</sup> The usage may be related to the distinction between the divine being and non-divine being, but uninterested in whether the being is corporeal or not. This is supported by the observation of Harding and Hamori, if they are right, that several biblical texts assume a heavenly court as in 1 Kgs 22:19–23 when רוח is a spirit of falsehood.<sup>106</sup> And I suspect that this notion of רוח is not to be confined to the spirit of falsehood but well to be extended to divine beings in general including God himself—meaning “divine being” or “divine person.” There is at least a possibility that the רוח in Job 4:15 can be understood as God through Job 9:11 and 11:10, as I mentioned above. The following verse in Isaiah is corroborative for the use of רוח to designate God:

Isa 30:1a

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<sup>104</sup> Albertz and Westermann, *TLOT*, 3:1211; Tengström and Fabry, *TDOT*, 13:390; H. Niehr, “Host of Heaven צבא השמים,” *DDD* 428–430, esp. 428.

<sup>105</sup> Clines, *Job 1–20*, 111.

<sup>106</sup> Harding, “Spirit of Deception,” 137–166; Hamori, “Spirit of Falsehood,” 18, 25, and 29–30.

הוי בנים סוררים נאם יהוה  
לעשות עצה ולא מני  
ולנסך מסכה ולא רוהי

Alas, sons who are stubborn, declares Yahweh,  
By making<sup>107</sup> a plan but (it is) not **from me**  
and by pouring a libation<sup>108</sup> but (it is) not (**from**)<sup>109</sup> **my רוה**

By comparison of the second line with the third, one may see that the deity refers to himself by “my spirit.” Freer translations may be “myself” or “my person” (see below). The word רוה is a possible metonym if not synecdoche that may simply designate the deity without implying the word’s other connotations in other instances.<sup>110</sup> Also see Isa 31:3a:

ומצרים אדם ולא אל  
וסוסיהם בשר ולא רוה

And Egypt is **human** and not **god**.  
And their horses are **flesh** and not **רוה**.

The second line may seem at first to support a spirit-matter dualism, which in turn retroacts to the first line such as man-flesh versus god-spirit. However, that First Isaiah does not consider the deity as merely a spirit is well attested in Isa 6.<sup>111</sup> God appears with an anthropomorphic form only differing in size and power. One should not rashly apply a spirit-versus-matter dualism in

<sup>107</sup> For this gerund use of the infinitive, see WO, 608–609 (§36.2.3e).

<sup>108</sup> By identifying מסכה with נסך, “libation,” many scholars regard that the image of the expression is figurative of making a pact and forming an alliance: cf. Bernhard Duhm, *Das Buch Jesaia*, HKAT 3/1 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1892), 192; Otto Kaiser, *Isaiah 13–39: A Commentary*, OTL (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1974), 282; Hans Wildberger, *Isaiah 28–39: A Continental Commentary*, trans. Thomas H. Trapp, Continental Commentaries (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2002), 120; Willem A. M. Beuken, *Isaiah II Volume 2: Isaiah 28–39*, trans. Brian Doyle, Historical Commentary on the Old Testament (Leuven: Peeters, 2002), 134; and J. J. M. Roberts, *First Isaiah: A Commentary*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2015), 381–382. For other options, see Dillmann, *Jesaia*, 269 and Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1–39: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 19 (New York: Doubleday, 2000), 411. The exact sense of the phrase (נס"ך מסכה) is not important for my argument.

<sup>109</sup> The preposition מן is implied by parallelism with the previous line. Cf. August Dillmann, *Der Prophet Jesaia*, 5. Aufl. (Leipzig: Hirzel, 1890), 269.

<sup>110</sup> Similarly, Beuken, *Isaiah II*, 153n21.

<sup>111</sup> Pace Köhler, *Old Testament Theology*, 118; also cited in Albertz and Westermann, *TLOT*, 3:1216.

Isa 31:3a, therefore.<sup>112</sup> Here, God is not presented as someone who is radically transcendent, but *more* powerful and reliable.<sup>113</sup> The prophet introduces the deity as an option for alliance as among the nations. This parallelism only stresses who really has the power: God of Israel or the foreign empire? The spirit (רוח) is not the inner essence of, but only an equivalent for the deity (אל) in this verse.<sup>114</sup> If there is any dualism, it is that of divine versus human.

As רוח is to be understood as an independent divine being, רוח אלהים can be understood in two different ways, depending on how the construct chain is understood. The most familiar understanding of the construct chain may be the possessive. This understanding tends to separate the possessed from the possessor as Kawashima did: the רוח of or from God.<sup>115</sup> If this is the case, “the רוח (spirit) of God” may be understood similar to “the messenger (מלאך) of God.” This may be the sense of (רעה) רוח אלהים “the evil spirit of God” in 1 Sam 16:15, 16, 23 and 18:10—if these cases are not merely the charismatic impulse, which is not impossible especially in light of the verb צל"ח in 1 Sam 18:10. The nature of this construct chain was clarified previously by רוח יהוה “an evil spirit from Yahweh” in 1 Sam 16:14. In P, however, the sense of the divine messenger from God is rare; the only potential candidate might be משחית in Exod 12:13 and 12:23. Yet even the nature of משחית is debatable, whether it is “destroyer” or “destruction.” The function of the other potential divine beings such as Azazel (אזאזל) in Lev 16 and the billy-goats (שעירים) in Lev 17, if they were really personified, is mysterious. Even if the plural subject “we” really implied the divine assembly in Gen 1:26, רוח אלהים is unlikely to be a collective and it does

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<sup>112</sup> Wildberger, *Isaiah 28–39*, 211–214 (esp. 213); followed by Beuken, *Isaiah II*, 199–200 (esp. 200). Pace Dillmann, *Jesaja*, 281 and Duhm, *Jesaja*, 206–207, among others.

<sup>113</sup> See the translation of Hebrew אל, usually “god,” as “superpower” in Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1–39*, 425. Though I think “superpower” sounds too interesting, it grasps the important aspect of my understanding of “divine.”

<sup>114</sup> Albertz and Westermann, *TLOT*, 3:1216. Pace Beuken, *Isaiah II*, 200 saying “YHWH . . . is ‘spirit’ (רוח), the highest principle of life, which he bestows on human persons at creation.

<sup>115</sup> Kawashima, “Priestly Tent,” 250: “This wind is a manifestation “of” or “from” God, but, as grammar makes clear, it is not equivalent to God.”



not make sense in the narrative if just one divine being among many was meant to be flipping the waters in Gen 1:2. Yet the construct chain has various usages, and there is another more probable option. The syntactic relationship of this construct chain may be understood as “the genitive of association” in which the *nomen rectum* belongs to the “class” of the *nomen regens*.<sup>116</sup> For example:

Gen 2:15	The Garden (of) Eden	גן-עדן
Exod 7:19	The land (of) Egypt	ארץ מצרים
Gen 1:2	the person (of) God	רוח אלהים

This genitive construction is similar to a function of the apposition, and thus, the referents of the two components of the construct chain are equivalent.

While I argued so far that the רוח can refer to an individual divine being or mean “God himself” when it refers to God, the use of רוח in רוח אלהים as “God himself” can be further clarified from a different direction. Comparing רוח with נפש enables “God himself” to be a simpler rendering of רוח אלהים, as נפש is rendered as “person.”<sup>117</sup> One of the unambiguous examples of נפש as “person, oneself” is found in Isa 46:2b: תפשמ בשבי הלכה “they themselves went into captivity.” Not to mention many English versions, it is striking that LXX, which normally prefers one-on-one translations such as “their soul” or “their life,” rendered נפשמ with the intensive pronoun αὐτοί “themselves.” This is supported by the interchangeability between

<sup>116</sup> WO, 153 (§9.5.3h). Different grammars use different appellations: cf. “the genitive of the name” in GKC, 416 (§128k); “the genitive of proper noun” in JM, 129f. Though רוח אלהים is not a proper noun per se, it is used as such when it designates the God of Israel in its absolute state without the definite article; so is it translated with the upper case G without an article.

<sup>117</sup> For נפש meaning “person,” see H. L. Ginsberg, “Gleanings in First Isaiah,” in *Mordecai M. Kaplan Jubilee Volume: On the Occasion of His Seventieth Birthday, English Section* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1953), 245–259, esp. 246. Though W. Brown concludes otherwise, LXX could have understood רוח אלהים, i.e., πνεῦμα θεοῦ, as God himself. He points out that the Greek word had not been used for a strictly dualistic purpose before Christian apologists; see W. Brown, *Structure, Role, and Ideology*, 48–50n36, esp. 49n36: “The term’s divine cosmological significance in Greek philosophy reached its height in Stoicism, in which *pneuma* denoted a cosmic and universal power or substance, denoting even the manifestation of the deity.” (my underline)

the simple pronominal suffix and the suffixed נפש in an expression—שמ"ר (mostly in N-stem, volitive) + ל + the second person pronominal suffix.<sup>118</sup> The preposition ל (*lamed*) functions as so-called *dativus ethicus* (ethical dative)—usually either untranslated or translated as reflexive—in this expression.<sup>119</sup> The mere pronominal suffix is enough in most cases:

Deut 12:13

השמר לך פן תעלה עלתיך בכל מקום אשר תראה

Take care (*yourself*) lest you offer your burnt offerings in any place that you see.

But we have two cases that נפש appears between this ethical dative *lamed* and the pronominal suffix (Deut 4:15; Josh 23:11). Compare:

Josh 23:11

ונשמרתם מאד לנפשתיכם לאהבה את יהוה אלהיכם

Take great care (*yourself*) to love Yahweh your God.

It is better not to translate לך and לנפשתיכם in Deut 12:13 and Josh 23:11, respectively. If translated, the best option is “yourself” for both texts. There is nothing that נפש adds to this expression.

In relation to this, one may want to compare this expression with a similar phrase in Jer 17:21: השמר בנפשותיכם. This short sentence is more ambiguous than it appears at first because of diverse meanings of both נפש and ב respectively.<sup>120</sup> It may be just an equivalent expression with שמ"ר. In this case, בנפשותיכם may be translated reflexively as NJPS suggests—“Guard yourselves”—or rather untranslated. Even if one prefers to preserve the distinctive meanings of the preposition ב and chooses whatever meaning, the semantic difference between the presence

<sup>118</sup> Jenni, *Präpositionen*, 3:51. Jenni offers a complete list for this expression in 3:53 (§1971): Gen 24:6; 31:24, 29; Exod 10:28; 19:12; 34:12; Deut 4:9, 15, 23; 6:12; 8:11; 11:16; 12:13, 19, 30; 15:9; Josh 23:11.

<sup>119</sup> For the meaning and the function of *dativus ethicus*, see WO, 208–209 (§11.2.20d) and Jenni, *Präpositionen*, 3:48–53.

<sup>120</sup> For a few possible understandings, see *HALOT*, 4:1584 (s.v. שמר).

and the absence of נפש is blurred. For example, if following Jenni who took this כ as *beth pretii*, the translation would be: “Take Care at the cost of your lives.”<sup>121</sup> Compare the following three cases:<sup>122</sup>

Josh 6:26

וישבע יהושע בעת ההיא לאמר ארור האיש לפני יהוה אשר יקום ובנה את העיר הזאת את יריחו בכרו ייסדנה  
וכצעירו יציב דלתיה

Joshua took an oath at that time: “Cursed before Yahweh be the man who arises and builds this city, Jericho. *At the cost of his firstborn* he will lay its foundation. *At the cost of his youngest* he will set up its gates.”

1 Kgs 16:34a–ba

בימיו בנה חיאל בית האלי את יריחה באבירם בכרו יסדה ובשגב צעירו הציב דלתיה כדבר יהוה אשר דבר  
ביד יהושע בן נון

In his days, Hiel of Bethel built Jericho. *At the cost of Abiram*, his firstborn, he laid its foundation. *At the cost of Segub*, his youngest, he set up its gates.

2 Sam 14:7aa

והנה קמה כל המשפחה על שפחתך ויאמרו תני את מכה אחיו ונמתהו בנפש אחיו אשר  
Look! The entire clan arose against your maidservant. They said: “Give the one who struck his brother so that we may put him to death *for a price of the life of his brother* whom he killed.

These three instances have *beth pretii* prefixed to the familial terms or personal names, while only the last has נפש before the familial term. The sense of the three texts are not so far. The offender was supposed to cost the value of his נפש, whether נפש should be considered as “life” or “self.” This נפש-price is tantamount to the value of one’s entire being that is simply referred to by the familial designation or the proper name without נפש. I think this is generally applicable, no matter how the preposition כ is understood. If what I have been trying to demonstrate so far makes sense, the same conclusion can be made with רווח. Mal 2:15–16 shares the same verbal

<sup>121</sup> Jenni, *Präpositionen*, 1:156–157, especially, §1864.

<sup>122</sup> See Jenni, *Präpositionen*, 1:156–157, especially, §1861 (Exod 32:29; Josh 6:26; 1 Kgs 16:34) and §1862 (2 Sam 14:7; Jonah 1:14).

phrase שמ"ר ב with Jer 17:21. That they are the same expression, not only verbally but also functionally, is supported by their context that the phrase introduces and emphasizes prohibitions in both texts. The only difference in the former text is the appearance of רוח in place of נפש: "You shall take care (+ lit. *at the cost of your* רוח)." In light of נפש "oneself" in שמ"ר לנפש/בנפש, it is likely that שמ"ר ברוח is also "oneself," even as רוח is not necessarily refer to a divine being.

On the basis of the usages of רוח in the Bible that it frequently refers to an individual divine being, while not necessarily incorporeal, and also can mean "oneself" similar to some use of נפש, רוח אלהים can be understood as "God himself" in Gen 1:2. The dissatisfaction of "the spirit of God" is because of its often laden connotation that evokes the theological and philosophical dualism, which are exotic to the mindset of the ancient Near East including Israel and Judah.<sup>123</sup> The feminine grammatical gender of רוח with a feminine participial predicate is of no problem as grammatically feminine נפש can be inclusive of both binary genders in law as well as narrative in P.<sup>124</sup> This spirit of God in Gen 1:2, therefore, may refer to the Priestly deity himself without implying incorporeality and transcendence. Moreover, since נפש is never used for God in P, one may suspect that רוח is a divine equivalent term for human נפש designating an

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<sup>123</sup> According to W. Brown, *Structure, Role, and Ideology*, 48–50n36, even the Greek translation of רוח, πνεῦμα, does not exclude a material sense. The strictly spiritual nuance of the word did not come until the early Church Fathers. It does not appear in Greek philosophy, but its possibility is opened and represented in Hellenistic Judaism by Philo's expansion of the word's semantic range before the Church Fathers.

<sup>124</sup> In law: e.g., Lev 2:1; 4:27; 5:1; in narrative: e.g., Gen 46:8–27; Exod 1:5; 12:4. While נפש can be used for animals as well in P, it does not designate them without further modification: e.g. נפש חיה in Gen 1:20 and *passim*. The gender of some nouns is fluid in Hebrew. We also saw usually feminine רוח may be regarded as masculine in 1 Kgs 22:19–23 when the referent is conceivably male presumably because court officials before the king would be conceived as male.

individual person.<sup>125</sup> Though a later layer of Pentateuchal P, נפש אדם “human being, person” in H—besides simple נפש in P—may be regarded as a counterpart of רוח אלהים “God himself.”<sup>126</sup>

Finally, relating to what I have argued about the structure of Gen 1:2, I should vindicate myself that I am not claiming “God himself” is a cause of the primordial disorder. In this understanding, the structure of Gen 1:2 does not necessarily purport to list the individual constituents of the disorderly state such as the earth, the darkness, and רוח אלהים. Gen 1:2 rather portrays the preexisting messiness as a whole. This is why the three clauses are all nominal (except for the copula in the first; see above).<sup>127</sup> As nominal clauses, they describe together one static scene like a picture. The earth is mixed with, i.e., soaked and submerged in, waters. This mishmash is enfolded in darkness.<sup>128</sup> The third clause is likewise about the disorderly state even though it uses a fientive verb. Nevertheless, the D-stem fientive verb רח"ף is used not in the finite form, but in the participial form, the verbal adjective that marks an ongoing state. In other words, רח"ף in the participial form without any further finite verb in the clause intends to describe the deity moving uncomfortably in the untidy space as part of the entire picture, rather than to single out the action per se.<sup>129</sup> As the darkness surrounds the watery mishmash (על פני תהום), God himself is aggressively moving around the murky space on the waters (על פני המים). In this

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<sup>125</sup> While not common, there are cases of נפש designating the divine self or the divine life in the oath formula outside P: cf. Jer 51:14 and Amos 6:8.

<sup>126</sup> Num 31:35, 40, 46. Cf. Lev 24:17; Ezek 27:13; 1 Chr 5:21.

<sup>127</sup> Some may hesitate to use “nominal” or “verbless” clause for the third clause of Gen 1:2 because of the participial form of the verb רח"ף. Even though the participle may maintain some verbal characteristics, it is an adjective in Hebrew, strictly speaking.

<sup>128</sup> Baruch Halpern, “The Assyrian Astronomy of Genesis 1 and the Birth of Milesian Philosophy,” *Eretz-Israel: Archaeological, Historical and Geographical Studies* 27 (2003): 74\*–83\*, esp. 74\*–75\*. Similarly, Cassuto, *Genesis*, 1:21–23; Jack M. Sasson, “Time . . . to Begin,” in “*Sha'arei Talmon*”: *Studies in the Bible, Qumran, and the Ancient Near East Presented to Shemaryahu Talmon*, eds. Michael Fishbane and Emanuel Tov (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1992), 183–194, esp. 188; W. Brown, *Structure, Role, and Ideology*, 73–75. Similar to the case of רוח אלהים, they refuse to rely mainly on “the etymological signification of its two component words” (cited from Cassuto, *Genesis*, 1:22). For a recent thorough philological study on תהו ובהו, see Tsumura, *Creation and Destruction*, 9–35.

<sup>129</sup> Similarly understood, Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 106. For this function of the Hebrew participle, see WO, 614 (§37.1f), 624 (§37.6b), 626 (37.6e); JM, 380 (§121c).

picture, God's uncomfortable feeling is externalized by his unstable movement around the primeval disorder.

### 3.5.4 Summary and Implication

I tried to understand רוח אלהים within the primordial picture that P's author may have supposed. Admittedly, my attempt to draw a more plausible state before creation by reading Gen 1:2 could not avoid some degree of speculation because of P's laconism on the primordial state. This is why I just laid out the three most plausible options without deciding on one. Among the three, either "the breath of God" or "God himself" seems to me more coherent for the narrative in that they do not make a narrative gap with a blind motif. I do not see any further (con)text provide a more definitive ground to decide between the two, unfortunately. But more important is that both alternatives describe the same disorderly state before creation and the same divine character eventually. Namely, the messiness is so severe and suffocating to the extent that the deity could not bear it. This deity is neither transcendent in the philosophical, dualistic sense, nor of spirit opposed to matter insofar as he is much affected by the state of the primordial matters.

Still, inquisitive readers may want to ask questions such as how long the deity existed in this eternal disorderly state, why the deity did not make the world earlier, and where the deity was in relation to the mishmash before the creation. Yet such questions are hard to answer, however entertainable. P merely provides the time when the deity began to create the world; remember the Priestly creation account begins with a subordinate clause according to my reading along with other creation accounts in the ancient Near East. P's author was barely interested in those questions of how the deity lived and what he did before creation, unlike Enuma Elish.

Having said that, the artificial starting point of the creation may further disclose the relationship between the Priestly deity and the world. The deity may not have been severely affected by the mishmash before Gen 1:2, the time in which the narrative is not interested. It may have been because the deity was outside the mishmash, which had not been separated from the space where he dwelled but was only a part of that larger space. When the deity came to the mishmash, whether to create the world out of it or some other reason, he found it was distasteful to him and decided to configure the mixed materials as he liked. This may suggest that the proximity affected his sensory awareness, as with human senses. Moreover, the order and disorder that I have been distinguishing is more of the etic than the emic concept according to the narrative presentation. P transposes the order and disorder into the matter of the divine sensory preference, which will become more explicit in the next chapter. The divine aesthetic preferences in the Priestly history become the cosmological and ethical matter now supported with the divine authority. This coalescence of divine aesthetics and worldly ethics in the Priestly history is recapitulated and anticipated with the recurring Hebrew term טוב “good” from the very beginning, i.e., the creation account.

### **3.5.5 Excursus: The Combat Myth (*Chaoskampfmythos*) in P?**

Since many studies relate רוח אלהים with a storm-god exerting the wind, I would like to stress that the divine breath and/or wind has no connection with the wind of the storm-god in Mesopotamia or Canaan. The Priestly deity is often too conveniently identified with the storm-god because Gen 1:2 is regarded to illustrate the Combat Myth motif: a storm-god struggling with and conquering the primordial waters or sea monsters. It is supposedly a well-known motif in the ancient Near East. As mentioned briefly above, one of the famous examples is in Enuma

Elish from Mesopotamia: the storm-god Marduk<sup>130</sup> subdues Tiamat, the primordial water, and creates the world out of her corpse. The victory of the Canaanite storm-god Baal over Yamm (sea-god) suggests the same popular motif in the Canaanite myth, although the Ugaritic example is not related to the creation of the world as in Enuma Elish.<sup>131</sup> This motif also fleshes itself out in various venues in the Bible. It is alleged that Yahweh struggles with the waters or sea dragons in many psalms such as Pss 74:12–17; 89:10–15; and 104:1–9.<sup>132</sup>

A few scholars questioned this widespread notion: Rebecca S. Watson, among others. Watson points out the four problems in using the concept of *Chaoskampfmythos* in biblical scholarship since Gunkel as follows.<sup>133</sup> First, the word “chaos” that was originally borrowed from a Greek-Latin concept is not accurate for the biblical interpretation. It is often more confusing since many biblical scholars personify the “chaos.”<sup>134</sup> Second, biblical scholars automatically relate this Combat Myth motif to creation on the basis of Enuma Elish, which

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<sup>130</sup> It seems that more scholars think of Marduk as a storm-god. See Thorkild Jacobsen, “The Battle between Marduk and Tiamat.” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 88 (1968): 104–108, esp. 105–106, followed by T. Abusch, “Marduk מַרְדּוּךְ,” *DDD* 543–549, esp. 548. Jacobsen suggests that Marduk’s logographic spelling <sup>d</sup>AMAR.UD can be translated either as “Son of the sun” or “Son of the storm,” but he discusses some clues for Marduk’s characteristics of the latter in Enuma Elish. However, Brisch, rejects the etymology: Nicole Brisch, “Marduk (god),” *Ancient Mesopotamian Gods and Goddesses*, Oracc and the UK Higher Education Academy, 2016 [<http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/amgg/listofdeities/marduk/>]. Yet she does not discuss about Marduk’s alleged storm-god characteristic in Enuma Elish (esp. IV:39–50) before he receives kingship and composite divine nature. Likewise, Tsumura, *Creation and Destruction*, 40n32. Oshima defines Marduk as the god of watercourses and fertility, based on Enuma Elish: see Takayoshi Oshima, “The Babylonian God Marduk,” in *The Babylonian World*, ed. Gwendolyn Leick, Routledge Worlds (New York: Routledge, 2007), 348–360, esp. 352 and 357n27.

<sup>131</sup> The Combat Myth does not require a creation account.

<sup>132</sup> John Day, *God’s Conflict with the Dragon and the Sea: Echoes of a Canaanite Myth in the Old Testament*, University of Cambridge Oriental Publications 35 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), esp. 49–53 for Gen 1:2. See also John Day, *Yahweh and the Gods and Goddesses of Canaan*, JSOTSup 265 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 98–107.

<sup>133</sup> Rebecca S. Watson, *Chaos Uncreated: A Reassessment of the Theme of “Chaos” in the Hebrew Bible*, BZAW 341 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2005), 12–31.

<sup>134</sup> Yet I do not necessarily agree with her (and others’) view of “the earth” as only the dry land and of תהו ובהו as “waste, emptiness” in the first clause of Gen 1:2: e.g., Watson, *Chaos Uncreated*, 16, 18; Tsumura, *Creation and Destruction*, 9–35 (esp. 33–35); and Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 102–104. This interpretation is, however, theologically interesting if one assumes that Gen 1 presents some type of *creatio ex nihilo*, which I do not share. I rather agree with Halpern, “Assyrian Astronomy,” 74\*–75\* for the initial mingled state of the primordial matters in Gen 1:2 (see below).



began already with Gunkel. The creation is only a small portion even in Enuma Elish and many other Mesopotamian and Canaanite myths do not relate the combat motif with creation. Third, the idea of combat is misleading. Watson argues that the combat assumes the parity between the two parties and yet no enemy if personified hardly rivals Yahweh in Psalms and elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible including Gen 1. Finally, she indicates that the comparative method is so uncritically applied that scattered tenuous biblical allusions stimulate scholars to read extra-biblical motifs too easily into the biblical texts.

Though Watson's focus is on poetic corpus in the Hebrew Bible, many of her insights are well applicable to the scholarship in P.<sup>135</sup> One should be cautious to expect to find a traditional motif intact in a narrative such as P, plotted carefully by an author. There is no reason to determine the Priestly deity as a storm-god. Tsumura properly challenges that the etymological relation between the primordial water in P, *tāhom* (תהום), and Mesopotamian goddess Tiamat does not warrant their mythological consanguinity: "Is there any reason to think that a term used as a common noun is the depersonification of a divine name, when both (i.e., Hebrew *tāhôm* and Akkadian Tiamat) can go back to their original common noun?"<sup>136</sup> The same question well applies to Canaanite Yamm as well. Also, Yahweh's controlling of the waters in Gen 1:6–7 and 9–10 is only one step of the entire process; it is not more noticeable than the other days if one abandons the bias. If רוח אלהים is understood as "the breath of God" in Gen 1:2, the chasm between the Priestly deity and storm-gods widens; neither Marduk nor Baal arouses a wind by exhalation.

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<sup>135</sup> Though my observations on P were made independently from her study, I found out many of my points had been already anticipated by her. Especially, I avoid using the word "chaos," in presenting my reading of Gen 1:2, following her persuasive suggestions.

<sup>136</sup> Tsumura, *Creation and Destruction*, 36–57. The quote is from p.42 (my parenthesis).

Some scholars may still look for P's Yahweh as the storm-god conquering the waters in Gen 8:1b.<sup>137</sup> However, merely bringing the wind and drying the water should not rashly evoke the storm-god image. The reason that scholars often do so is because of its probable connection to the Mesopotamian flood story, Atrahasis, which I think is right.<sup>138</sup> In this story, Enlil, the Lord of the Air, brings the flood. Again, even though it is true that there is a higher mythological affinity between these two than Gen 1 and Enuma Elish, one should be precise in comparing the two stories.<sup>139</sup> Even if Enlil were indeed considered a storm-god in Mesopotamian religious history, which is debatable,<sup>140</sup> at least Enlil in Atrahasis (also in the parallel version in Gilgamesh tablet IX) does not appear to be particularly a storm-god. The flood was only one of the three disasters to reduce the human population. In the flood disaster as well as in the entire story, Enlil was presented as the king of the gods, rather than specifically a storm-god. He intends the flood, but it is performed by other gods, especially Adad who was known more specifically as a storm-god. It is not surprising that the king of the gods, Enlil, has a storm-god attribute, in light of the famous case that Marduk receives the fifty names, implying the transfer of other deities' attributes, after he became the king of the gods.<sup>141</sup> Yahweh is also depicted as regal in the universe in P and other biblical traditions. Though he is not presented as the king of the gods since no other divine beings, if any are fully personified, play important narrative roles

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<sup>137</sup> Cf. M. S. Smith, *Priestly Vision*, 54 and 229n102.

<sup>138</sup> I already argued for this in the previous chapter. See the references there.

<sup>139</sup> Moran, "Atrahasis," 61, adds the caveat that the contrast is more significant.

<sup>140</sup> A strong supporter of the identification of Enlil as a storm-god, based on the divine name, is Thorkild Jacobsen, "The lil<sub>2</sub> of <sup>d</sup>En-lil<sub>2</sub>," in *Dumu-E<sub>2</sub>-Dub-ba-a: Studies in Honor of Åke W. Sjöberg*, Occasional Publications of the Samuel Noah Kramer Fund 11 (Philadelphia: Babylonian Section, University Museum, 1989), 267–276. His etymological analysis of the divine name is rejected by Piotr Steinkeller, "More on the Archaic Writing of the Name of Enlil/Nippur," in *Why Should Someone Who Knows Something Conceal It? Cuneiform Studies in Honor of David I. Owen on His 70th Birthday*, (Bethesda, MD: CDL, 2010), 239–243. Cf. Adam Stone, "Enlil/Ellil (god)," *Ancient Mesopotamian Gods and Goddesses*, Oracc and the UK Higher Education Academy, 2016 [<http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/amgg/listofdeities/enlil/>].

<sup>141</sup> Enuma Elish VI:121–VII:144. According to W. Lambert, *Babylonian Creation Myth*, 456, the number of the divine names is actually fifty-one.

in P,<sup>142</sup> it is more appropriate that Yahweh has an attribute of the storm-god as the supreme being in the world if Gen 8:1 indeed presupposes P's deity as a storm-god. The religious evolution from polytheism through monolatry to monotheism, which the religion of Israel and Judah likely experienced, entails the convergence, in M. S. Smith's term, that involves "the coalescence of various deities and/or some of their features into the figure of Yahweh."<sup>143</sup> This tendency must be shared strongly in Israel and Judah where the course of monolatry was vigorously proceeding at least in light of biblical evidence.<sup>144</sup> Moreover, if Yahweh is to be compared with Enlil, he should be compared as well with Ea, who instructed the survivor hero and was certainly not a storm-god.

In addition, it should be noted that the Priestly deity is not depicted as a storm-god elsewhere in P. Above all, his theophany is never accompanied by the thunders and lightnings; compare Exod 24:17 and 40:34–38 (both P) with Exod 19:16 (J).<sup>145</sup> It is true that P's God appears with the cloud. But that cloud may be considered as a divine vehicle and/or a traffic signal.<sup>146</sup> The cloud has nothing to do with the weather ever in P. In the Priestly layer of Exod 14,<sup>147</sup> God does not bring wind to split the sea; compare P and J layers of 14:21 respectively.<sup>148</sup>

ויט משה את ידו על הים ויבקעו המים Exod 14:21a, b (P)

<sup>142</sup> A possible exception may be Exod 12:13 and 12:23. But the exact sense of משהית is debatable, whether it is "destroyer" or "destruction." Cf. Sommer, *Bodies of God*, 76–77. Other possible divine beings in P, though debatable, are found in Gen 1:26 (the first-person plural pronouns); Lev 16:8, 10, 26; 17:7; 18:21; and 20:2–5. Even if they were all considered as divine beings in P, the author did not personify or grant agency to them to the sufficient extent that their nature, character and relationship to God can be examined.

<sup>143</sup> Mark S. Smith, *The Early History of God: Yahweh and the Other Deities in Ancient Israel*, 2nd ed., Biblical Resource Series (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 7–8 and *passim* (esp. chapter 6). Similarly, Tikva Frymer-Kensky, *In the Wake of the Goddesses: Women, Culture, and the Biblical Transformation of Pagan Myth* (New York: Free Press, 1992), 86–88 and Peter Machinist, "Once More: Monotheism in Biblical Israel," *Journal of the Interdisciplinary Study of Monotheistic Religions* 1 (2005): 25–39. Amun-Re is an Egyptian example for the similar convergence of the deities: Vincent Arieh Tobin, "Amun and Amun-Re," *OEA* 1:82–85, esp. 1:84.

<sup>144</sup> M. S. Smith, *Early History*, 195–199.

<sup>145</sup> One should not fill the gap from Ezek 1:4.

<sup>146</sup> For example, Exod 40:36–37 and Num 10:11–12.

<sup>147</sup> I follow the source division in Baden, *Composition*, 193–213 (esp. 202–205).

<sup>148</sup> Following the source analysis of Baden, *Composition*, 200–201.

And Moses spread his arm over the sea and the waters were split.

ויולך יהוה את הים ברוח קדים עזה כל הלילה וישם את הים לחרבה Exod 14:21aβ–ay (J)  
And Yahweh made the sea go away with the strong east **wind** all night and made the sea dry land.

Admittedly, the Combat Myth does not require a wind for the storm-god to defeat his enemy in the Canaanite Baal myth, which is considered more related to this biblical motif by some scholars.<sup>149</sup> However, nothing else seems really to correspond to the Canaanite as well as the Mesopotamian myths. Yahweh does not split a dragon, an enemy, but rather the natural sea.<sup>150</sup> The enemy in Exod 14 is not identified with what was *split* but with Pharaoh and Egypt who *drowned* by what was split. Namely, the sea is not the enemy that the deity should conquer as it was neither in the Priestly flood account. It did not menace the Israelites, not to mention the deity, in the story. This case should be differentiated from the category that Debra Scoggins Ballentine terms “Yahweh versus Human Enemies”: among others, Isa 30:7; 51:9–11; Ps 87:4; and Ezek 29:2–6. In these texts, the political enemies of Israel are explicitly identified with “the dragon.”<sup>151</sup> But in Exod 14, I do not see such an identification.<sup>152</sup> The sea is never an agent or foe

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<sup>149</sup> For example, Cross, *Canaanite Myth*, 131–133; Day, *God’s Conflict*, 96–97. Cf. Bernard F. Batto, *Slaying the Dragon: Mythmaking in the Biblical Tradition* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992), 102–152 (chs. 4–5); William H. C. Propp, *Exodus 1–18*, AB 2 (New York: Doubleday, 1999), 554–561 (esp. 557–559); Debra Scoggins Ballentine, *The Conflict Myth and the Biblical Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 90–98. They conveniently use both the Canaanite and the Mesopotamian myths at the same time for comparison with Exod 14 under the umbrella term, ‘the Combat Myth,’ without specifying the type of relationship among the three narratives. While generally similar to them, Dozeman assigns the Mesopotamian tradition to P and the Canaanite tradition to non-P: see Thomas B. Dozeman, *Commentary on Exodus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 300, 304, and 310.

<sup>150</sup> I do not agree that splitting the sea suggests God’s violent act toward the sea in P. *Pace* Ballentine, *Conflict Myth*, 95–96.

<sup>151</sup> Ballentine, *Conflict Myth*, 98–108. Even though she claims to find the conflict motif in Exod 14, she avoids including Exod 14 in her section that deals with this category.

<sup>152</sup> The association of Reed Sea to Combat Myth is unmistakable in Isa 51:9–11. Cf. Klaus Baltzer, *Deutero-Isaiah: A Commentary on Isaiah 40–55*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001), 355–359 (esp. 357); H. G. M. Williamson, *The Book Called Isaiah: Deutero-Isaiah’s Role in Composition and Redaction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 83–86; Claus Westermann, *Isaiah 40–66: A Commentary*, OTL (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1969), 240–243; Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 40–55: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 19A (New York: Doubleday, 2002), 332–333; Shalom M. Paul, *Isaiah 40–66: Translation and Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012), 366–371; and John Goldingay and David Payne, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Isaiah 40–55*, 2 vols. (London: T&T Clark, 2006), 2:236–240. In this text, Second Isaiah juxtaposes

but always an instrument in P—already from the very beginning when the untidy waters were coordinated in Gen 1:6–10.<sup>153</sup> Batto and Thomas B. Dozeman pay undue attention to the word בק"ע “to split,” in order to relate Exod 14 with the Combat myth.<sup>154</sup> Baal did not bisect Yamm as Yahweh divides the sea in Exod 14:16 and 14:21, even though he may have dismembered and scattered Yamm.<sup>155</sup> Marduk indeed divided Tiamat in two.<sup>156</sup> Yet mere splitting and nothing more cannot make the two narratives analogous. Moreover, the image of Marduk splitting Tiamat is at least not identical with Exod 14. Marduk must have split Tiamat horizontally, considering his creation of the heaven and earth out of the latter’s corpse. The split in Exod 14 is, however, vertical. Admittedly, it is not necessary that every element should be exactly identical to argue that Exod 14 and Enuma Elish or the Baal myth, as well as any two texts, are related. Yet differences piling up on differences are corroborative.

Even though P could have used some traditional mythical or conventional literary motifs in the air to make up its own story, I am skeptical that the author intended to evoke that specific motif to present Egypt as the sea-monster. It is unfair to read an entire mythic episode or plot into the Priestly text because of any tenuous correspondence as if the biblical author could not

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originally two separate traditions to link them (i.e., Creation and Exodus). Even if Williamson is right to say that this combination of the two traditions in Isa 51:9–10 might have already been coined by First Isaiah as alluded to in Isa 30:7, P seems to use the two in their original contexts respectively. If one does not posit P as exilic or postexilic time when the two traditions appear merged more frequently, it is not necessary to see Exod 14 with the Combat Myth motif to my mind. For the mythical element in Isa 30:6–7, see Göran Eidevall, *Prophecy and Propaganda: Images of Enemies in the Book of Isaiah* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2009), 98–101; Wildberger, *Isaiah 28–39*, 130–138; Beuken, *Isaiah II*, 155–157; Roberts, *First Isaiah*, 385–386; Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1–39*, 413–414.

<sup>153</sup> It is Yahweh who brings the flood in Gen 6:17 and Moses who is the agent to split the sea in Exod 14:16. The primordial sea is only a disorderly matter, not the rebellious enemy. Contra Levenson, *Creation*, 10–11 and Batto, *Slaying the Dragon*, 86–87. Batto is not unaware of but ignores Yahweh’s agency to bring the flood in Gen 6:17 (see p.214n30).

<sup>154</sup> Batto, *Slaying the Dragon*, 110 and 136; Dozeman, *Exodus*, 300 and 304. Both anticipated by Cross, *Canaanite Myth*, 131–133.

<sup>155</sup> Depending on how to analyze the roots of *yšt* in *KTU* 1.2:IV:27 and *bī* in 1.2:IV:28–29. See Pierre Bordreuil, and Dennis Pardee *A Manual of Ugaritic* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2009), 160 and 163; M. S. Smith, *Baal Cycle*, 1:354 and 1:357. For a further caveat, see Propp, *Exodus 1–18*, 559.

<sup>156</sup> Enuma Elish, IV:135–138

compose a narrative without an existing mythical structure. Some old traditional motifs could be there and knowing them may help decode incomprehensible literary conventions that now escape us. But as I have shown, the mythological motifs in Exod 14, if any, were developed and transformed within the larger context of P's style and plot. P's story in Exod 14 cannot be defined merely as a historicized Combat Myth. It is a different genre, whose complexity and uniqueness deserve an independent analysis from the alleged mythical paradigm.

Also, *kəḫôḏ YHWH*, the Priestly term to describe the deity's public appearance in my view (see below), depicts the extreme brightness and heat that attends this appearance. This seems like a sun-god more than a storm-god. The sun-god Shamash in Mesopotamia is the god of justice (and divination), for example, as he is portrayed on the top of the Hammurabi stele.<sup>157</sup> This image is apposite to P's Yahweh as the (quasi-)lawgiver. Admittedly, the laws in P are concentrated on the cult and different in character, apart from H, from the law collections such as the Hammurabi Laws, the Covenant Collection, or the Deuteronomic Collection. Nonetheless, Yahweh's instructions and the context in which at least the bulk of the laws were given in the important juncture of the Priestly narrative as corresponding to E's Covenant Collection are sufficient to present him as the guardian of social order and peace in some sense. The law-giving image is there because the so-called cultic laws, as well as the narrative, in P aim to reveal the divine character that is disgusted by disorder and turmoil in the society (see more in the following chapters). In this respect, Yahweh may be comparable to Shamash as god of justice, though Shamash may not be himself a lawgiver.<sup>158</sup>

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<sup>157</sup> Though the stele is from the first half of the second millennium, this image of Shamash continued in the first millennium. Cf. Ruth Horry, "Utu/Šamaš (god)," *Ancient Mesopotamian Gods and Goddesses*, Oracc and the UK Higher Education Academy, 2013 [<http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/amgg/listofdeities/utu/>].

<sup>158</sup> Shalom M. Paul, *Studies in the Book of the Covenant in the Light of Cuneiform and Biblical Law*, VTSup 18 (Leiden: Brill, 1970), 7–8.

In the history of religion of ancient Israel and Judah, there is actually textual evidence that Yahweh absorbed the solar imagery (e.g., Deut 33:2; Mal 3:20) and solar worship is performed, probably, within the boundary of the Yahwistic cult (e.g., 2 Kgs 23:5, 11; Ezek 8:16).<sup>159</sup> This textual evidence is not incompatible with “the discovery of a large number of horse-and-rider statuettes in Jerusalem” and elsewhere in the contemporary period, though the connections should be interpreted with some cautions.<sup>160</sup> According to Keel and Christoph Uehlinger, the horses and chariots in 2 Kgs 23:11 might have been the real rather than iconographic ones, which reflects the influence of the Neo-Assyrian divinatory practice especially in Sargonid time.<sup>161</sup> But the archaeological contexts where the horse-and-rider statuettes are found are in the realm of family (or private) religion.<sup>162</sup> In the view of Keel and Uehlinger, these statuettes might have been not the sun god himself but his entourage such as the messengers or the army (the Host of Heaven).<sup>163</sup> They might have had a protective role, different from the divinatory role of the live horses in the temple cult.<sup>164</sup> Though the textual and the iconographic data suggest some different socio-religious locations and functions between them, they together reveal the widespread popularity of solar worship in the Judean religious world. Even though Keel and Uehlinger hesitate to confirm confidently that it was particularly Yahweh

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<sup>159</sup> M. S. Smith, *Early History*, 148–159. Solar worship in Yahwistic cult is most enthusiastically defended with both archaeological and biblical evidence in J. Glen Taylor, *Yahweh and the Sun: Biblical and Archaeological Evidence for Sun Worship in Ancient Israel*, JSOTSup 111 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993). But the degree of the divine status of the sun in the Yahwistic cult is debatable. Day, *Yahweh and the Gods*, 156–163 (esp. 160–163, specifically against Taylor) and Steve A. Wiggins, “Yahweh: The God of Sun?,” *JSOT* 21 (1996): 89–106 fiercely question Taylor’s interpretation of both material and textual evidence. See further retorts between Taylor and Wiggins: J. Glen Taylor, “A Response to Steve A. Wiggins, ‘Yahweh: The God of Sun?’” *JSOT* 21 (1996): 107–19; Steve A. Wiggins, “A Rejoinder to J. Glen Taylor,” *JSOT* 22 (1997): 109–12.

<sup>160</sup> Keel and Uehlinger, *Gods, Goddesses*, 341–348 (§§198–200) and 387–389 (§224). The quote is from p.343. I am considering a specific form of the practices and materials of the solar cult in this (Neo-Assyrian) period, revealed by the biblical texts and the archaeological remains. I do not mean that a solar cult and its imagery were previously unknown in the Levant.

<sup>161</sup> Keel and Uehlinger, *Gods, Goddesses*, 343–344.

<sup>162</sup> Keel and Uehlinger, *Gods, Goddesses*, 343.

<sup>163</sup> Keel and Uehlinger, *Gods, Goddesses*, 345–347.

<sup>164</sup> Keel and Uehlinger, *Gods, Goddesses*, 344.

who was identified with this sun god imagery in their evidence, the entire evidence suggests to me that Yahweh combined the solar imagery with other divine images such as El's image of the creator god.<sup>165</sup> This Judean religious history suggested by Keel and Uehlinger is well suitable for P's presentation of Yahweh with some characteristics of the sun-god, whose appellations are gradually expanded, Elohim as the creator deity, El-Shaday, and Yahweh. The discussed archaeological materials are contemporary with the Neo-Assyrian period that the biblical texts describe, whether or not written at that time, and also that I supposed in the previous chapter as the likely time that P was written.<sup>166</sup> It may be germane to draw here M. S. Smith's observation that national deities, who are presumably supreme of the universe, such as Assur, Marduk, and El, tend to appropriate the sun-god image as well as that of the storm-god.<sup>167</sup> Mal 1:14 supports this: Yahweh who absorbed the solar imagery in Mal 3:20 had unequivocally designated himself as "king." It is true that Yahweh was never explicitly designated as king in P. Yet his kingly position is unmistakable in light of the vivid illustration of the deity's regal appearance and his "majestic mobile home"<sup>168</sup> that is commensurate with his appearance. The characteristic of the solar deity, therefore, is not something foreign to P's Yahweh, the supreme deity of the universe, who later presides over Israel with regalia (see below).

I have argued at length that it is hard to read the Combat Myth in Gen 1 as well as elsewhere in P (e.g., Exod 14).<sup>169</sup> Yahweh in P is never particularly a storm-god; the waters are

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<sup>165</sup> Cf. Keel and Uehlinger, *Gods, Goddesses*, 345–348 (esp. 347–348) and 311–312 (§180).

<sup>166</sup> This suggests to me that not all the Mesopotamian influences reflected in P are necessarily to be considered possible only through direct literary contact. Some may have already been integrated to the Judean culture.

<sup>167</sup> M. S. Smith, *Early History*, 157. This should be understood on a broader trend in the ancient Near East that the kings of the gods such as Enlil and Marduk tend to assume the attributes of other deities as I mentioned above. A similar religious-political phenomenon is also observed with an Egyptian god, Amun-Re. Cf. Assmann, *DDD*, 29 and Tobin, *OEAE*, 1:83.

<sup>168</sup> Simeon Chavel, "'Oracular Novellae' and Biblical Historiography," *Clio* 39 (2009): 1–27, esp. 12.

<sup>169</sup> Atrahasis, whose motif is clearly related to P's flood account, is not a Combat Myth. Also, I do not mean that P did not know the Combat Myth. I rather mean that the author did not intend the reader to find a mimicry of that myth.



never demonized and not even personified. It is true, no matter how the רוּחַ in Gen 1:2 is understood. Even if it is the “wind,” it is not a major attribute of the Priestly deity. Even though Yahweh’s breath upsets the primordial waters as if the mighty wind does, it is not because he is a storm-god but because his breath is superhuman as he is.<sup>170</sup>

### 3.6 *Kāḇôḏ YHWH* in P

Apart from רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים in Gen 1:2, many of the scholars mentioned above who have discussed divine transcendence versus immanence in P consider *kāḇôḏ YHWH*, a Priestly term for divine manifestation, as abstract and/or transcendent.<sup>171</sup> As Weinfeld pointed out the corporeality of *kāḇôḏ YHWH*,<sup>172</sup> the expression should be understood otherwise. In this section, I will try to demonstrate that *kāḇôḏ YHWH* has a concrete form and function in the Pentateuchal Priestly history, which will, in turn, reveal the nature of the Priestly deity.

The noun *kāḇôḏ* is a common, supposedly unproblematic term in the Hebrew Bible. We have ample attestations, nearly 200 times in the Masoretic Text.<sup>173</sup> Lexically, it has a clear etymology and many cognates throughout the Semitic languages. The noun *kāḇôḏ* derives from a verbal root, כָּבַד, “to be heavy.” Its multivalent meanings and usages—such as substance, heaviness, and honor—are well known.<sup>174</sup> However, *kāḇôḏ YHWH*, that is, “*kāḇôḏ* of Yahweh,” is often more than a combination of the two words. While the traditional translation found in many English versions of the Bible is “the glory of the LORD,” this abstract rendering is not immediately intelligible. What is the glory of God? What would the expression evoke for us as

<sup>170</sup> Cf. M. S. Smith, “Like Deities,” 16–20; M. S. Smith, “Three Bodies,” 478–481.

<sup>171</sup> Among others, Eichrodt, *Theology*, 2:29–35; von Rad, *Theology*, 146; Kawahima, “Priestly Tent,” 228–229, 231, 251, 256–257. See above.

<sup>172</sup> Weinfeld, *Deuteronomical School*, 202.

<sup>173</sup> J. E. Fossum, “Glory כָּבוֹד δόξα,” *DDD* 348–352, esp. 348 and C. Westermann, “כָּבַד *kbd* to be heavy,” *TLOT* 2:590–602, esp. 2:591. Cf. Weinfeld, *TDOT* 7:24 counts 199 times.

<sup>174</sup> Cf. Weinfeld, *TDOT*, 7:22–38 (esp. 23–28).

well as for the ancient? NJPS' rendering, "the Presence of the LORD," may be a little better but still not sufficient to grasp its nuance.

Maybe a consistent translation throughout the Bible, whether "the Glory of the LORD" or "the Presence of the LORD," is a necessary evil despite its vagueness. But it is not easy to understand the significance of this Hebrew phrase with such abstract translations. Students of the Bible thus look for a tangible/coherent image that might have been intended in the various attestations of *kāḇôḏ YHWH*. Modern critics of the Bible also recognize that there were various religious traditions, theologies, and practices in ancient Israel and Judah over time and even at the same time. In the case of *kāḇôḏ YHWH* as well, this diversity is preserved within and throughout the biblical text. Therefore, I would rather limit myself to delve into its meaning in the context of the Pentateuchal Priestly history because I think the writers of P and H employed this phrase, unlike their use of *רוח אלהים*, in a particular way consistently to lay out their own theology of Yahweh.

First of all, what did the writers of P and H have in mind when they mentioned *kāḇôḏ YHWH*? There are fifteen attestations of *kāḇôḏ* in Pentateuchal P, although it may vary by one's source division: Exod 16:7, 10; 24:16-17; 28:2, 40; 29:43; 40:34-35; Lev 9:6, 23; Num 14:10; 16:19; 17:7; and 20:6.<sup>175</sup> These texts do not define or explain *kāḇôḏ* graphically. Thus, some scholars begin from the etymology of this Hebrew word. Others pay attention to the interchangeability of *kāḇôḏ YHWH* and YHWH. The former argue that it refers to the divine

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<sup>175</sup> I found the same list of P's *kāḇôḏ* in Rolf Rendtorff, "The Concept of Revelation in Ancient Israel," in *Revelation as History*, ed. Wolfhart Pannenberg, trans. David Granskou (New York: Macmillan, 1968), 23–53, esp. 50n40–41. Cf. Claus Westermann, "Die Herrlichkeit Gottes in der Priesterschrift," in *Wort, Gebot, Glaube: Beiträge zur Theologie des Alten Testaments, Walther Eichrodt zum 80. Geburtstag*, ed. Hans Joachim Stoebe (Zürich: Zwingli, 1970), 227–249, esp. 230; Mettinger, *Dethronement*, 80.

body,<sup>176</sup> while the latter contend that it refers to the person or the self of the deity.<sup>177</sup> The two suggestions are not really different. Many of the former also recognize the interchangeability and consider the body of YHWH is nothing but the deity himself.<sup>178</sup> A certain degree of the interchangeability is undeniable as in the following texts:

Lev 9:3–4

ואל בני ישראל תדבר לאמר קחו שעיר עזים לחטאת ועגל וכבש בני שנה תמימים לעלה ושור ואיל לשלמים לזבח לפני יהוה ומנחה בלולה בשמן כי היום יהוה נראה אליכם

Speak to the Israelites: “Take a male goat for a purification offering; a calf and a lamb, unblemished yearlings, for a burnt offering; an ox and a ram for well-being offerings to sacrifice before the LORD; and a grain offering mixed with oil; for today YHWH will appear to you.”

Lev 9:6

ויאמר משה זה הדבר אשר צוה יהוה תעשו וירא אליכם כבוד יהוה

Moses said: “This is the thing that YHWH commanded that you should do so that kāḇôḏ YHWH may appear to you.”

Aaron was supposed to tell the Israelites to prepare their first sacrifices because *YHWH* will appear to them on that day. When Moses tells the Israelites the same thing a little later in 9:6, he says it is *kāḇôḏ YHWH* that will appear.<sup>179</sup> Nonetheless, we may still ask, to what extent *kāḇôḏ YHWH* and *YHWH* are interchangeable.

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<sup>176</sup> Julian Morgenstern, “Biblical Theophanies,” *ZAVA* 25 (1911): 139–193, esp. 140, 141–153, and 190; Weinfeld, *Deuteronomism School*, 202; Weinfeld, *TDOT* 7:31–33; David H. Aaron, *Biblical Ambiguities: Metaphor, Semantics, and Divine Imagery*, Brill Reference Library of Ancient Judaism 4 (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 53–54; Sommer, *Bodies*, 60–61 and 68. Pace von Rad, *TDNT* 2:239, who believes the etymological sense (“weight”) has nothing to do with the meaning of *kāḇôḏ YHWH*.

<sup>177</sup> Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1–20*, 51; Mettinger, *Dethronement*, 107; Aster, *Unbeatable Light*, 264.

<sup>178</sup> Among others, see Morgenstern, “Biblical Theophanies,” 147; Ginsberg, “Gleanings,” 246–247; and Sommer *Bodies*, 72–73. Cf. Aster, *Unbeatable Light*, 265–266.

<sup>179</sup> Also, what appears as the fulfilment of Lev 9:4 and 9:6 in 9:23 is *kāḇôḏ YHWH*. Likewise, Morgenstern, “Biblical Theophanies,” 147 and Aster, *Unbeatable Light*, 265–266. Also Sommer, *Bodies*, 72–73 with other biblical instances.

There are two clues that *kāḇôḏ YHWH* in P and H is not an abstract concept, but rather, at least, a visible phenomenon. The first clue is that *kāḇôḏ YHWH* often accompanies fire in P and H. For example, Leviticus 9:23–24:

ויבא משה ואהרן אל אהל מועד ויצאו ויברכו את העם וירא כבוד יהוה אל כל העם ותצא אש מלפני יהוה ותאכל על המזבח את העלה ואת החלבים וירא כל העם וירנו ויפלו על פניהם

Moses and Aaron entered the Tent of Meeting. And they came out and blessed the people. Then, *kāḇôḏ YHWH* appeared to all the people. A fire came out from before YHWH and consumed the burnt offering and the fat parts on the altar. All the people saw, shouted, and fell on their faces.

In this text, after Moses and Aaron finish setting up the sacrifices and bless the people, the divine *kāḇôḏ* appears. And then, אש, “a fire” comes from Yahweh, and it consumes (אכל) the sacrifices. Likewise, *kāḇôḏ YHWH* appears to all the congregation (of Israel) in Numbers 16:19. Then, אש, “a fire” comes from Yahweh in Numbers 16:35. Again, the fire consumes, this time, the rebels. One may say that the fire is of no descriptive value for *kāḇôḏ YHWH* since *kāḇôḏ* may be separate from the fire. But I think Exodus 24:17 is a definitive example. It says:

ומראה כבוד יהוה כאש אכלת בראש ההר לעיני בני ישראל

The appearance of *kāḇôḏ YHWH* was like a consuming fire on top of the mountain in the sight of the Israelites.

This text is the only instance in Pentateuchal P that directly mentions what *kāḇôḏ YHWH* looks like. It uses the same noun and verb (אש and אכל) as the verses that we just looked at in Leviticus and Numbers.

There is a second clue that signals the concrete picture of *kāḇôḏ YHWH*. In P and H, *kāḇôḏ YHWH* is frequently predicated by the N-stem of רא"ה, meaning in the middle voice “to appear.” The N-stem רא"ה can also indicate the passive voice, “to be seen.” In one case, Moses says straightforwardly to the Israelites, using the G-stem of רא"ה “to see”:

Exod 16:7

ובקר וראיתם את כבוד יהוה בשמעו את תלנתיכם על יהוה ונחנו מה כי תלוננו עלינו

In the morning, you will see *kəbôd YHWH* because he heard your grumbles against YHWH. What are we that you grumble against us?

Because of the lack of further unambiguous visual cues, some scholars look to Ezekiel.<sup>180</sup>

The close literary relationship between P and especially H, on the one hand, and Ezekiel, on the other, is widely acknowledged in biblical scholarship, though the degree and the nature of correspondences have long been debated.<sup>181</sup> While Ezekiel provides a much more elaborate picture, one may notice the similarity of the vocabulary and concepts used to depict the deity and his throne in Pentateuchal P and in Ezekiel: *kərubîm*, (Cherubim), *mar'eḥ* (appearance), *'ēš* (fire), and *kəbôd YHWH*, among others. Ezekiel describes *kəbôd YHWH* vividly especially in Ezekiel 1:26–28:

Ezek 1:26–28

וממעל לרקיע אשר על ראשם כמראה אבן ספיר דמות כסא ועל דמות הכסא דמות כמראה אדם עליו  
מלמעלה וארא כעין חשמל כמראה אש בית לה סביב ממראה מתניו ולמעלה וממראה מתניו ולמטה  
ראיתי כמראה אש ונגה לו סביב כמראה הקשת אשר יהיה בענן ביום הגשם כן מראה הנגה סביב הוא  
מראה דמות כבוד יהוה ואראה ואפל על פני ואשמע קול מדבר

Above the expanse over their heads, there was something like the appearance of sapphire, the semblance of a throne. On the semblance of the throne, there was a semblance, one like a human appearance above it. I saw something like an eye of amber, inside of which something like an appearance of fire was surrounding, from the appearance of his loins and above; from the appearance of his loins and below I saw something like an appearance of fire and the radiance around it. As the appearance of a rainbow that is in the clouds on a rainy day, so was the appearance of the surrounding radiance. It was the

<sup>180</sup> Among others, Weinfeld, *Deuteronomistic School*, 201–202; Sommer, *Bodies of God*, 69, 72–73, 222n57. Hundley, *Keeping Heaven*, 41 with caution of the identification with the human form as in Ezekiel. Difference between P's and Ezekiel's *kəbôd YHWH* is more emphasized in von Rad, *TDNT* 2:240–241; Clements, *God and Temple*, 113–114; Knohl, *Sanctuary*, 129.

<sup>181</sup> See the brief summaries of the history of scholarship and recent views in the last four papers of Part Nine in Jan C. Gertz et al., eds., *The Formation of the Pentateuch: Bridging the Academic Cultures of Europe, Israel, and North America*, FAT 111 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016): Christophe L. Nihan, “Ezekiel and the Holiness Legislation – A Plea for Nonlinear Models,” 1015–1039; Ariel Kopilovitz, “What Kind of Priestly Writings Did Ezekiel Know?” 1041–1054; Michael A. Lyons, “How Have We Changed?: Older and Newer Arguments about the Relationship between Ezekiel and the Holiness Code,” 1055–1074; Tova Ganzel and Risa Levitt Kohn, “Ezekiel’s Prophetic Message in Light of Leviticus 26,” 1075–1084.

appearance of the semblance of *kəḇôḏ YHWH*. When I saw I fell on my face and heard a voice speaking.

In this text, *kəḇôḏ YHWH* is like the appearance of human beings and like the appearance of fire, having radiance with the appearance of a rainbow. Thus, based on the evidence from Ezekiel, it is corroborated that *kəḇôḏ YHWH* is fiery and radiant in P and H.<sup>182</sup>

Some scholars, such as Cross and Weinfeld, have pointed out the potential comparability of *kəḇôḏ YHWH* with the Mesopotamian *melammu*.<sup>183</sup> More recently, it is Shawn Zelig Aster who has more thoroughly studied Mesopotamian *melammu* and compared it with biblical *kəḇôḏ*. One of Aster's insightful contributions is that *melammu* is not a static concept; it had gone through some historical changes. *Melammu* became predominantly identified with radiance only from the eighth century and later.<sup>184</sup> Aster's study of *melammu* provides a good point of comparison for the Priestly *kəḇôḏ*. Yet he does not acknowledge the visual similarity between the radiant *melammu* and Priestly *kəḇôḏ YHWH*.<sup>185</sup> I suspect it is because he generalizes that *kəḇôḏ YHWH* in the pre-exilic material in the Hebrew Bible, including P, is radiant only occasionally when it is described so as in Exodus 24:17 and Leviticus 9:23–24. It seems to have escaped him that both Exodus 24:17 and Leviticus 9:23–24 belong to P. These texts should be considered first within the context of the Priestly narrative plot, before within the broader pre-exilic material. Within the narrative of P, one should assume that *kəḇôḏ YHWH* must be fiery still in the places where the narrator does not mention fire.<sup>186</sup>

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<sup>182</sup> Pace M. S. Smith, "Three Bodies," 487–488, who distinguishes the divine non-body in P from the divine body in Ezekiel.

<sup>183</sup> Cross, *Canaanite Myth*, 153n30; Weinfeld, *TDOT*, 7:29–31.

<sup>184</sup> Aster, *Unbeatable Light*, 52–59.

<sup>185</sup> Aster, *Unbeatable Light*, 261–295 and 311–315 (esp. 289–295, 314–315); pace Sommer, *Bodies of God*, 222n57. Yet he grants the functional similarity between *melammu* and *kəḇôḏ YHWH*, as I note below.

<sup>186</sup> Interestingly, Aster grants the visual similarity of *kəḇôḏ YHWH* with *melammu* in Ezekiel. See Aster, *Unbeatable Light*, 314–315. He thinks Ezekiel's *kəḇôḏ YHWH* is functionally similar to and visually different from P's and other preexilic *kəḇôḏ YHWH*, while the relationship between Ezekiel's *kəḇôḏ YHWH* and Mesopotamian *melammu* is exactly the opposite. Aster's reason for difference between P and Ezekiel seems to me that Ezekiel offers a

In addition to the formal resemblance, there are functional parallels between *kābôd* and *melammu*. One common function of *melammu* in both the second and first millennia is to demonstrate the irresistible, sovereign power of the owner, whether *melammu* is understood as merely a covering or a radiance. In the Neo-Assyrian period, if Aster is correct, both divine *melammu* and royal *melammu* cause fear and threat to the enemies, respectively; namely, divine *melammu* causes submission, while royal *melammu* causes flight.<sup>187</sup> For example:

*Melammu* of Aššur:<sup>188</sup>

*ki-i ina KUR kîr-ru-ri us-ba-ku-ni KUR gil-za-na-a-a KUR ħub-uš-ka-a-a me-lam-me šá aš-šur EN-ia is-ħup-šú-nu ANŠE.KUR.RA.MEŠ KÙ.BABBAR.MEŠ KÙ.GI.MEŠ AN.NA.MEŠ ZABAR.MEŠ ÚTUL.MEŠ ZABAR ma-da-ta-šú-nu a-na muh-ħi-a ub-lu-ni*

While I was in Mount Kurruru the radiance of Aššur, my lord, overwhelmed the Gilzānu and the Hubušku (and) they brought to me as their tribute horses, silver, gold, tin, bronze, (and) bronze casseroles.

*Melammu* of Assurnasirpal II:<sup>189</sup>

TA IGI *me-lam-me* MAN-ti-a ip-la-ħu-ma URU.DIDLI-šú-nu BĀD.MEŠ-ni-šú-nu ú-še-ru ana šu-zu-ub ZI.MEŠ-šú-nu ana KUR ma-at-ni KUR dan-ni e-li-ú

They took fright in the face of my royal radiance and abandoned their cities (and) walls. To save their lives they climbed up Mount Matnu, a mighty mountain.

There is no such distinction between divine and royal in Pentateuchal P since the Priestly God is both divine and sovereign. Still, this observation is particularly germane to the Priestly *kābôd* *YHWH*. The Priestly *kābôd* *YHWH* appears in but is not limited to the four so-called murmuring narratives: the manna in Exodus 16, the spies in Numbers 13–14, Korah in Numbers 16, and

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consistent description in its four instances of *kābôd* *YHWH*, while P leaves the divine form unspecified at times. Cf. Aster, *Unbeatable Light*, 275–278. He once entertained the possibility to fill the gap by the narrative coherence when the form of *kābôd* *YHWH* is unspecified (Num 14:10; 16:19; 20:6) but mentioned no more. His focus throughout the discussion is predominantly on its function. This seems to have made him underestimate the formal consistency of the Priestly *kābôd* *YHWH* by means of the coherent narrative (esp. p.277).

<sup>187</sup> Aster, *Unbeatable Light*, 89–98.

<sup>188</sup> Grayson, RIMA 2, 197: A.0.101.1 col.i, lines 56–58. Also cited in Aster, *Unbeatable Light*, 93.

<sup>189</sup> Grayson, RIMA 2, 210–211: A.0.101.1 col. ii, lines 113. Also cited in Aster, *Unbeatable Light*, 90.

Merivah in Numbers 20. Whenever the people complain or rebel, *kəḥōḏ YHWH* appears; sometimes he punishes the rebels, and he settles the problems. The proper response to seeing *kəḥōḏ YHWH* is to submit and fall down in honor as exemplified in Lev 9:24<sup>190</sup>; Numbers 16:22; and 20:6.

This comparison raises a question about the nature of *kəḥōḏ YHWH*. Is it merely a stylistic way of referring to YHWH? Here also, *melammu* can shed light on our understanding of *kəḥōḏ YHWH*. As Oppenheim and Aster noted, in some cases, *melammu* is understood as an

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<sup>190</sup> Differences between *melammu* and *kəḥōḏ YHWH* in the preexilic biblical texts are critical for Aster to reject any historical relationship between them. One of the differences is that the Israelites respond to the divine *kəḥōḏ* with joy while the idol worshipers with dismay (e.g., Ps 97:6–8). Akkadian literature only evokes terror, but neither joy nor dismay, according to Aster *Unbeatable Light*, 290–291. If one both agrees with Aster and thinks of רנין in Lev 9:24 as an expression of joy (e.g., Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 591; Rolf Rendtorff, *Leviticus*, BKAT 3/1 [Neukirchner-Vluyn: Neukirchner Verlag, 2004], 301; James W. Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, Historical Commentary on the Old Testament [Leuven: Peeters, 2013], 502; Thomas Hieke, *Leviticus 1–15*, HThKAT [Freiburg: Herder, 2014], 373), my comparison of *kəḥōḏ YHWH* with *melammu* is unfounded. I would suggest two answers. First of all, as Stackert, *Prophet Like Moses*, 189 says, biblical appropriation of *melammu* “need not be constrained by their sources’ uses of them.” There is no reason to think that *kəḥōḏ YHWH* and *melammu* should be exactly same in every aspect, even though *kəḥōḏ YHWH* borrowed the concept of *melammu*. Second, רנין does not always imply joy. LXX translated רנין with ἐξίστημι (to confuse, amaze) in Lev 9:24, although it is true that LXX predominantly translates רנין with εὐφραίνω (to cheer) or ἀγαλλιάω (to exult) in other places. See also Ibn Ezra’s comment on רנין in Lev 9:24 in light of the nominal form רנה in 1King 22:36 (“a shout”): M. Cohen, ed., *Mikra ’ot Gedolot: Leviticus*, 57. In Lam 2:19, רנין may mean “to shout in distress,” even though LXX translates it with ἀγαλλιάω. Maybe the same action in the two contrasting emotions suggests that the action has nothing to do with a particular emotion. This Hebrew word means “to cry out” certainly without implying joy in Prov 1:20 and 8:3. LXX translated רנין with ὑμνέω “to sing, praise.” This translation not necessarily implies joy or celebration. It may allude to the self-praise in her subsequent speeches by this verb in middle voice (ὑμνεῖται, “Wisdom praises herself”): cf. Michael V. Fox, *Proverbs 1–9: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 18A (New York: Doubleday, 2000), 370. Or it may just designate a mode, which the translator supposed to be likely, of Wisdom’s speech in the public places. Also, רנין is not always related to singing. Salters suggests some cases that רנין is used in the context of laments: Ps 17:1; 61:2; 88:3; and Jer 7:16; see Robert B. Salters, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Lamentations*, ICC (London: T&T Clark, 2010), 172–173, 173n134. It is also possible that רנין might be considered a mode of prayer rather than a song or a lament since רנין parallels with תפלה in these cases, unless this prayer was recited in tunes. As such, LXX does not translate the Hebrew word with ‘song’ or ‘joy,’ but rather with δέησις (prayer, request) in Pss 17:1; 61:2; and 88:3 and with the passive infinitive form of ἐλεέω (ἐλεηθῆναι, to have mercy) in Jer 7:16. It would be striking if it were the case that people sang in Lev 9:24 since singing is nowhere mentioned as a manner of worship in P (pace Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 591). Lev 9:24 less likely indicates a joyful shout in light of both Priestly, biblical, and extra-biblical evidence. 1) The Israelites fear Moses’s facial radiance in Exod 34:29–35. 2) Falling on faces is not a right gesture for joyful singing by common sense, which appears singularly here if it were true; this gesture is of homage in biblical and other cultures. Thus, Lev 9:24 may well be interpreted in light of *melammu* causing terror. When the Israelites saw *kəḥōḏ YHWH* unleashing fire as Neo-Assyrian kings ‘unleashed’ *melammu* (*melam bēlūtiya atbuk* [root: *tabāku*]), they may have cried out ‘in fear.’ Cf. Chavel, *Oracular Law*, 83: “*Awestruck*, the people fall on their faces and *cry out*” (my italics).



image of clothing.<sup>191</sup> It is often predicated by verbs related to wearing: e.g., sometimes with *labāšu* (“to put on”), *našû* (“to lift,” but also “to put on”), and *ḥalāpu* (“to cover,” “to clothe”); and more frequently, with *sahāpu* (“to cover,” and also “to put a cover on”) and *katāmu* (“to cover”). This means that *melammu* is not a bodily part of the owner; it may be put on or taken off as in Enuma Elish, Tablet I:65–68 (esp. line 68):

65 He put Apšu to slumber as he poured out sleep,  
 66 And Mummu, the counsellor, was breathless with agitation.  
 67 He split (Apšu’s) sinews, ripped off his crown,  
 68 Carried away (*itbala* from *tabālu*) his aura (Apšu’s *melammu*) and put it on (*utaddiq* from *edēqu*) himself (Ea).<sup>192</sup>

Does P use the same clothing image for the divine *kābôd*? Michael B. Hundley argues that this is the case.<sup>193</sup> He depends on the shared awe-inspiring character between *melammu* and *kābôd*, which I have just described, and further, on the instances of non-divine *kābôd* in P. Hundley notes passingly one situation in which *kābôd* does *not* refer to the deity in P.<sup>194</sup> In this single case, the use of *kābôd* is related to clothing; the priestly garments and coats are commanded to be made for *kābôd* and for *tip’eret*:

Exod 28:2

ועשית בגדי קדש לאהרן אחיך לכבוד ולתפארת

You shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother for *kābôd* and for beauty.

Exod 28:40

ולבני אהרן תעשה כתנת ועשית להם אבנטים ומגבעות תעשה להם לכבוד ולתפארת

For the sons of Aaron, you shall make tunics and you shall make for them sashes for *kābôd* and for beauty.

<sup>191</sup> A. L. Oppenheim, “Akkadian Pul(u)h(t)u and Melammu,” *JAOS* 63 (1943): 31–34; Aster, *Unbeatable Light*, 49–52 (esp. 51). See the latter’s critique on Oppenheim’s peculiar understanding of *melammu* as a crown or a mask in Aster, *Unbeatable Light*, 23–27.

<sup>192</sup> Translation from W. Lambert, *Babylonian Creation Myths*, 54–55 (my parentheses and underline on line 68; his parenthesis on line 67). Cf. Aster, *Unbeatable Light*, 35. The original owner of the *melammu* is to be Apšu rather than Mummu (See *CAD*, 4:29 *pace* *CAD*, 18:19).

<sup>193</sup> Hundley, *Keeping Heaven*, 40–43.

<sup>194</sup> Hundley, *Keeping Heaven*, 43n26 (and also 74).

Namely, it means either that it should be made with the best skill or that its appearance should be worthy of serving the deity. Hundley does not elaborate on this point further probably because there is no more evidence for this in P. The aforementioned piece of evidence is admittedly not definitive. And yet it is corroborative of the analogous use of both *kāḇôḏ* and *melammu*. In addition, I would add that *kāḇôḏ YHWH* does not seem to be personified in P. *Kāḇôḏ YHWH* appears at or fills a place physically. But it never speaks or listens, at least according to the wording of the Priestly text. It is always YHWH whom the verbs of speaking and listening predicate even when what is seen is *kāḇôḏ YHWH*.<sup>195</sup> Therefore, I believe the Priestly narrative assumes a certain degree of distinction between YHWH and *kāḇôḏ YHWH*. All the narrative clues I have collected point toward the conclusion that *kāḇôḏ YHWH* makes the deity look sovereign, fearful, and great, and can also be removed.

Interestingly, *kāḇôḏ Yahweh* is not found in the texts that mention Yahweh in the holy of holies. In Exodus 25:22, God is speaking in the first-person voice, “I will meet with you in the inner sanctum.” Likewise, the high priest is not allowed to freely enter the inner sanctum because the deity, designated with the first-person singular pronoun “I,” is seen there in Leviticus 16:2. I would add Num 7:89 for the case that the deity is in the holy of holies; here he is referred to in the third-person by the narrator. These texts clearly show that only Moses has oracular access to the holy of holies.<sup>196</sup> For this personal meeting, I think Yahweh could mention כבודי, “my

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<sup>195</sup> A possible exception might be that *kāḇôḏ Yahweh* is allegedly the implied subject of קר"א: e.g., Exod 24:16 (with 25:1) and Lev 1:1 (with 40:34–35). Cf. Ezek 9:3–4. This is suggested by Rendtorff, *Leviticus*, 22; Hieke, *Leviticus 1–15*, 156–158; Baruch J. Schwartz, “Leviticus,” *JSB* 193–266, esp. 196; and Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1–20*, 176–177. But this reading is not inescapable. It is possible that the implied subject is Yahweh in the following clause in Lev 1:1b. This is more plausible in that the other verbs of personification are not used for *kāḇôḏ Yahweh* in P. Similarly, Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, 176–177. He notes that *kāḇôḏ Yahweh* “elsewhere is the subject of verbs of appearance or motion” rather than calling or speaking.

<sup>196</sup> Cf. Stackert, *Prophet Like Moses*, 64–66. Pace Arnold B. Ehrlich, *Randglossen Zur Hebräischen Bibel: Textkritisches, Sprachliches Und Sachliches* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1908), 2:1; Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 134–143 (esp. 134–138, 140); Hieke, *Leviticus 1–15*, 156. They assume Moses never went beyond the veil (פרכת) in accordance with the rabbinic tradition.

*kābôd*”: for example, Yahweh could say in Lev 16:2, “my *kābôd* will be seen,” as the deity mentions his *kābôd* in Exod 29:43.<sup>197</sup> This absence of the mention of *kābôd* in these texts suggests to me that Moses is privileged to meet with Yahweh not clothed in *kābôd* in the latter’s private room. Even though the aural (שמ״ע) aspect of Moses’s meeting with Yahweh in the holy of holies is highlighted in Num 7:89, there is no reason to assume that Moses did not meet the deity there; Exod 25:22 states he did.<sup>198</sup> If Moses is assumed to not see the deity in Num 7:89, which is not the only interpretation, it may be because even Moses was not permitted unchecked privilege, while he was allowed to feel and glimpse the immediate, more private presence of the deity, a similar concept of which is found in the J layer of Exod 33:12–34:8 (esp. 33:18–23; 34:8).<sup>199</sup> It is clear from Lev 16:2 that human eyes could see the bare deity—I do not mean that the deity was literally naked—in the inner sanctum on the natural condition, even though the sight was not allowed according to “a predetermined set of protocols.”<sup>200</sup> Admittedly, we have not many texts describing Yahweh inside the holy of holies. Yet it should be recalled that the rest of the Israelites meet with the deity only at פתח אהל מועד, “the entrance of the Tent of Meeting,” according to Exod 29:42–43. And it was always *kābôd* Yahweh that appeared, whenever the deity is mentioned to have manifested outside the Tent of Meeting.

Then, why is it that *kābôd* YHWH appears only outside the Tent of Meeting? Scholars such as Barr, Mettinger, and Rendtorff correctly recognize the public aspect of *kābôd* YHWH.<sup>201</sup>

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<sup>197</sup> Then, why did the deity not say “my *kābôd* will meet Israelites” in Exod 29:43? It is because “to meet” is too personified for clothes. In Lev 16:2, however, the verb is less personified “to appear, to be seen.”

<sup>198</sup> Pace Ehrlich, *Randglossen*, 1:367. He thinks Exod 25:22 is secondary.

<sup>199</sup> Chavel, “Face of God,” 40–42 and 5–6n16.

<sup>200</sup> Chavel, “Face of God,” 41. The high priest’s incense smoke had a double duty in the protocols. It was not only to prevent him from pipping; his entrance and serving should also not disturb the deity’s repose. For the latter, see Jeremy Schipper and Jeffrey Stackert, “Blemishes, Camouflage, and Sanctuary Service,” *Hebrew Bible and Ancient Israel* 2 (2013): 458–478, esp. 473.

<sup>201</sup> James Barr, “Theophany and Anthropomorphism in the Old Testament,” in *Bible and Interpretation: The Collected Essays of James Barr*, 3 vols., ed. John Barton (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 2:49–55, esp. 2:52; Mettinger, *Dethronement*, 89; and Rendtorff, “Revelation,” 36–37. Also, Westermann, “Herrlichkeit,” 227–

It makes sense if one thinks about the situations in which *kəḇôḏ YHWH* appears. As I mentioned earlier, it appeared when the deity had to subdue rebels (e.g., Num 14:10). It also appeared when the deity wanted to magnify his sovereignty to the people (e.g., Lev 9:23–24). It is worth noting that *kəḇôḏ YHWH* was always shown to all of the Israelites in P and H. I do not know of a single case that Pentateuchal P's *kəḇôḏ YHWH* showed up privately to a special person as in Ezekiel.<sup>202</sup> This fact, if accepted, reveals the function of *kəḇôḏ YHWH* in P. It stresses the regal aspect of the Priestly deity outside his palace, namely the Tent of Meeting. It consequently intensifies P's schematic socio-religious hierarchy, which is presented along with other categories such as the gradation of holiness and the priestly caste.

In sum, Pentateuchal P's *kəḇôḏ YHWH* is a fiery and radiant visual phenomenon. There are inner and extra biblical parallels that presume the radiant clothing imagery, especially royal as *melammu*. *Kəḇôḏ YHWH* can designate divine presence and even the deity himself as a synecdoche. Yet it is not personified, which means that it is not always interchangeable with the deity himself. It always appears outside the deity's private room. When it appears, the sight is aimed for everyone. Whenever it is seen, people fall down in honor, become subdued in fear, or are attacked. It evokes a picture of a king with his "regalia"—my definition of P and H's *kəḇôḏ YHWH*—wearing his glorious robes and ornaments or equipped with the full set of his armor. A modern equivalent may be a president in a suit giving a public speech or an army general in his combat uniform with a bulletproof jacket, a gun, and other equipment, with four stars on his helmet. P's depiction of the deity including *kəḇôḏ YHWH* has often been misunderstood as anti-anthropomorphic as well as spiritual and transcendent, as we have seen above, because it

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249; Rainer Albertz, *A History of Israelite Religion in the Old Testament Period*, 2 vols., trans. John Bowden, OTL (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1994), 2:483 (also, 2:631nn120–121).

<sup>202</sup> Also noted by von Rad, *TDNT*, 2:240–241.

allegedly conceals the essence of the deity. But if understood as an imagery of clothing, it cannot but imply anthropomorphism. Therefore, *kəḇôḏ YHWH* does not camouflage the true divine form and nature, but rather presents his best appearance. Its divine/regal quality stresses the societal, hierarchic superiority of the deity, so fully anthropomorphic, in the public sphere. He is a *part* of the social order of P. There is no intention here to describe the deity being totally other and transcendent, apart from the imagined Israelite society.

### 3.7 Conclusion

In this section, I attempted to correct a common, long-standing misunderstanding that the deity in P is transcendent and of total otherness, especially influenced by later theological-philosophical dualism of “spirit vs. matter.” This dualistic idea has been imposed on the understanding of the famous “spirit of God.” The dualistic understanding has continued until recently even after רוּחַ in Gen 1:2 became widely understood as the divine “wind” or the like, rather than “spirit.” I argued that the Hebrew רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים should be understood by no means as spirit opposed to matter. The best alternative understanding may be either the breath of God or God himself. Whichever one prefers, my conclusion is that what P intends to describe by the picture of the primordial state is the divine nature: i.e., the deity who is irritated by the messy mixtures, rather than one who *transcends* the matters. Also, I argued that the function of *kəḇôḏ YHWH* is not to conceal the true essence of the Priestly deity. P’s narrative suggests that *kəḇôḏ YHWH* rather reveals the vivid nature of the deity as regal. If there is any dualism in P, it is not spirit versus matter or transcendence versus immanence. The Priestly deity is sensitively affected by the matter from the beginning. Rather, if there are any binary categories, it is divine (i.e., superhuman) and human. This classification is not a matter of kind but of degree in that the deity

and humanity, apart from the rest of the world, share anthropomorphic characteristics. No complete dichotomy is between the deity and humanity without any contacting point. With the previous and the present chapters, I founded a divine-human relationship on comparable ground. In the following chapter, I will delve into the divine character more specifically in terms of the deity's sensory disposition. This will be argued to be the Priestly guide of how people should live.

## Chapter Four

### **The Priestly Law More than Ritual Instructions: The Character of the Priestly Deity in the Law**

In the previous two chapters, I demonstrated that the Priestly history depicts an anthropomorphic, non-transcendent deity against a long-standing otherwise view in scholarship. This deity created humankind according to his image. This idea belongs to the broader ancient Near Eastern royal ideology. I argued that “the image of God (צלם אלהים)” is not metaphorical language for the royal function in the Priestly history as well as in the ancient Near East, especially in Mesopotamia. Rather, the Priestly and Mesopotamian royal ideology implies the external resemblance between the deity and the king. The resemblance of their physiognomies—which extends to that of their postures, actions, and nature as both material and textual evidence suggest—assures by sight the king’s competence to perform the royal function. P claims that this divine image is not limited to a particular individual or class but rather distributed to all humankind. It suggests that its deity expects all human beings whose appearance is theomorphic to live up to a certain standard that accords with his nature and preference.<sup>1</sup> If morality is defined descriptively as certain values and norms that guide the way in which people should live among themselves, then, this deity is the origin and supreme model of human morality in the Priestly history.

This is also consistent with the image of the deity giving instructions in P. After he descended on Mount Sinai in Exod 24:15b–17, he instructs Moses with the design of his

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<sup>1</sup> The divine nature and the divine preference are almost synonymous to me. The deity prefers one option since it accords with his nature. Yet many times it is not merely that he likes the other option to a lesser degree; rather, he fiercely rejects it. And P does not distinguish between what the deity *does not* bear and what he *cannot* bear. Thus, I use them almost as hendiadys for the Priestly deity.

dwelling complex and its furniture that satisfies his aesthetic and sensory preferences. The deity then enacts cultic provisions (largely in Lev 1–16) and moral regulations (largely in Lev 17–26), following the construction of the Tent of Meeting and his entrance to it (lit. מל"א “to fill”) in Exod 40:33b–35. These two blocs of laws in Pentateuchal P have often been considered as two relatively independent sets of laws that unfold distinct concerns and purposes. It is especially because modern biblical critics acknowledge two or more layers of different origins in the laws, no matter how varying their views are in detail from one another. The seeming reticence about non-religious moral matters in P’s law in contrast to H’s explicit social regulations suggested at least to some scholars that P is cultic and not ethical.<sup>2</sup> While the identification of two large layers in laws—namely, P and H—is likely correct, the observation of the different provenances should not exaggerate the distance between them constituting together a well-composed literary work like the Pentateuchal Priestly history. It is to be noted that H has never been a self-standing legislation.<sup>3</sup> In contrast to H reusing and reconceptualizing the earlier legal corpora such as the Covenant Collection and the Deuteronomic Laws to supplant them, it never intended to exist separately from or to replace P. Rather, H’s authors continued P and produced an enlarged and revised edition of P.<sup>4</sup> In the same vein, the apparent difference between the cultic and moral laws is only topical within the Priestly narrative frame. The different layers of laws in the Pentateuchal Priestly history are not presented as if they serve distinct purposes, not least

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<sup>2</sup> E.g., Knohl, *Sanctuary*, 137–148, 226–230; cf. J. Milgrom, “Response to Rolf Rendtorff,” *JSOT* 18 (1993): 83–85, esp. 84. Though Milgrom admits H’s explicit focus on social justice here, he also tries to demonstrate the ethics in P’s law with some details: see Milgrom, *Cult and Conscience*; Milgrom, “Dietary Law,” 159–191; Milgrom, “Diet Laws,” 288–301; Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 21–26, 704–742, and *passim*; Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 23–27*, AB 3B (New York: Doubleday, 2001), 2440–2446.

<sup>3</sup> Baruch J. Schwartz, “Israel’s Holiness: The Torah Traditions,” *Purity and Holiness: The Heritage of Leviticus*, eds. M. J. H. M. Poorthuis and J. Schwartz, Jewish and Christian Perspectives Series 2 (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 47–59, esp. 2n14; Stackert, *Rewriting*, 2n4; Nihan, *Priestly Torah*, esp. 546. Even more so for those who deny the existence of the Holiness layer distinctive from P: e.g., Blum, *Studien*, 318–332; Crüsemann, *Torah*, 277–282 (esp. 277–278); Albertz, *History of Israelite Religion*, 2:629n100.

<sup>4</sup> Stackert, *Rewriting*, 209–225, esp. 218–225.



because they are framed and contextualized by a common mythology in the same narrative text. The purpose of both types of laws were together to serve and satisfy the deity to secure and maintain his proximate presence. This is also true for H alone in that it is not only concerned with social, moral matters (as widely admitted, whereas P is often allegedly not) but it also revises and adds cultic rules often. There are no two categories of laws within the Pentateuchal Priestly concept, except for the laws given by the deity. Such is one of the reasons that some continental scholars deny the existence of the H layer.<sup>5</sup> That said, I do not suggest by this that there are no ideological modifications and expansions. I simply mean that the ideological distinction between P and H has nothing to do with whether or not ethical concerns are present. Pointing back to the main thesis of this study, P has moral concerns as well, however implicitly, which will be further investigated in subsequent chapters. In this chapter, I am more interested in whether there is—and if there is, how to find—a consistent moral ground in P's law as one that I discussed in P's narrative in the previous chapters. I think the key is the divine character presented consistently throughout P's law and narrative.

#### **4.1 Continuous Divine Nature between the Narrative and the Law in P**

It should be noted that it is mainly P's ritual law that some scholars have in mind when they argue that P is not ethical but cultic. There has been a trend in modern Pentateuchal studies that P's laws (often labelled as P<sub>s</sub>) are only supplemental and loosely connected to the Priestly narrative (often labelled as P<sub>g</sub>). Some scholars even maintain that cultic laws are not even P—that is, the cultic laws were introduced to the already combined Pentateuch independently from

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<sup>5</sup> For instance, Blum, *Studien*, 318–332; Crüsemann, *Torah*, 277–282 (esp. 277–278); Albertz, *History of Israelite Religion*, 2:629n100.

P's narrative.<sup>6</sup> This could have allowed some biblical critics to easily think about P's law apart from its narrative setting. Yet the sharp separation of P's narrative from its law is not the only cause for the opinion that P's law is not moral but cultic. For example, Knohl made an argument that there is a dramatic theological transition from the universal ethics to the particular cult within P's narrative plot. According to him, the prediluvian and the patriarchal individuals, such as Noah and Abraham, interacted with the deity in the anthropomorphic way; they personally met, spoke, and made a covenant with God. Yet a special revelation of the divine name of Yahweh revealed the essence of the deity, which was never known before Moses in the Priestly history. This true essence of God is "numinosity," which means holy and transcendent in Rudolf Otto's sense.<sup>7</sup> The interaction with this deity was no longer allowed, if not impossible, to humans. It is because P's author tried hard to describe the deity in an abstract, antianthropomorphic, and impersonal manner to express this numinosity following the name revelation.<sup>8</sup> For instance, there is no ברית (covenant) but only עדות (testimony, pact) in P's Sinai. In Knohl's understanding, ברית implies bilateral obligation, while עדות denotes one-way commandments.<sup>9</sup> The access to the numinous deity was then only possible by means of the strict

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<sup>6</sup> Among others, Noth, *Pentateuchal Traditions*, 9–10 and 10n15; von Rad, *Theology*, 1:232–234; Elliger, "Sinn und Ursprung", 121–143, esp. 121–122; Lohfink, *Theology of the Pentateuch*, 136–149; McEvenue, *Narrative Style*, 19–21; Weimar, *Studien*, 5–10.

<sup>7</sup> Knohl borrows this term and concept from Rudolf Otto, *The Idea of the Holy: An Inquiry into the Non-Rational Factor in the Idea of the Divine and Its Relation to the Rational* (London: Oxford University Press, 1958), 1–40 in Knohl *Sanctuary*, 146n90. As indicated in the previous chapter, what defines transcendence and immanence in Knohl's terminology is where the permanent divine dwelling locates. The designation corresponding to transcendence that many others use in the sense of ontological otherness, he rather uses variously impersonality, abstraction, nonanthropomorphism, or numinosity. See see Knohl, "Two Aspects," 76–77; Knohl, *Sanctuary*, 124–164 (esp. 125–137 and 146–147).

<sup>8</sup> Knohl, *Sanctuary*, 124–137.

<sup>9</sup> Knohl, *Sanctuary*, 141–146. Yet see an opposition of Baruch J. Schwartz, "The Priestly Account of the Theophany and Lawgiving at Sinai," in *Texts, Temples, and Traditions: A Tribute to Menahem Haran*, eds. Michael V. Fox et al. (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1996), 103–134, esp. 126–127 and 126n52. Schwartz argues that the identity of עדות is completely elusive and not necessarily a concept antithetical to Sinai/Horeb "covenant (ברית)" or a document parallel with the Ten Commandments in the other sources. Taking etymology into account, he surmises an evidentiary object. Cf. Haran, *Temples*, 143n12, 272–273.

protocols taught by P's Sinaitic cultic instructions. In the Priestly cult, even prayers and songs that imply personal interactions were eliminated because this numinous deity could not be approached by any human, personal means.<sup>10</sup> Moral demands were not included in the Sinaitic instructions because that social concern has no contact with the numinosity. That said, Knohl does not mean that P (his PT) unreservedly parts with morality in the Mosaic period. The moral instructions were merely dispensable, on the one hand, since it had nothing to do with the interaction with the numinous deity and, on the other, superfluous because the universal moral law in previous generations implicitly continued and was adequate for the Israelites in the Mosaic period.<sup>11</sup>

I agree with Knohl's schematic reading of P to some degree. The revelation of the deity's name, which I think is only the beginning that culminates in the law-giving at Sinai, certainly marks a significant transition in P's narrative while the changed relationship of the deity with his people at the Sinai/Horeb pericope is not peculiar to P but characteristic of the other Pentateuchal sources as well. However, Knohl's explanation can be easily misleading in relation to the nature and character of the Priestly God. It seems that the nature of God that was revealed to pre-Mosaic individuals was ontologically different from that in the Mosaic era and, thus, not the true nature of God, in Knohl's understanding.<sup>12</sup> It is true, as Knohl argues, that the descriptions of the divine manifestation from Sinai on are different from those in Genesis. Yet I already argued in the previous chapter that a special type of the divine manifestation in P's Sinai pericope, i.e., *kəḇôḏ YHWH*, is neither abstract nor nonanthropomorphic. Anne Knafel's distinction between small-scale and full-scale manifestations is helpful to explain the difference between the two

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<sup>10</sup> Knohl, *Sanctuary*, 148–152.

<sup>11</sup> Knohl, *Sanctuary*, esp. 147.

<sup>12</sup> Knohl, *Sanctuary*, esp. 146–147.

types of the divine appearance in P. Her distinction depends on the degree of the experience of the divine manifestation for humans in the narrative, which is expressed by the extent of the details of the divine appearance. The full-scale theophany is conceptually more embellished and described accordingly, whereas the small-scale is more moderate.<sup>13</sup> Comparing the divine appearance to Abraham in Gen 17:1–22 with *kābôd YHWH*, what is changed is not the nature or the character of the deity but the degree of its revelation in the two epochs; it is a matter of intensity, not of transformation. This change is founded on the altered relationship between the deity and the world/humans/Israel.

#### **4.2. Defense for Using Modern Categories: Cultic and Moral**

It may be necessary, before moving on, to justify using modern categories such as “cultic” and “moral,” among others. Legitimate caveats that modern categories could skew our understanding of the ancient texts have been raised from time to time. Among others, Brent Nongbri points out a recurring fallacy that modern categories uncritically applied to the ancient context in scholarship. For example, “religious” and “secular” were not the categories reflected and engaged, at least consciously, in ancient Mediterranean antiquity. If a later coined concept is employed by modern scholarship to analyze the ancient world, according to Nongbri, it should be understood as “redescriptive,” and not “descriptive.” Only if modern scholarship finds a category that was actually articulated in the ancient world, then it can be called “descriptive.” Scholarly use of these post-Enlightenment concepts as if they are descriptive mislead us into

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<sup>13</sup> Anne K. Knafl, *Forming God: Divine Anthropomorphism in the Pentateuch*, Siphrut 12 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2014), 73–76, esp. 76. Knafl borrows the term “small-scale manifestation” from Sommer but the definition is her own. Cf. Sommer, *Bodies of God*, 38–57, esp. 38–44. Sommer uses this term for the manifestations of divine fragments, which may be part of a deity and yet cannot exhaust that deity’s entire divinity—among others, מַלְאָךְ (divine messenger). With this definition, a small-scale manifestation is impossible for the Priestly deity—this is one of Sommer’s arguments—whose body or selfhood cannot be divided among many temples according to P’s theology.

believing that these categories really existed as ours in ancient societies.<sup>14</sup> Some may want to apply his thesis to the categories of “cultic” and “moral,” which I use for P. If the distinction between cultic and moral laws in Pentateuchal P is merely researchers’ redescriptive categorization for a heuristic purpose, there is no descriptive morality in P. Then, the Priestly morality that I attempt to reconstruct in this study would turn out to be my version of a modern construct.

However, it is not certain whether there could not be such *descriptive* concepts as “cultic” and “moral” or the equivalents in ancient Israel and Judah, or whether the author of P could not distinguish them at all. There are descriptive terms for social justice and individual moral actions such as משפט וצדקה “justice and righteousness” in the Hebrew Bible. Even though these concepts were presented as divine commission to humanity, they aim at human peace and well-being.<sup>15</sup> Various Prophetic texts seem to indicate that ancient Israel and Judah may have been able to distinguish the categories in a manner somewhat corresponding to ours, without having coined the exact terms: e.g., Amos 5:21–24; Hos 6:6; Isa 1:10–17; and Isa 58:3–6.<sup>16</sup> In these Prophetic texts, at least some of the implied audience whose conducts the prophets were accusing seem to have separated what matters to God from what does not. The prophets blamed them for being

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<sup>14</sup> Brent Nongbri, “Dislodging “Embedded” Religion: A Brief Note on a Scholarly Trope,” *Numen* 55 (2008): 440–460; Brent Nongbri, *Before Religion: A History of a Modern Concept*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013), esp. 21–24. As he admits, these terms correspond to more commonly used “emic” and “etic” with some caveats; see Nongbri, “Dislodging,” 443n8.

<sup>15</sup> Weinfeld, *Social Justice*. The execution of “justice and righteousness” is not restricted to state or legal institutions, but rather expanded to individuals (pp.215–230).

<sup>16</sup> Cf. John Barton, “The Prophets and the Cult,” in *Temple and Worship in Biblical Israel*, ed. John Day (London: T&T Clark, 2005), 111–122. Barton’s concern is about the prophets’ attitude toward the cult. For the ethical concern of the prophets allegedly against the cult either in its entirety or in part, see Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament*, 1:364–369; Wellhausen, *Prolegomena to the History*, esp. 491; W. McKane, “Prophet and Institution,” *ZAW* 94.2 (1982): 251–266, esp. 255–256, 265; Ronald S. Hendel, “Prophets, Priests, and the Efficacy of Ritual,” in *Pomegranates and Golden Bells: Studies in Biblical, Jewish, and Near Eastern Ritual, Law, and Literature in Honor of Jacob Milgrom*, eds. David P. Wright, David Noel Freedman, and Avi Hurvitz, (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1995), 185–198, esp. 190–195; James G. Williams, “The Social Location of Israelite Prophecy,” *JAAR* 37.2 (1969): 153–165.

concerned only with the sacrificial cult and exhorted them to practice social justice because the deity cares about the latter as much as the former, if not more. And the two spheres more or less correspond to what I call “cultic/ritual” and “moral/ethical,” even though they were not defined and termed as clearly as ours. The prophets’ condemnations might be understood as their ethical reflections.<sup>17</sup>

Admittedly, the Priestly history does not seem to propose the two autonomous categories within its literary world. To this extent, I can agree with Baruch J. Schwartz suggesting “that both P and H are essentially sacral in their world-views, and that even H is unwilling to incorporate in its greatly expanded enumeration of the laws it claims were commanded at Sinai any law that does not somehow impinge upon the realm of the sacred.”<sup>18</sup> The narrative plot requires the cultic institution because the entire narrative is about accommodating the deity. If P had no sign of any morality, the common characterization of P—especially of its legal portion—as cultic is justified. That is to say, the point is whether there is a sign of moral concern in P’s law. Even if the explicit moral commands and teachings were rare in P’s ritual laws, I do not believe that automatically refutes the presence of the Priestly ethics and morality. My task with this chapter as well as the next chapters is to demonstrate that the deity did not legislate merely ritualistic and legalistic laws; the laws within the narrative are founded on the deity’s value of *repose and peace*.

It is my working hypothesis that P’s moral norms and values should be sought in the character indicators such as divine speech, action, and value-judgement, which are all

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<sup>17</sup> Cf. Barton, *Ethics in Ancient Israel*, esp. 12–13. Barton argues for “critical reflection on moral issues in ancient Israel, and indeed in the ‘pre-Greek’ world of the eastern Mediterranean.”

<sup>18</sup> Baruch J. Schwartz, “Introduction: The Strata of the Priestly Writings and the Revised Relative Dating of P and H,” in *The Strata of the Priestly Writings: Contemporary Debate and Future Directions*, eds. Sarah Shectman, Joel S. Baden (Zürich: TVZ, 2009), 1–12, esp. 9.

constituents of the divine character as much in the law as in the narrative. A consistent divine character underlies P's prose narrative, on the one hand, and its building instructions and various cultic laws, on the other, as the latter are no less part of the continuous narrative.<sup>19</sup> If the deity was the lawgiver and the cultic legislation was to accommodate him according to his nature and preference, the Priestly law is no less a significant source for digging out the divine character than the earlier pre-Sinaitic narrative is. For this reason, I think Schwartz's words reveal only half the truth.<sup>20</sup> Morality is inseparable from sacredness in the Priestly history because the deity in P cares for the people and the world which he created according to his character. There is a certain way of life that the deity expects and requires for the Israelites in P's ritual commands, i.e., 'how one should live,' which is my definition of morality. If Schwartz is right to say that H is essentially as sacral as P, therefore, the opposite is as much true; P and H are essentially moral, both together and respectively. The proposition that P is fundamentally sacral is not necessarily antithetical to that P is essentially moral.

It is not unreasonable to suppose that the authors of P and H could have also distinguished moral and cultic matters but chose to subordinate them together under the theme of the service of God as did the above cited Prophetic texts, which cover from the preexilic to the postexilic period, and even many modern religions do. P's morality is not disclosed explicitly. It is rather implicit due to the nature of the narrative mode, though there is a relatively less implicit case that is discussed in the next chapter (Lev 5:21–26). P embedded its morality in the story and intended it to be found by the reader from the story. If I am correct, any claim based on P that the

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<sup>19</sup> Chavel, "Oracular Novellae," esp. 2–12; Liane Marquis Feldman, "Ritual Sequence and Narrative Constraints in Leviticus 9:1–10:3," *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures* 17 (2017): 1–35; Feldman, *Story of Sacrifice*; Andreas Ruwe, "The Structure of the Book of Leviticus in the Narrative Outline of the Priestly Sinai Story (Exod 19:1–Num 10:10\*)," in *The Book of Leviticus: Composition and Reception*, eds. Rolf Rendtorff and Robert A. Kugler, VTSup 93 (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 55–78, esp. 57–58.

<sup>20</sup> Schwartz, "Introduction," 9. The opinions of Milgrom, Knohl, and even Schwartz seem to assume that the two propositions are incompatible.

prophetic and the priestly<sup>21</sup> groups, at least in preexilic Israel and Judah, had opposing views of the deity would be invalid.<sup>22</sup> In sum, the designations—cultic/ritual/religious/sacred and moral/ethical/social—are helpful and convenient from the modern researcher’s perspective for two reasons without such problems that Nongbri raised above for another context: 1) It is more likely that these categories were not incomprehensible to ancient authors of many biblical books; 2) I engage in scholarly discussion that use the categories. Therefore, I will continue to use the two terms without assuming that they are incompatible.

#### 4.3 Ritual within Narrative<sup>23</sup>

It is quite obvious why many biblical scholars have thought that P is predominantly cultic and barely thought about its moral aspect. Simply, it appears to be cultic rather than ethical. It is because the sheer amount of the cultic matters occupies the central place of P, both textually and conceptually. Most of the Priestly laws are about the ritual and cult associated with the Tent of Meeting in varying degrees in terms of their vocabulary, forms, and contents.<sup>24</sup> The legal portion in P, which is preceded by the building instructions of the cultic place (i.e., the Tent of Meeting), is seemingly a ritual manual.<sup>25</sup> At least some parts of Lev 1–16 and elsewhere in P appear to

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<sup>21</sup> It is also problematic that the Priestly history is undoubtedly written by one or more priestly individuals or groups. If P centers the ordinary Israelites in the cult rather than concentrates on advocacy of the (Aaronide) priestly rights (Feldman, *Story of Sacrifice*, 57–58; *pace* Cranz, *Atonement*, 88–106, 144–145 and Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, 91–100, 104–111) and even proposes an ethical vision as I argue, non-priests as well as priests could have written this literature. See a similar opinion in Erhard S. Gerstenberger, *Leviticus: A Commentary*, trans. Douglas W. Stott, OTL (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996), 10–14, though he maintains the Second Temple setting.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Klawans, *Purity, Sacrifice*, 75–100.

<sup>23</sup> I largely share basic points with other Neo-Documentarians regarding the relationship between law/ritual and narrative: e.g., Chavel, *Oracular Law*, 265–270; Chavel, “Oracular Novellae,” 2–12; Feldman, *Story of Sacrifice*, 10–23; and Stackert, *Prophet Like Moses*, 28–31.

<sup>24</sup> While sacrificial laws command the cult performed in the Tent of Meeting, the dietary laws in Lev 11 seem less directly related to the Tent. Though the latter regulate the action outside the Tent, their violation produces pollution not only for the people but also for the Tent.

<sup>25</sup> For example, the “Manual of Offerings” for Lev 1–7 and the “Manual of Purity” for Lev 11–15 in Budd, *Leviticus*, 13–14; a “Handbook for Priests” in A. F. Rainey, “The Order of Sacrifices in Old Testament Ritual



correspond to a ritual genre either by its form or in comparison to the broader ancient Near Eastern (e.g., Mesopotamian or Ugaritic) literary contexts. Many modern biblical critics have assumed that the Priestly laws belonging to this genre reflect the real cultic practices in postexilic Jerusalem Temple, though they vary in how to define the ritual genre and its subgenres.<sup>26</sup> Rolf Rendtorff and Klaus Koch argued that the original form of Lev 1–3, to which they think the protases were later added to make casuistic laws, assumes a setting in which the priests’ oral instructions were conveyed to the lay offerers.<sup>27</sup> Rolf P. Knierim rejects their artificial exclusion of the protases and does not endorse the hypothetical oral setting. The sacrificial rituals in Lev 1–3 belong to the genre of case law and were meant to be written down altogether from the outset in his analysis.<sup>28</sup> With this, Knierim seems to genuinely render the written sacrificial laws in P as ritual manuals even more than Rendtorff and Koch by preferring “prescriptions,” instead of “instructions,” as the designation for the Priestly sacrificial laws.<sup>29</sup> The prescriptions of the procedures for the various sacrifices, he says, appear “to respond to needs and tendencies, perhaps in view of the exilic situation in which the tradition of the sacrifices had to be put

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Texts.” *Biblica* 51 (1970): 485–498; “cultic ‘aide-mémoires’ (*memoranda*, check-lists) of a sort” and “a kind of sacrificial manual” in Nihan, *Priestly Torah*, 219.

<sup>26</sup> For further references and discussions, see Budd, *Leviticus*, 20–24; Nihan, *Priestly Torah*, 215–219; James W. Watts, “The Rhetoric of Ritual Instruction in Leviticus 1–7,” in *The Book of Leviticus: Composition and Reception*, eds. Rolf Rendtorff and Robert A. Kugler, VTSup 93 (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 79–100, esp. 81–86; and Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, 139–143.

<sup>27</sup> Rolf Rendtorff, *The Old Testament: An Introduction*, trans. John Bowden (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986), 98, 145; Rolf Rendtorff, *Die Gesetze in der Priesterschrift: Eine Gattungsgeschichtliche Untersuchung* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1954), 12, 77; Klaus Koch, *Die Priesterschrift von Exodus 25 bis Leviticus 16: Eine überlieferungsgeschichtliche und literarkritische Untersuchung* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1959), esp. 96–104; Klaus Koch, “Alttestamentliche und altorientalische Rituale,” in *Die Hebräische Bibel und ihre zweifache Nachgeschichte: Festschrift für Rolf Rendtorff zum 65. Geburtstag*, eds. Erhard Blum, Christian Macholz, and Ekkehard W. Stegemann (Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1990), 75–85; recently followed by Cranz, *Atonement*, 49, 88, 143. Cf. Alfred Marx, “The Theology of the Sacrifice According to Leviticus 1–7,” in *The Book of Leviticus: Composition and Reception*, eds. Rolf Rendtorff and Robert A. Kugler, VTSup 93 (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 103–120, esp. 119; John E. Hartley, *Leviticus*, WBC 4 (Dallas: Word Books, 1992), 5–7; Noth, *Leviticus*, 14–15.

<sup>28</sup> Rolf P. Knierim, *Text and Concept in Leviticus 1:1–9: A Case in Exegetical Method*, FAT 2 (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1992), esp. 91–97 and 99–101.

<sup>29</sup> Knierim, *Text and Concept*, 105–106. Also, Blenkinsopp does not hesitate to designate P’s sacrificial and purity laws as a manual: see Joseph Blenkinsopp, *The Pentateuch: An Introduction to the First Five Books of the Bible*, Anchor Bible Reference Library (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 221 and 222.

together and systematized as a program for a new beginning, but also in view of a deficit in the traditions themselves.”<sup>30</sup> He actually represents those who view that P’s presentation of the laws in the narrative frame was to legitimate or to correct the contemporary Second Temple cult.<sup>31</sup> Even the scholars who argued for the antiquity of P—such as Kaufmann, Baruch A. Levine, and Jacob Milgrom among others—likewise presupposed that P’s cultic laws were, at least to some extent, meant to represent the real concepts and practices of the preexilic cult.<sup>32</sup> Christophe Nihan, though he thinks P’s ritual law is different from the other ancient Near Eastern ritual texts, epitomizes such views, regarding Lev 1–3:<sup>33</sup>

Comparative evidence may help illuminate the original function of this collection. A central aspect of Lev 1–3 resides in its enumeration of a specific *sequence* of ritual acts regarded as normative. This has a parallel in numerous texts classified as “rituals” in both Ugarit and Mesopotamia, extending from mere cultic records of offerings to more developed ritual instructions, regarding which it has often been proposed that they should be viewed as cultic “aide-mémoires” (*memoranda*, check-lists) of a sort, to be used by the person in charge of the ritual. . . .

If so, Lev 1–3 should be conceived as a kind of sacrificial manual, or, possibly, an excerpt from such a manual, which functioned as a standard for the priests officiating at the temple with regard to the offering of the three main types of public sacrifices.

All these arguments might reveal why P’s laws have been regarded as a guide to contemporary cultic practices to some extent, as if they functioned as ritual manuals *even after* they were

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<sup>30</sup> Knierim, *Text and Concept*, 104.

<sup>31</sup> Noth, *Pentateuchal Traditions*, 240; Wellhausen, *Prolegomena*, 341; Albertz, *History of Israelite Religion*, 2:480–493; Blenkinsopp, *Pentateuch*, 218–219; and similarly, Nihan, *Priestly Torah*, esp. 383–394. Again, see Knierim, *Text and Concept*, 104: procedural prescriptions for sacrifices in Lev 1–7 were needed for “the standardization of legitimate sacrifices and sacrificial procedures *vis-à-vis* a variety of traditional procedures, e.g., the difference between a sacrificing lay person alone and the prerogatives of a priest in the same ritual,” and “the institutional centralization of the sacrificial system and its procedures” (his italics).

<sup>32</sup> For instance, see Kaufmann, *Religion of Israel*, 101–121; Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, esp. 10–12; Baruch A. Levine, “The Descriptive Tabernacle Texts of the Pentateuch.” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 85 (1965): 307–318; Baruch A. Levine, *The JPS Torah Commentary: Leviticus* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989), xxi–xxxix, 3; Rainey, “Order of Sacrifices,” 485–498; Budd, *Leviticus*, 13–14.

<sup>33</sup> Nihan, *Priestly Torah*, 218–219. This conclusion is a bit surprising in that he has been striving hard in this section to argue that the resemblance among so-called ritual texts in Mesopotamia, Ugarit, and Israel and Judah is too generic to identify a fixed ritual genre: e.g., “the very attempt to connect Lev 1–3 to a fixed literary genre of ‘ritual instructions’ appears to be irrelevant since *such a ‘genre’ probably never existed in ANE literature*” (p.216, my italics). See below. It seems that he at least allows family resemblance among them.

conjoined to the historical narrative. If the genre (more specifically in this case, the form and the content) of the central portion of P entails at least family resemblance—this is key to establishing a genre, instead of a list of common features, for genre theorist Alastair Fowler<sup>34</sup>—to the various types of other ancient Near Eastern ritual texts, is it not natural to suspect that P’s ritual instructions aim at transmitting, advocating, or proposing the authentic cult to be practiced as some scholars have maintained?

The theory of “affordances” may help to prevent making an impetuous, uncritical inference from appearance. “Affordance” is an ecological-psychological term that was first coined by James J. Gibson to explain the animals’ visual perception of the environment.<sup>35</sup> This theory has been subsequently applied in many disciplines beyond psychology, such as anthropology, ethnography, and archaeology, with some modifications. According to the theory, an object entails many properties and qualities but what we perceive (in the ordinary, practical rather than conditioned, experimental situation) is not the individual properties, but rather the affordances of the object. An affordance is defined as a specific combination of (all or part of) the properties of an object, which enables the observer to make a specific action out of it. For example, an object can afford sitting-on if it features a surface of support that bears the four properties—horizontal, flat, extended, and rigid—and if the surface is knee-high above the ground.<sup>36</sup> The most common object with this affordance is a chair. Yet the affordance may not be the same to everyone; a child may not be able to sit on a chair, i.e., a chair cannot afford sitting-

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<sup>34</sup> Alastair Fowler, *Kinds of Literature: An Introduction to the Theory of Genres and Modes* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982), 37–44. Cf. John J. Collins, “Epilogue: Genre Analysis and the Dead Sea Scrolls,” *Dead Sea Discoveries* 17 (2010): 418–430, esp. 421–422. I realized there are page discrepancies between the JSTOR version (389–401) and the brill.com version (418–430) in all the articles in this volume of the journal. I follow the pagination of the brill.com version.

<sup>35</sup> James J. Gibson, *The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception*, Classic Edition (New York: Psychology Press, 2015), 119–135.

<sup>36</sup> Gibson, *Ecological Approach*, 120.

on to a child, if the child's knee-high is too low for the chair.<sup>37</sup> Also, an object may, and usually does, have more than one affordance that it is commonly thought to afford. A chair may afford standing-on when one intends to take out a bowl on the shelf higher than one's reach. All this reveals that affordance is a relational concept, "relative to the properties of some *other* perceiving and acting entity."<sup>38</sup> The individual properties of an object may be inherent to the object but its affordances, namely, the specific combinations of its qualities, exist only as potentials until they are noticed by the observer. The observer may perceive and actualize one of many affordances according to one's context including many conditions such as physical capabilities and specific needs.<sup>39</sup>

Webb Keane suggests that this concept can be extended to any human experience "such as emotions, bodily movements, habitual practices, linguistic forms, laws, etiquette, or narratives."<sup>40</sup> The concept is helpful to avoid the too-rigid interpretations of literary forms and conventions—namely, genres. I want to draw on two related insights from this theory in my reading of the Priestly narrative and law. First of all, the properties of a text, such as the form and the subject matter in our case, should not automatically determine the meaning or the purpose of

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<sup>37</sup> Gibson, *Ecological Approach*, 120.

<sup>38</sup> Webb Keane, *Ethical Life: Its Natural and Social Histories* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 28. (his italics)

<sup>39</sup> Though Gibson and his followers would agree that the affordance is relative to the observer, there is a certain range about how important the role of the observer is for the existence of the affordance. This resembles some ontological-epistemological debates such as realism versus idealism and objectivism versus subjectivism or hermeneutic debates about where meaning is located—in the text, the reader, or the reading dynamics. The original concept, which Gibson himself suggested with opposing some phenomenological-physical dualism and many others follow, proposes that an affordance exists in the object independently of the existence of the observer and her observation; an observer only perceives what is already there (see Gibson, *Ecological Approach*, 129–131, esp. 130). Others argue that an affordance does not exist without an observer's perception according to the observer's properties. For this debate and the corrective attempts for the extremes, see Anthony Chemero, "An Outline of a Theory of Affordances," *Ecological Psychology* 15 (2003): 181–195 and Knappett, "Affordances of Things," in *Rethinking Materiality: The Engagement of Mind with the Material World*, eds. Elizabeth DeMarrais, Chris Gosden, and Colin Renfrew, McDonald Institute Monographs (Cambridge: McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research, 2004), 43–51 (esp. 44–45).

<sup>40</sup> Keane, *Ethical Life*, 30.

the text. Gibson suggested that humans can directly obtain knowledge of things by perception, opposing the indirect cognitivism that regards knowledge as mediated indirectly by the pre-existing categories in the human mind after perception.<sup>41</sup> One piece of evidence for this direct perception is that objects that are not normally classified as chairs in our cognition can also afford sitting-on; a hiker may sit on a rock without regarding it as a chair.<sup>42</sup> In other words, human perception can be spontaneous and practical rather than contemplative. As a cultural product, a literary genre could afford intuitively something other than its more frequent uses and functions. The author of P could make legal or ritual genres serve a purpose other than the one that they were typically expected to do, according to the author's compositional scheme.

The second insight I want to draw on is that the context should control the meaning. The context here means physical, psychological, and environmental situations that an observer is faced with. I would consider an affordance is a translation of the available properties in the environment. It is a meaning that the observer finds in the environment. Gibson says that available properties "have to be measured *relative to the animal*. . . . They have unity relative to the posture and behavior of the animal being considered."<sup>43</sup> Physical properties are not automatically translated into an affordance. As said above, an affordance depends on what the observer needs, intends, and is capable of in combination with what is available in the environment, all of which together constitute the observer's context. But what context for P? Since we do not know the personal information of P's author, one may consider the historical and cultural milieu of the author. Many scholars place P into the early Second Temple context. I indicated my suspicion about this view and observed that P reveals preexilic cultural taste,

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<sup>41</sup> Gibson, *Ecological Approach*, 227–251 and *passim*. Cf. Knappett, "Affordances of Things," 44.

<sup>42</sup> Keane, *Ethical Life*, 28.

<sup>43</sup> Gibson, *Ecological Approach*, 120. Cf. Knappett, "Affordances of Things," 46; Keane, *Ethical Life*, 27–30.

especially Neo-Assyrian. The dating issue of P is a moot question, however, and it is beyond the scope of my project to fix the date and situate P in the Neo-Assyrian period. Others may rely on the literary-history of the text, identifying the *Gattung* (i.e., literary convention, often translated as genre) and its *Sitz im Leben*.<sup>44</sup> Yet there is no dogmatic ground that an author should use a *Gattung* always in the same way that he or another in the shared culture would usually use it. Identifying the *Gattung* of a text does not inform by itself how and for what it was used in each and every case. The use of a *Gattung* itself can be relative to the context of its use.

Two problems may be raised against my understanding in light of the theory of affordance. First of all, there seems to be a contradiction to what I laid out in the introductory chapter. In the introduction, I drew Barton's "plain sense" as an appropriate meaning of a text that I will pursue in this study. One of the qualifications for the plain sense was genre awareness. Is the identification of the ritual genre not important to recognize the meaning and intent of P's ritual law? I do not deny the importance of genre. Yet genre awareness should not be confined to a part as if the part is independent from the whole. It should be noted that genres are neither constant nor static but open categories, as some genre theorists argue. Genres are historically, socially, and culturally changeable.<sup>45</sup> Molly M. Zahn stressed the flexibility of genres; individual texts may be grouped and re-grouped to different genres according to when, by whom, and/or for what they are classified as a genre.<sup>46</sup> This flexibility supports that the ritual laws within P's

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<sup>44</sup> For helpful introductions to the relationship between a *Gattung* and its *Sitz im Leben* in general, see Klaus Koch, *The Growth of the Biblical Tradition: The Form-Critical Method*, trans. S. M. Cupitt, 1st Scribners/Macmillan Hudson River ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1988), 3–38; Barton, *Reading the Old Testament*, 30–43.

<sup>45</sup> E.g., Ralph Cohen, "History and Genre." *New Literary History* 17 (1986): 203–218; Devitt, *Writing Genres*, 7–8, 88–136; Fowler, *Kinds of Literature*, 37–53 (esp. 45–52).

<sup>46</sup> Molly M. Zahn, "Genre and Rewritten Scripture," 276–278 (esp. 277). Her entire article offers a useful discussion and extensive references. Cf. Collins, "Epilogue," 421; Amy J. Devitt, *Writing Genres, Rhetorical Philosophy and Theory* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2004), 88–136 (esp. 115–122); Fowler, *Kinds of Literature*, 45–52. P and Leviticus were discussed in a similar view in David Damrosch, *The Narrative Covenant: Transformations of Genre in the Growth of Biblical Literature* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987), 261–297.

narrative may be classified and function differently as self-standing ritual texts that are independent of the narrative. The rigid application of a genre and its *Sitz im Leben*, narrowly identified by the form and content of a part without considering its larger literary context, may be misleading for finding the meaning and function of the part within the entire work to which it belongs.

Above, I intentionally used *Gattung* untranslated for P's law, while I did not mind using a corresponding English (originally French) term "genre" elsewhere. Barton points out, the English word "genre" often implies a large-scale literary type, whereas a *Gattung* in form criticism originally refers to a smaller-scale, oral genre in biblical studies.<sup>47</sup> I am presently calling attention to a specific section of P and its literary convention by *Gattung*, rather than P in its entirety and its large-scale literary type. The plain sense of an embedded text is ultimately to be sought in light of this large-scale genre of the entire literary work to which it belongs rather than narrowly from a small-scale *Gattung* of itself. Koch similarly distinguished "component literary types" and "complex literary types" that may include the other literary types. He argued:

Indeed, component types can be so radically adapted when taken up into a written work that their previous formal characteristics have almost disappeared and are only distinguishable from their surroundings as a particular series of images or as a tradition-complex. . . . *Each exegesis must therefore not only define the literary type, but also discover whether this literary type is associated with other, perhaps complex, literary types.*<sup>48</sup>

He correctly prioritized the large-scale genre of the work over the individual *Gattungen* of its components. With this, however, he is still concerned about the *Sitz im Leben* of the large-scale genre.<sup>49</sup> Yet a literary composition does not necessarily have an oral life setting, i.e., *Sitz im Leben*, of its final form even though its components may have. A literary work should be read

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<sup>47</sup> Barton, *Reading the Old Testament*, 31.

<sup>48</sup> Koch, *Biblical Tradition*, 23–25, esp. 24 (his italics).

<sup>49</sup> Koch, *Biblical Tradition*, 28.

and analyzed literarily as such since its meaning is in the text and not behind the text. I rather contend, therefore, that it is not *Sitz im Leben* but *Sitz im Text* that determines the meaning of a small-scale *Gattung*, especially in a literary work. This is directly relevant to P's sacrificial laws, contra Koch and others who search the prehistory of P's laws and rituals, as I classified the entire P as a *historical narrative*, a written literary composition. The meaning of the entire Priestly history is to be sought through the narrative analysis.

Also, I would add that the theory of affordances is not to be misunderstood as allowing humans to perceive affordances randomly if only there is a practical need. Not only does the object of perception consist of relevant properties; many times, it is also controlled by cultural knowledge. While admitting Gibson's idea of obtaining knowledge, Carl Knappett lays a caveat against an extreme that human knowledge is obtained only through the direct perception. He points out that some (more fixed and determined) affordances may require cultural knowledge; for instance, litterbins and postboxes may not be distinguishable without the pre-existing knowledge.<sup>50</sup> Applying this idea, a text's properties such as a form, theme, and content may guide the text's use in collaboration with the cultural knowledge of its *Gattung* and *Sitz im Leben*, among others. In this sense, it is worth noting that P's law in the style of ritual prescription is still employed to instruct ritual procedures to the Israelites as characters in the story.<sup>51</sup> Though the narrative surrounding the ritual procedure as it is in P may be uncommon for the ritual *Gattung*, neither is the ritual incorporated arbitrarily nor is its meaning unpredictable in the course of the narrative. Our knowledge of the ritual *Gattung*, if we can plausibly define it, is

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<sup>50</sup> Knappett, "Affordances of Things," 44–45.

<sup>51</sup> Feldman, *Story of Sacrifice*, 48 makes useful distinction between the character-Israelites (those as characters in the story world) and the reader-Israelites (those as the implied readers). Ruwe, "Structure," 57–58 also appreciates the narrated world in Leviticus. This distinction fits well with my idea that P's (implied) author intends to teach its (implied) readers its morality rather than the strict rules themselves, which the latter should have followed.



still beneficial to understand the ritual laws within the narrative. It will explain how the laws function in this place of the text at this specific narrative time in the plot, for instance, narratologically and rhetorically.<sup>52</sup> The essential point that escaped some biblical scholars I mentioned above is that these ritual laws serve and build up the entire narrative as a part of the narrative.<sup>53</sup>

There is a second problem. If the observer's context is important to decide the use of an object according to the theory of affordances, and we cannot have knowledge of the observer's (i.e., the Priestly author's) context, what controls the meaning of our text? In fact, the only one secure piece of information of P's real author that we may know is that the author combined the ritual genre into the narrative and intended the ritual and legal part to be read in light of the narrative as part of it. Having said that, one may alternatively resort to the implied author as the controller of the meaning of the text, instead of the real author. As I laid out in the introductory chapter, this concept is not a hypothetical person, i.e., the reader's speculation and reconstruction about what the real author would be like while reading the text, in order to circularly read back to the text. This is a trope for the text's structural principle that designs the text and gives coherence to all the narrative components including the values and norms of the text.<sup>54</sup>

In the narrative world, the so-called ritual law was given not utterly for the cult. That reading of P is from modern mind, though not the category itself is necessarily modern as I

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<sup>52</sup> By the term "rhetorical," I do not have in mind some public reading and aural setting as argued in Watts, "Rhetoric of Ritual Instruction," 86–100 (esp. 100); Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, 139–154 (esp. 154).

<sup>53</sup> Previous studies in this stance are, among others, Damrosch, *Narrative Covenant*, 261–297; David P. Wright, "Ritual Theory, Ritual Texts, and the Priestly-Holiness Writings of the Pentateuch," in *Social Theory and the Study of Israelite Religion: Essays in Retrospect and Prospect*, ed. Saul Olyan (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2012), 195–216; Ruwe, "Structure," 57–58; Magdalene, *On the Scales*, 51–52; Chavel, "Oracular Novellae," 1–27; Chavel, *Oracular Law*; Feldman, "Ritual Sequence," 1–35; Feldman, *Story of Sacrifice*. For the perspective of modern jurisdiction, see Robert M. Cover, "Foreword: *Nomos* and Narrative," *Harvard Law Review* 97.4 (1983): 4–68.

<sup>54</sup> See, among others, Chatman, *Story and Discourse*, 147–151; Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction*, 89–92; Darby, "Form and Context," 829–852.

argued above. I am not saying this just because the term “ritual” never appears in this narrative. It is because there is no division between cult/ritual/religion and secular in the Priestly history. The so-called ritual laws were given to serve the deity. But this serving of the deity does not only dominate the religious lives of the Israelites, leaving room for them a private, secular domain of life; it rather dominates the Israelites’ entire lives in P’s narrative. P does not imagine any part of life that is not relevant to the deity. The cultic and moral life are not separable for P’s Israelites. Therefore, the so-called ritual instructions should not be thought narrowly as how the Israelites should worship their God. More broadly, they teach the Israelites within the narrative as well as the Israelites reading the narrative how the members of the Israelites should live.<sup>55</sup> In other words, the ritual *Gattung* of the Priestly law *affords* the implied author (and the implied reader) the communication of the moral values (for how to live) by joining the *Gattung* to the larger narrative context.

What needs to be clarified subsequently is how this affordance is possible: namely, how the so-called ritual instructions within the narrative suggest the interpersonal morality, which is the main subject of the present chapter. There are good reasons to think that P’s ritual instructions were intended to be read not by themselves but within the narrative context, even if their *Gattung* were really ritual manual—whether it implies that they were originally inserted from the existing ritual instructions or that the author mimicked that *Gattung*.<sup>56</sup> Even if it is true

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<sup>55</sup> See the differentiation between the character-Israelites and the reader-Israelites in Feldman, *Story of Sacrifice*, 48 and elsewhere. The latter is not the real reader, but the implied reader invoked and conditioned by the implied author. The real reader may or may not accept the values of the implied author, but the implied reader is supposed to do by definition. Cf. Peter J. Rabinowitz, “Reader-Response Theory and Criticism,” in *The Johns Hopkins Guide to Literary Theory & Criticism*, eds. Michael Groden and Martin Kreiswirth (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), 606–609, esp. 606: The implied reader is one “whose moves are charted out by (and hence more or less controlled by) the work in question. This is the kind of reader referred to, for instance, when one says, ‘The reader is surprised by the end of an Agatha Christie novel.’”

<sup>56</sup> Cf. Rendtorff, *Introduction*, 98, 145; Rendtorff, *Gesetze*; Koch, *Priesterschrift*, esp. 96–104; Koch, “Rituale,” 75–85; Levine, “Descriptive Tabernacle Texts,” 307–318; Levine, *Leviticus*, xxi–xxxix, 3; Rainey, “Order of

that the Priestly law follows the features of the ritual genres in the ancient Near East, it does not strive for mirroring the actual praxes or justifying the contemporary cultic system as such.<sup>57</sup> P rather suggests the world of the imagination.<sup>58</sup> The Priestly ritual is most likely not the same with the actual cult in Israel and Judah. Also, the Priestly cult does not aim to replace the cultic practices at that time since it was almost impossible to be observed as precisely as described, being situated inseparably within the narrative plot.<sup>59</sup> While the ritual laws in Lev 1–7, whether in total or in part, have been considered as a later insertion by the majority of scholarship,<sup>60</sup> even some proponents of this admit that the laws in Lev 1–7 are not inappropriate for the narrative sequence between the installation of the Tent of Meeting in Exod 25–40\* and the inauguration of the Tent cult in Lev 8–9.<sup>61</sup> Whatever the origin might be, Lev 1–7 is adopted by P’s author for the narrative purpose.

Moreover, James W. Watts and Nihan, more or less anticipated by Knierim, direct attention to the fluidity and ambiguity of the so-called ritual *Gattung* for P and other ancient

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Sacrifices,” 485–498; Marx, “Theology of the Sacrifice,” 119; Noth, *Leviticus*, 14–15; Knierim, *Text and Concept*, 101.

<sup>57</sup> Pace, for instance, Wellhausen, *Prolegomena*, 341.

<sup>58</sup> The fictionality of the Priestly cult is well argued in Hanna Liss, “The Imaginary Sanctuary: The Priestly Code as an Example of Fictional Literature in the Hebrew Bible,” in *Judah and the Judeans in the Persian Period*, eds. Oded Lipschits and Manfred Oeming (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2006), 663–689; Hanna Liss, “Of Mice and Men and Blood: The Laws of Ritual Purity in the Hebrew Bible,” in *Literary Construction of Identity in the Ancient World: Proceedings of a Conference, Literary Fiction and the Construction of Identity in Ancient Literatures: Options and Limits of Modern Literary Approaches in the Exegesis of Ancient Texts, Heidelberg, July 10–13, 2006*, eds. Hanna Liss and Manfred Oeming (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2010), 199–213. See also, D. Wright, “Ritual Theory,” esp. 200–207.

<sup>59</sup> Pace Albertz, *History of Israelite Religion*, 482, 630n105; Knierim, *Text and Concept*, 104; Noth, *Pentateuchal Traditions*, 240.

<sup>60</sup> Among others, Noth, *Pentateuchal Traditions*, 8–19 thinks Lev 1–7 has nothing to do with the Priestly narrative. Nihan, *Priestly Torah*, 150–231 (esp. 197–198, 215–219) considers that Lev 1–3 predates and was later used by P, while Lev 4–7 is later.

<sup>61</sup> Noth, *Pentateuchal Traditions*, 8 and Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 61. Milgrom points out that it is hard to understand Lev 8–9 without Lev 1–7. Nihan, *Priestly Torah*, 158–159 says in a more resolute tone that Lev 1–7 is “an integral part of the narrative beginning in Exod 40:35 and climaxing in Lev 9:23–24”—only preliminarily, since he was soon going to disconnect Lev 4–7 from the original narrative layer (i.e., P). A recent support for the literary coherence of Lev 1–9, see Feldman, *Story of Sacrifice* and Feldman, “Ritual Sequence,” 1–35.

Near Eastern texts, reviewing recent studies.<sup>62</sup> Watts criticizes that the supporters of the ritual genre tend to deal with the hypothetical ideal type with an unduly strict view of genre, instead of the actual texts.<sup>63</sup> Nihan likewise points out that the so-called ritual texts even in one culture, e.g., Ugarit, are diverse in types and that the resemblance between P's law and the ritual texts in Mesopotamia, Anatolia, and Levant is very general.<sup>64</sup> For instance, the Priestly law may be hardly dubbed "magical rituals," though there are some correspondences between them, because the former deals with a notably different subject matter from the similar casuistic instructions from Mesopotamian and Anatolian ritual texts. The latter work "for the elimination of evil and the healing of a person, or for protection against bad omens," says Nihan, whereas P is concerned about "the various cases of legitimate offerings."<sup>65</sup> He also claims:<sup>66</sup>

Lev 1–3 is typically a *scribal* creation, freely using the genre of case law to prescribe the offering of three main types of sacrifices. Although there is an unmistakable pattern of formulation, especially in Lev 1; 3, the instruction for the cereal offering (Lev 2) shows that this stylistic pattern did not have to be rigidly applied, and the entire form-critical attempt to reconstruct a strict "ritual" *Gattung* is flawed.

The scribal—written rather than oral—feature of Lev 1–7,<sup>67</sup> though Nihan does not necessarily relate this to the narrative setting, is compatible with my view that the narrative setting may

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<sup>62</sup> Knierim, *Text and Concept*, 91–111; Nihan, *Priestly Torah*, 215–219; Watts, "Rhetoric of Ritual Instruction," 79–100 (esp. 81–86); Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, 139–149.

<sup>63</sup> Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, 141.

<sup>64</sup> Nihan, *Priestly Torah*, 216–218.

<sup>65</sup> Nihan, *Priestly Torah*, 218.

<sup>66</sup> Nihan, *Priestly Torah*, 218 (his italics and parentheses). As cited above, he admits a generic topic or family resemblance among the so-called ritual texts. For the scribal feature of the sacrificial law, see also Knierim, *Text and Concept*, 91–111; Watts, "Rhetoric of Ritual Instruction," 82, 93–94; Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, 140, 148–149.

<sup>67</sup> Though Nihan admits only Lev 1–3 to be original, it seems that he nevertheless admits the likelihood of some knowledge of the purification offering (תִּטֹּחַת, *hattā't*) in Lev 8–9 (original P) because of the references to the purification offering in these chapters. Yet he does not believe that that very knowledge has come from Lev 4. His exclusion of Lev 4–7 from P is, briefly speaking, based on the following (see Nihan, *Priestly Torah*, 150–198, esp. 166–197): 1) the incense altar—the place of the high priest's blood manipulation in the inner sanctum—is influenced by Exod 30:1–10, which is allegedly a late text; 2) Lev 4 combines the two historically distinct *hattā't* traditions, i.e., purification and atonement, the latter of which P did not know; and 3) the permanent ritual use of frankincense unlikely began before the Second Temple. Yet none of these reasons are indisputable. 1) The argument for the secondary nature of P's incense altar, though predominant (since Wellhausen, *Prolegomena*, 64–67 and Wellhausen, *Composition*, 138), has been occasionally opposed for various reasons. I do not see the counter argument as any less plausible. For the refutations, see Haran, *Temples*, 227–229 and 230–245; Milgrom, *Leviticus*

adopt and adapt the apparently cultic and legal form, style, and genre of Lev 1–7.<sup>68</sup> As Watts points out, “Genres are not immutable forms, but rather repertoires of literary conventions available to speakers and writers.”<sup>69</sup> So, the ritual *Gattung* may have narrative potentials. It includes often unidentified speakers and addressees, ritual practitioners, and specific circumstances.<sup>70</sup> These components can be easily transferred and merged to the narrative characters and situations. P’s author may have recognized in the ritual *Gattung* this affordance of the narrative in the course of the writing of P and integrated it into his composition apart from its traditional function, though not in the radically arbitrary way.<sup>71</sup>

P’s ritual texts were not alone in affording the narrative integration. At least one precursor existed in the northern Levant in the Late Bronze Age. David P. Wright observed that the parallels between the ritual texts that may reflect the real ritual praxes and the ritual

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1–16, 236–237; Carol Meyers, “Realms of Sanctity: The Case of the ‘Misplaced’ Incense Altar in the Tabernacle Texts of Exodus,” in *Texts, Temples, and Traditions: A Tribute to Menahem Haran*, eds. Michael V. Fox et al. (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1996), 33–46; and Carol Meyers, “Framing Aaron: Incense Altar and Lamp Oil in the Tabernacle Texts,” in *Sacred History, Sacred Literature: Essays on Ancient Israel, the Bible, and Religion in Honor of R. E. Friedman on His Sixtieth Birthday*, ed. Shawna Dolansky (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2008), 13–21, esp. 17–18. 2) The close relationship between Lev 4 and Lev 16 should not be exaggerated as if it is inflexible. The special, annual ritual in Lev 16 does not have to coincide with the contingent ritual in Lev 4 in every aspect. In other words, the absence of atonement *ḥattā’t* in Lev 16 does not prove that it did not know it. In fact, as I will argue in the subsequent chapter, the purification offerings both in Lev 4 and Lev 16 are not so different; they both purge the sancta of the pollutants (i.e., sins and impurities). Also, the presence of the inner sanctum rite in Lev 4 does not make the annual ritual in Lev 16 unnecessary. 3) Regarding the permanent access to frankincense, P does not have to reflect the reality. Nihan himself admits the availability of frankincense to some degree in Jerusalem from the late Neo-Assyrian period. For more recent supports for Lev 4 as original to P, see Feldman, “Ritual Sequence,” 1–35 (esp. 16–21) and Cranz, *Atonement*, 35–38.

<sup>68</sup> Cf. David P. Wright, *Ritual in Narrative: The Dynamics of Feasting, Mourning, and Retaliation Rites in the Ugaritic Tale of Aqhat* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2001), 227–229; Chavel, “Oracular Novellae,” 1–27; Chavel, *Oracular Law*; Stackert, *Prophet Like Moses*, 50–51; Feldman, “Ritual Sequence,” 6–7; Feldman, *Story of Sacrifice*.

<sup>69</sup> Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, 142. Cf. R. Cohen, “History and Genre,” 203–218; Collins, “Epilogue,” 421; Devitt, *Writing Genres*, 88–136 (esp. 115–122); Fowler, *Kinds of Literature*, 45–52; Molly M. Zahn, “Genre and Rewritten Scripture: A Reassessment,” *JBL* 131.2 (2012): 271–288, esp. 276–278.

<sup>70</sup> As much as the casuistic laws do in Assnat Bartor, *Reading Law as Narrative: A Study in the Casuistic Laws of the Pentateuch* (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2010), 1–14 (esp. 5–11).

<sup>71</sup> See Chatman, *Coming to Terms*, 74–75, 81. The implied author is the real author’s construct that preexists before reading and should be *reconstructed* by the readers from the text. The norms, values, or morals of the text are embedded by the real author at will, but they are what only the implied author hold to. The real author does not necessarily believe the values of the text that he produced, and we may never know whether or not that is the case.

descriptions in the Aqhat text are few or at best loose in Ugarit.<sup>72</sup> The differences are possibly due to, he says, “simply a function of narration: just as ritual in real life contributes to and constructs a particular reality for the participants, so ritual in narrative seeks to create a world for its characters. This requires that the ritual, even though it depends to some extent on real-world models, be molded to the needs of its narrative.”<sup>73</sup> Though this was not the only possible interpretation that he speculates of the differences between them, D. Wright seems to regard this as almost certain as he later calls it “fact”: “The *fact* that ritual in story could be modeled to the wishes of the authors/poets afforded them the opportunity to compose from an ideal perspective.”<sup>74</sup> Similar dynamics between law and narrative can be found in P as well as in its later layers.<sup>75</sup> For instance, several differences between Lev 9 and Lev 16 may hinder readers from fully recognizing their structural and procedural similarities, even though some scholars did recognize them to some extent.<sup>76</sup> Yet Liane M. Feldman argued that Lev 9 actually describes such a tabernacle purification ritual as the annual purification in Lev 16 and that the differences can be explained by reading the narrative context carefully.<sup>77</sup> First of all, the priestly ordination was not yet completed until the initiation of the *tāmīd* offering in Lev 9:17, even though the

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<sup>72</sup> D. Wright, *Ritual in Narrative*, 227.

<sup>73</sup> D. Wright, *Ritual in Narrative*, 228. F. Rachel Magdalene expressed this same principle—namely, the priority of the narrative purpose over the genre of an embedded part—regarding the law and narrative in her literary-forensic reading of Job in Magdalene, *On the Scales*, 51–52: “Authors who embed a trial in a work of literature are free to play with the law because the law is in service to literary goals, not legal goals. . . . As a result, in analyzing the law in literature, one must be prepared for deviations from the norm consistent with the narratological goals of the work.” Magdalene is dealing with narrative and judicial law instead of narrative and cult. Yet remember P’s cultic instructions are also divine laws, formally and conceptually (see below). The cultic instructions and the laws are close enough, both formally and functionally, when they are subordinated to the narrative.

<sup>74</sup> D. Wright, *Ritual in Narrative*, 228 (my italics) and 227–228 for the other possibilities. His use of “afforded” fits well with the concept of the affordance, though he did not intend to allude to the theory.

<sup>75</sup> For the later layers in Pentateuchal P, see Chavel, “Oracular *Novellae*,” 1–27; Chavel, *Oracular Law*. Feldman focuses more on the original layer of the Priestly history: see Feldman, “Ritual Sequence,” 1–27 and Feldman, *Story of Sacrifice*.

<sup>76</sup> Feldman, “Ritual Sequence,” 7–8.

<sup>77</sup> Feldman, “Ritual Sequence,” 13–19. Cf. Nihan, *Priestly Torah*, 150–159, 231–237, 370–371, 379–382, and *passim*. Nihan excludes Lev 4–7 and Lev 10 from an otherwise literary unity of Lev 1–16.

priests' ordination ritual was already performed in Lev 8.<sup>78</sup> Also, there was not enough time to accumulate sins at the time of the first tabernacle purification ritual in Lev 9.<sup>79</sup> In other words, the narrative context of Lev 9 had to modify the soon-to-be normative tabernacle purification procedure in Lev 16 including the order of the offerings, the required sacrificial animals, and the goat for Azazel. Feldman persuasively argued that the apparent deviations in Lev 9 from the corresponding rituals elsewhere in P were, thus, perfectly appropriate to be considered as part of original P.<sup>80</sup>

Yet a question may still be raised. If P's purpose is not to teach the right ritual procedures, why is a large and central part of P about the cult? First of all, a hint may be found in the fact that P's cultic instructions have the form of the casuistic law and given as the state institutions comparable to the Covenant Collection or the Deuteronomic Collection rather than as a ritual handbook in P's narrative context (see below).<sup>81</sup> If this is admitted, the ritual *laws* are necessary for P's *historical narrative*. Hayden White insists:

If every fully realized story . . . is a kind of allegory, points to a moral, or endows events, whether real or imaginary, with a significance that they do not possess as a mere sequence, then it seems possible to conclude that every historical narrative has as its latent or manifest purpose the desire to moralize the events of which it treats. *Where there is ambiguity or ambivalence regarding the status of the legal system, which is the form in which the subject encounters most immediately the social system in which he is enjoined to achieve a full humanity, the ground on which any closure of a story one might wish to tell about a past, whether it be a public or a private past, is lacking.*<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> Feldman, "Ritual Sequence," 27–30; Feldman, *Story of Sacrifice*, 100–103.

<sup>79</sup> Feldman, "Ritual Sequence," 25–27.

<sup>80</sup> Feldman, "Ritual Sequence," esp. 34. Note some scholars have attributed (at least a part of) Lev 9 to a distinct tradition from the original layer of P, though not necessarily because of the apparent discrepancies between Lev 9 and Lev 16: among others, Koch, *Priesterschrift*, 70–71. For others, at least a part of Lev 9 is a rare text in Leviticus that belongs to the original layer of P: e.g., Wellhausen, *Composition*, 144; Karl Elliger, *Leviticus*, HAT 1/4 Tubingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1966), 122–128 (esp. 127–128); Noth, *Leviticus*, 75–76; also, see conveniently the texts ascribed (more or less differently) to the original layer of P in Elliger, "Sinn und Ursprung," 121–122 (esp. 122); Lohfink, *Theology*, 145; and Noth, *Pentateuchal Traditions*, 17–19 (esp. 18). Nihan, *Priestly Torah*, 111–122 offers a fuller discussion about the scholarly opinions about Lev 9.

<sup>81</sup> Cf. Knierim, *Text and Concept*, esp. 94–97; Feldman, *Story of Sacrifice*, 18–23 (esp. 18–19).

<sup>82</sup> White, "Value of Narrativity," 17–18 (my italics).

He says that a motivation to write a full historical narrative is to moralize reality, which is a kind of allegorizing.<sup>83</sup> This moralization is what makes historical narrative historical narrative.

Without moralization, it does not have a unifying end to conclude a story and this deficient story cannot be considered as a historical narrative. In turn, this moralization is not possible without a legal system that offers a consistent moral value.<sup>84</sup> This is supported by Ricoeur's definition of ethics that I proposed in the introductory chapter: "aiming at the good life with and for others *in just institutions*."<sup>85</sup> An ethical, moral vision, is not conceivable without a social institution as a moral focal point. Consequently, a historical narrative cannot exist without a legal and social system, whether it is latently underlying or manifestly articulated in the narrative. If P is indeed a historical narrative and aimed at "learning from the events it recounts,"<sup>86</sup> inclusion of a legal system was inevitable. If we have to find a social setting of P as history genre, this is one, however it is generic and vague. In other words, P as a historical narrative adopted and declared a cultic system as its legal and social system that unifies and concludes its story in its version of moralizing the reality, by which divine presence is maintained as a moralizing focal point.<sup>87</sup> P's law within a historical and political allegorical narrative, if White's stance is admitted, is not to endorse or correct a certain existing cultic system, but to moralize the reality in the cultic point of view. In this sense, the Priestly history is not only sacral, but also ethical.

Another hint may be found in D. Wright's observation on the Aqhat text again:<sup>88</sup>

All of these factors reveal just how integral and central ritual is to the narrative. Ritual elements do not simply provide a stage for events in the story; they largely determine the very meaning of the story. The different rites convey much of what we know about the

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<sup>83</sup> See White's further remark in White, "Value of Narrativity," 18: "Narrativity, certainly in factual storytelling and probably in fictional storytelling as well, is intimately related to, if not a function of, the impulse to *moralize* reality, that is, to identify it with the social system that is the source of any morality that we can imagine."

<sup>84</sup> White, "Value of Narrativity," 17.

<sup>85</sup> Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, 170 and 180 (my italics).

<sup>86</sup> Chavel, *Oracular Law*, 266.

<sup>87</sup> See a further discussion in Chavel, *Oracular Law*, 265–270.

<sup>88</sup> D. Wright, *Ritual in Narrative*, 227.



relationships of the characters. The characters' emotions and ethics—love, anger, hate, frustration, piety, a sense of duty and honor—are revealed through their various performances. Ritual's expressive nature suits well this descriptive task in narrative. While ritual is not the same sort of communication as language and expressiveness is not its defining characteristic, ritual's actions and objects are symbolic.

In other words, ritual may reveal the social dynamics among the characters in the narrative and, therefore, afford the character analysis.<sup>89</sup> I would add that not only performances but also physical ritual items and space reveal the properties of the characters—mostly, of the deity—in P (see below). Some may not agree with the last quoted sentence that ritual is symbolic, if it means that the purpose of ritual is to communicate a unified system of hidden meanings for social solidarity. That point was rightly criticized by many modern ritual theorists and biblical scholars. Among others, Catherine Bell argued that the participants of a certain ritual practice do not usually share its intended meaning, if there exists one.<sup>90</sup> However, I can agree that ritual is symbolic as far as it is on the textual level of the transaction of the meaning between the author and the reader—instead of the performing level between the characters in the narrative world or between priests and lay people in the real world.<sup>91</sup> This symbolism is not based on cultural or social conventions, but rather on literary conventions. An author may construct a unified and systemic ritual symbolism in a literary work; a reader can reconstruct symbolism by reading the cues in the narrative text. D. Wright's point is justified to the extent that he appreciates the

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<sup>89</sup> D. Wright, *Ritual in Narrative*, 228.

<sup>90</sup> Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 182–187 and *passim*. Regarding P, see Gorman, “Pagans and Priests,” 96–110 (esp. 99–101). But see Jonathan Klawans, “Methodology and Ideology in the Study of Priestly Ritual,” in *Perspectives on Purity and Purification in the Bible*, eds. Baruch J. Schwartz et al., LHBOTS 474 (London: T&T Clark, 2008), 84–95 (85–90). Klawans defends P's ritual symbolism that symbolism was a pervasive characteristic of the culture of ancient Israel and Judah because even prophets used it. Whether or not prophets' symbolic actions and priestly ritual acts are of the same kind, however, the fact that the Priestly ritual is part of a larger narrative should be taken into account before rejecting symbolism of P's ritual (see below). See also Klawans, “Pure Violence,” 135–157.

<sup>91</sup> My view is largely anticipated by Feldman, *Story of Sacrifice*, 10–18 (esp. 12–13).

textuality and narrativity of the Aqhat narrative (and also of the Priestly history beyond the ritual laws).<sup>92</sup> D. Wright further says:<sup>93</sup>

Ritual as symbol in real life defines the status of individuals, marks transitions, celebrates joy, makes the endurance of misfortune possible, and otherwise creates “reality” for participants. These functions of ritual also come to bear in narrative. The main difference is that, instead of being participants in the rites, readers and hearers are observers. Story does draw readers and hearers into its world, however, until they become virtual participants through sympathetic identification with characters.

Namely, ritual in literature creates a world first and foremost for the characters and only indirectly for the readers. By employing the political allegorical mode, the characters’ world becomes the readers’ *alternative world* fraught with *alternative facts*<sup>94</sup> that influence and persuade the readers.<sup>95</sup> For instance, the material pollutions and sins that stick to the Tent of Meeting and the deity’s permanent physical presence in the Tent are nothing but reality to the characters. Yet to the readers, P’s cultic system as part of a larger historical narrative is more of an effective rhetoric. It persuades the readers to live according to the value<sup>96</sup> of that alternative world rather than commands them to comply with its details meticulously.

The scope of the present chapter is what alternative world and characters are suggested by the Priestly ritual engaging with the narrative plot. This plotted ritual law enables the character analysis. The main character that we may know about from ritual is the deity in the case of P. The focus of the Priestly ritual is more on the deity than on anyone else in the story such as Moses, priests, and the Israelites, though information about them is also available to some degree. In the story, the deity not only created the world but also he tailored the society of

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<sup>92</sup> Not alone for the Aqhat narrative in *Ritual in Narrative* but also for P does he make this point elsewhere: see D. Wright, “Ritual Theory,” 195–216.

<sup>93</sup> D. Wright, *Ritual in Narrative*, 227.

<sup>94</sup> The phrase “alternative facts” was first used by former U.S. Counselor to the President Kellyanne Conway. I intend no mocking sense by employing it, while I see some parallels to my use of the word “alternative.”

<sup>95</sup> Stackert, “Political Allegory,” 215.

<sup>96</sup> Cf. White, “Value of Narrativity,” 26–27. The moral value attached to narrativity is what makes historical narrative coherent and marks it different from other historical representations such as annals and the chronicle.

Israel so he could dwell among them. The interest associated with the Israelites in P's ritual is primarily in the right manner to serve the deity, the manner corresponding to his nature and preference. Thus, I propose that the Priestly ritual was a source of ethical affordance that is coined and defined in Keane: "By ethical affordance I mean any aspects of people's experiences and perceptions that they might draw on in the process of making ethical evaluations and decisions, whether consciously or not."<sup>97</sup> In other words, "ethical affordance refers to the opportunities that any experiences might offer as people evaluate themselves, other persons, and their circumstances."<sup>98</sup> The Priestly laws offered such an opportunity. They were not a manual to instruct or prescribe ritual procedures to certain priests or lay people outside the text. They aimed to present the character of God and, in turn, to persuade the proper *way of life*, i.e., the morality, in the world assumed that the deity and the people shared in common.

#### 4.4 Characterization

Before I go into the text, it may be necessary to lay out what I mean by 'character' and how to analyze the divine character. A character is a nexus of the traits that depict a person in a story.<sup>99</sup> But those traits are not immediately detected and defined from the text since the narrator does not present characters in such a simple way.

Rimmon-Kenan distinguishes two basic kinds of textual clues for the character: "direct definition" and "indirect presentation." The direct means of characterization is the narrator's statements that qualify or define a character with adjectives, abstract nouns, and/or some other

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<sup>97</sup> Keane, *Ethical Life*, 27.

<sup>98</sup> Keane, *Ethical Life*, 31.

<sup>99</sup> For the discussion of person-like character against (at least some) structuralist views that ignore the individuality of character and equate it to mere actions or words, whereby making it as a mere function of plot, see Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction*, 29–42 and 59–70 and Chatman, *Story and Discourse*, 96–145. Also, Shimon Bar-Efrat, *Narrative Art in the Bible* (Sheffield: Almond Press, 1989), 47–48.

culturally value-laden nouns.<sup>100</sup> One may find an obvious biblical example for this in Num 12:3: “Now Moses was very humble, more so than any other person on earth.”<sup>101</sup> This explicit qualification of Moses characterizes him by filling the gap that skips his response to Miriam and Aaron’s slander against him, which is expected to appear between Num 12:2 and 12:4. It also makes Moses’s petition for Miriam’s punishment less surprising later in the narrative (Num 12:13) since the previously given information of his trait corresponds well with that action.

Direct presentation is very rare in P. Indirect characterization is much more frequent and important in P as well as in many other biblical narratives. Since it is dispersed throughout the text, it requires a thorough reading and analysis. Especially, one needs to pay close attention to character-indicators in order to understand a character presented indirectly. Among many character-indicators, action, speech, external appearance,<sup>102</sup> and environment of the deity may stand out in P’s law and narrative.<sup>103</sup> For instance, the Priestly law was given by the divine *speech*. The Tent of Meeting and its surrounding Israelite society were the *environment* which the deity experiences immediately. Having said that, the individual indicators are useful only for heuristic purposes. What is important is the character to which these indicators refer; all the indicators can work together to amount to a coherent divine character. Preliminarily speaking, the Israelites of the narrative had to follow the divine instructions given in P, and not only

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<sup>100</sup> Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction*, 59–61.

<sup>101</sup> Translation from NJPS. On the meaning of ענוּו, see Baruch A. Levine, *The JPS Torah Commentary: Leviticus* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989), 329; Jacob Milgrom, *The JPS Torah Commentary: Numbers* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1990), 94. It is traditionally translated with “meek.” See Bar-Efrat, *Narrative Art*, 74, which connects the indirect characterization of Moses’s modesty in Exod 3:11 to the explicit one of Num 12:3. The connection is not impossible in that both texts come from E and yet it is questionable whether both texts refer to the same admirable personality of Moses. Moses in Exod 3:11 is rebuked by the deity and E’s narrator is on God’s side.

<sup>102</sup> While Rimmon-Kenan assigns this to the indirect presentation of a character, Bar-Efrat, *Narrative Art*, 48–53 assigns it to the direct shaping of a character. There are ambiguous cases for the function of external appearance, as Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction*, 68 admits.

<sup>103</sup> For the constituent indicators and their categorization, I largely follow Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction*, 59–70. For similar but somewhat different terms and categorization, see Chatman, *Story and Discourse*, 96–145; Bar-efrat, *Narrative Art*, 47–92.

because they were commanded. They could also presumably learn from the instructions what the deity likes or hates at least by his evaluation such as “impure” or “detestable.” The implied reader is better able to find the divine character than the Israelites in the narrative world since they read and see the coherent divine character from the very beginning of P. Related to the previous chapters, I expect the divine character would disclose how the people of Israel should serve the deity, which is at the same time how they should live. They should have lived according to the divine character by accommodating the deity.

#### 4.4.1 Appearance

Shimon Bar-Efrat argues that details about external appearance do not inform about personality.<sup>104</sup> They are significant only to advance the plot. This is too narrow a view, though to advance the plot is an important function of the external appearance. One of his examples is that Esau was hairy but Jacob was smooth in terms of their skin (Gen 27:11). According to him, this description serves solely to prepare Jacob’s deception of Isaac in the plot.<sup>105</sup> He is right since that description appears in relation to the deception story in Gen 27. Yet that description epitomizes and metaphorizes their respective personalities presented by other means such as direct definition, action, and environment in the Jacob cycle. Esau was a hunter, previously designated as a man of the open field; Jacob was an innocent<sup>106</sup> man who dwells in the tents (Gen 25:27). In

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<sup>104</sup> Bar-Efrat, *Narrative Art*, 48.

<sup>105</sup> Bar-Efrat, *Narrative Art*, 48–49.

<sup>106</sup> This is a typical translation of “*tām*.” Elsewhere, the phrase “’*iš tām* (innocent man)” is found only to *directly* define Job in Job 1:8 and 2:3. In Job, the phrase certainly reveals his ethical and pious character. Yet it cannot be considered likewise in Gen 25:27 (J). The parallelism in this verse—A: “אִישׁ יָדַע צִיד” (man knowing hunting),” B: “אִישׁ שְׂדֵה” (man of the open field),” A’: “אִישׁ תָּם” (innocent man),” B’: “יָשַׁב אֹהֲלִים” ([man] dwelling tents)—does not allow such a moral understanding. In this structure, the innocent man perhaps implies the simple fact that Jacob was ignorant of hunting. If any ethical connotation is implied, the qualification may mean that Jacob was never responsible for the bloodshed of the wild animals, yet this is not a motif well developed in the Jacob-Esau story or elsewhere in J. No matter how the sense of “*tām*” is uncertain in this verse, the contrast between Jacob and Esau must be found in Esau’s masculinity. Hunting reveals heroic nature as for Nimrod in Gen 10:8–9 (J); also remember

other words, Esau is more mannish and heroic while static Jacob does not meet the expectation of typical manhood of the ancient Near East. While this is explicitly given nowhere, it is also *indirectly* supported by Gen 25:28 that Isaac—man, father, patriarch—loved Esau whereas Rebekah—woman, mother, housewife—loved Jacob. It is worth noting that manhood was frequently depicted with beard (i.e., facial *hair*); the lack of bodily hair and beard may have implied inability to procreate, immaturity, or gender ambiguity such as eunuchs.<sup>107</sup> Conversely, hairiness is a sign of heroic strength and masculinity as we can see in Samson in Judg 13–16 (esp. 16:17) and Enkidu (1:105, 107) in the Gilgamesh epic.<sup>108</sup> Thus, while it is true that physiognomic traits have no direct relation to the personality in the real world, Bar-Efrat misses that the narrative may embrace culturally laden stereotypes and the latter entail the metonymic function by means of metaphor that encodes social conventions.<sup>109</sup> This is also shown by handsomeness and height often belonging to the stock of royal characteristics (i.e., a legitimate quality to be king) and divine favor (e.g., 1 Sam 9:2, 16:12 and 2 Sam 14:25–27).<sup>110</sup>

Likewise, the appearance of the deity helps to understand the divine character. I already discussed the divine external appearance from Sinai in the previous chapter—namely, *kəbôd* *YHWH* “the regalia of Yahweh.” I argued that this appearance emphasizes the kingly, regal aspect of the deity when doing his official duty, especially in front of the public outside the Tent.

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Assyrian kings in the royal hunt scenes in Assyrian palace reliefs and David striking wild animals in 1 Sam 17:35. Cf. Sebas, *Genesis*, 2/2:271; Sarna, *Genesis*, 181; Hamilton, *Genesis*, 181–182. The contrast of their personalities in line with this continues to their reunion in Gen 32–33.

<sup>107</sup> Yalçın, “Men, Women, Eunuchs,” 121–150 (esp. 126). Regarding the debate about the identification of the representation of beardless men in terms of *ša rēši*, see Reade, “Neo-Assyrian Court,” 87–112; Oppenheim, “A Note,” 325–334; Tadmor, “Biblical *sārīs*,” 317–325; Tadmor, “Chief Eunuch,” 603–612; Sidall, “Re-examination,” 225–240. Cf. 2 Sam 10:4. The shaving of the beard was part of symbolic castration: see P. Kyle McCarter Jr., *I Samuel: A New Translation with Introduction, Notes & Commentary*, AB 9 (New York: Doubleday, 1984), 270.

<sup>108</sup> For the text and translation of the Gilgamesh epic, see George, *Babylonian Gilgamesh*, 544–545.

<sup>109</sup> Cf. Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction*, 67–68.

<sup>110</sup> Shimon Bar-Efrat and Marc Zvi Brettler, “1 Samuel,” *JSB*, 545–603, esp. 562, 577, 630; P. Kyle McCarter Jr., *I Samuel: A New Translation with Introduction, Notes & Commentary*, AB 8 (New York: Doubleday, 1980), 173, 276.

Rimmon-Kenan suggests a distinction between external appearance that is beyond one's control such as height and nationality, on the one hand, and that which depends at least partly on choice such as hair-style, on the other. These choices do not characterize through contiguity alone but add causal overtones.<sup>111</sup> If she is right, this distinction is notably germane to P. *Kābôd* YHWH is a form of divine manifestation with which he chose to appear in the sight of the public. This decision reveals his regal character. His (chosen) regal appearance in *kābôd* YHWH, in turn, is the character that the deity wanted to express the most to the people and must be deeply related to the divine characterization of P.

I also argued that the appearance inside the Tent is likely to be without the regalia since the place is intended for his more personal and private life as in Exod 25:22; 29:42; Lev 16:2; and Num 7:89.<sup>112</sup> Since Moses received the oracles including the law, when necessary, Moses' meeting with the deity in the holy of holies might be considered official to some degree.<sup>113</sup> Nonetheless, Moses should be considered a special case. He was the only one who could relatively freely enter the holy of holies and talk with the deity.<sup>114</sup> The divine form without the *kābôd* is elusive due to the lack of description even more than that with the *kābôd*. Yet one can, I think safely, assume that the form might be at least anthropomorphic as it was in Gen 1 and in other divine visitations before the Sinai pericope. As I argued previously, this anthropomorphic deity is supposed to feel, act, and speak as a human, but in varying degrees, since this does not mean that the divine body is exactly identical with the human body in every aspect. So, P's law

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<sup>111</sup> Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction*, 67–68.

<sup>112</sup> As mentioned in the previous chapter, compare especially Exod 25:22 and 29:42 on the one hand and 29:43 on the other. The addition of וְנִקְדַּשׁ בְּכַבְדִּי—“it (פְּתַח אֹהֶל-מוֹעֵד) will be sanctified by my *kābôd*”—only to the people's meeting is not insignificant.

<sup>113</sup> For instance, Exod 25:22; 34:34–35; Num 7:89.

<sup>114</sup> While Num 7:89 may not be iterative, Exod 25:22 and 34:34–35 are. It does not seem that Moses was required to follow specific preparation or protocol to meet the deity. This status of Moses is assumed in the later layers of the Pentateuchal P when Moses waited for the divine oracles in the four *oracular novellae* (Lev 24:10–23; Num 9:1–14; 15:32–36; 27:1–11). See a helpful chart in Chavel, *Oracular Law*, 6–7.

intimates how the deity lives not only officially and publicly but also personally and privately in his abode to reveal his royal and anthropomorphic character.

#### 4.4.2 Speech

Speech, both dialogue and monologue, is important for characterization. For example, Ittai is not a character that appears frequently and importantly in the Davidic narrative; his few appearances are concentrated in the episode of the rebellion of Absalom, one of David's son. Even though there is no evaluative statement of the narrator unlike Num 12:3, the reader can infer Ittai's loyalty by his speech that he would not depart David in his hardship in 2 Sam 15:19–22. The speech not only discloses one's thought, intention, and mood by its content. By its style, it may also offer information about one's origin, dwelling place, social class, or profession<sup>115</sup> as well as emotional states.<sup>116</sup> The stylistic as well as dialect distinctions of the characters' direct speeches are not common in biblical texts.<sup>117</sup>

In P as well, I do not see many stylistic, structural, or linguistic peculiarities in the divine speech, compared to that of the narrator or other characters such as Moses.<sup>118</sup> The deity uses common language as Moses does in a casual conversation—compare the divine calling and Moses's courteous declination in Exod 6:29–30. Since Moses relays the divine instructions, the divine speech has no conspicuous distinctions from Moses's speech. That said, one may note that

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<sup>115</sup> Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction*, 66.

<sup>116</sup> Bar-Efrat, *Narrative Art*, 65, is skeptical to find biblical cases for the former information that Rimmon-Kenan finds in general literature.

<sup>117</sup> Bar-Efrat, *Narrative Art*, 65. Biblical narratives, he claims, lack distinctive speech styles among characters and between the narrator and the characters because of the author's mediation. Yet they are not absent. A famous example of the regional, dialectic distinction becoming a literary device appears when Gileadites tested Ephraimites by shibboleth (שבילת) and sibboleth (סבילת) in Judg 12:6. However, the nature of the real distinction is moot. See among others, Rendsburg, "Ammonite Phoneme," 73–79; Faber, "Second Harvest," 1–10; Hendel, "Sibilants," 69–75. See Sasson, *Judges 1–12*, 453–455 and the relevant footnotes for additional references.

<sup>118</sup> Cf. Bar-Efrat, 65.



the central bulk of P is the direct quotes from the deity's instructions to Moses, Aaron and his sons, and all the Israelites. These Priestly ritual instructions share styles (e.g., casuistic formula) with the legal genre to the extent that it has been typically designated as the Priestly law.<sup>119</sup> Yet the subject matter of P's instructions is quite different from other biblical laws (e.g., the Covenant Collection and the Deuteronomic Law) and ancient Near Eastern laws (e.g., the Law of Hammurabi).<sup>120</sup> The casuistic and authoritarian style of the divine speech in the ritual and legal section may reflect the style of its *Gattung* if not its sources—whatever it and its *Sitz im Leben* were.

That said, the style of its ritual instructions must be considered how it functions in the narrative, as I argued above. That this specific style was put on the deity's mouth must be relevant to the characterization of the deity in the narrative. The divine speech in P reveals his royal character in its casuistic style (usually, law) and legislated contents (what to do and what not to do). Even though the subject matter of P's ritual instructions is different from the other Pentateuchal laws, the circumstance that P's ritual instructions were given in Lev 1–7 is quite similar. The Pentateuchal legislations all were situated in the theophanic experience at the mountain of the deity, whether Sinai or Horeb, though the divine legislation was not closed but continued afterwards in the wilderness journey in P.<sup>121</sup> It was the moment when the deity and Israel were supposed to enter a new relationship, even though the new relationship in P was not defined as contractual (ברית) as in the other Pentateuchal covenants.<sup>122</sup> This endorses the

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<sup>119</sup> See, among others, Knierim, *Text and Concept*, esp. 94–97.

<sup>120</sup> Cf. Feldman, *Story of Sacrifice*, 6n17. The Covenant Collection and the Deuteronomic Law include the ritual matters, but their legal topics are predominantly societal as the Law of Hammurabi.

<sup>121</sup> While Moses did not relay D's law at Mount Horeb, it was first given at the mountain to him by the deity before its later promulgation to the people in the land of Moab. Cf. Deut 1:5; 5 (esp. 5:31); 28:69. For a fuller discussion, see Stackert, *Prophet Like Moses*, 128–135.

<sup>122</sup> Note that there is no Sinaitic “covenant (ברית)” in P, while its presence is more controversial in H. There have been many debates about the presence/absence, meaning, and nature of the “covenant (ברית)” in P. More recently, see Nihan, “Priestly Covenant,” 87–134 (esp. 91–103); Stackert, “Distinguishing,” 369–386.

conventional designation for the various Priestly instructions as the Priestly *law*, apart from the anachronistic understanding of the *tôrā<sup>h</sup>* (תורה) as law rather than as instruction.<sup>123</sup> In other words, P's author placed the ritual instructions in the deity's mouth in the situation in which the law or the royal edict would be expected to be given.<sup>124</sup> In fact, it is P's literary freedom to place this *Gattung* in a different *Sitz im Leben* in the text. This might not have come out of nowhere. The shared casuistic style and volitive mood of both *Gattungen* (i.e., the law and the ritual) may have inspired the combination. The outcome is a mixed genre: the ritual instructions having "the character of complex series of casuistic paragraphs and sub-paragraphs organized topically, logically, and juridically like legal collections."<sup>125</sup> The narrative setting combining the ritual *Gattung* in the casuistic form with the legal *Sitz im Leben* without explicitly mentioning more typical legal topics (as H does) suggests the Temple cult has some bearing on the social life in P's imagined world. In line with the public theophany with *kābôd YHWH* as regalia, thus, the narrative context and the style of the divine ritual instructions suggest the deity's royal character.

The royal characteristic of the divine speech is not only bound to the law in Lev 1–7. Frank Polak argues that the formal speech is a sign of the authority and yet "different rules obtain for the king's speaking style."<sup>126</sup> The tendency is that while the king speaks in more cultivated style for the manifestation of the authority in his official duty, his curt diction in the more private settings may indicate a condescending style. This tendency may not be absent, though by no means frequent, in the divine speeches in P. Sean E. McEvenue observes that P

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<sup>123</sup> The designation as the Priestly "law" is well established in scholarship and many times useful as an umbrella term for diverse instructions such as the building instructions in Exod 25–31 and the more societal-oriented Holiness laws when discussing Pentateuchal P. I am just pointing out that the so-called laws in P are comparable to the Covenant Collection and the Deuteronomic law not so much content-wise as stylistic- and context-wise when one thinks about the genre of the various instructions in P.

<sup>124</sup> Cf. Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, 144–149.

<sup>125</sup> Chavel, *Oracular Law*, 112; also, Feldman, *Story of Sacrifice*, 18–23, 44.

<sup>126</sup> Frank Polak, "The Style of the Dialogue in Biblical Prose Narrative," *JANES* 28 (2002): 53–95, esp. 83.

reserves Yahweh's words for important salvific direction. These divine words always anticipate the fulfillment as P's structural scheme. His words, thus, are predominantly commands, promises, or predictions with using volitive mood.<sup>127</sup> For example, the divine warning against murder in Gen 9:6 is spoken in a pithy and elevated style with parallelism and chiasm (שִׁפְךָ דָם (הָאָדָם בָּאָדָם דָּמוֹ יִשְׁפָּךְ). The immediate declaration after the divine incineration of Nadav and Avihu in Lev 10:3 is likewise terse and elevated (בְּקִרְבֵי אֱקִדֵּשׁ וְעַל פְּנֵי כָל הָעָם אֲכַבֵּד). The building instructions in Exod 25–31 manifest a fairly elevated style throughout (e.g., Exod 25:11a; 25:12b), though not as tightly structured as Gen 9:6.<sup>128</sup>

#### 4.4.3 Environment

Environment includes “a character’s physical surrounding (room, house, street, town) as well as his human environment (family, social class).”<sup>129</sup> This serves to reveal traits of a character metonymically in a way similar to external appearance. Biblical God (e.g., 1 Kgs 8:27; 19:8, 11; 20:23, 28) as well as other ancient Near Eastern deities (e.g., El and Baal in the Baal cycle) are frequently depicted to live on high, such as in high mountains or in heaven. This metonymically implies the highness, mightiness, power, and authority of the divinity. Rimmon-Kenan’s distinction between the natural and the chosen aspects of the external appearance, mentioned above, is also applicable to the environment of the character.<sup>130</sup> Life in a more civilized city by preference may reveal some more nuance trait of the character. Lot chose Sodom because it looks fertile like the land of Egypt (Gen 13:10–11a). This reveals his values

<sup>127</sup> Sean E. McEvenue, “Word and Fulfillment: A Stylistic Feature of the Priestly Writer,” *Semitics* 1 (1970): 104–110, esp. 104–105.

<sup>128</sup> Gaines, *Poetic Priestly Source*, 387–413 (esp. 387–390). Gaines is not particularly interested in the divine speech. He tries to set apart the original poetic layer from the later prosaic additions. Though I do not necessarily share his hypothesis and divisions, his observations show P’s adept literary style.

<sup>129</sup> Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction*, 68.

<sup>130</sup> Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction*, 68.

such as convenience, wealth, and prosperity. This may anticipate the reason he later lingered to leave the city and asked permission to escape to another city in the impending destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen 19:16, 20).<sup>131</sup> In P, the choice of certain conditions for the divine dwelling will reveal the deity's character more comprehensively and deeply. P assigns a great amount of the text to describe the divine space and the actions that should be performed there. No other text rivals P in building up a character with the description of the environment.

The environment that surrounds the deity is the Tent of Meeting and the Israelite society. A famous moniker of this Tent is “the sanctuary of *silence*.” Kaufmann first coined the moniker because there were no prayers or musical elements in the rites in P, while this observation was anticipated in the Second Temple and the rabbinic period.<sup>132</sup> He argued that the priests—who penned P in his mind—were elitist religious functionaries and had theology of anti-pagan and anti-magic, apart from popular religious sentiment in Israel. Therefore, P's ritual did not seek any magical means to heighten the divine power or to invoke the blessing for prosperity. The thanksgivings in P were always retroactively attributed to the past and never anticipated the future blessing. No spoken words and praises were assigned to the priests; they only performed their duties silently. The theme of the seasonal cycle of life and death, which was common in the pagan cult, was completely absent, altogether with the pagan funerary cults.<sup>133</sup> Knohl turned Kaufmann's interest in the polemic situation to P's internal rationale. While Knohl accepted the silence of the temple cult in Israel, he rejected the Israelite versus pagan schema. Following

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<sup>131</sup> Lot's reasoning that he would not make the flight on time in Gen 19:19–20 seems to be a pretense in light of the narrator's use of *hiphil* *מהה* in Gen 19:16. This Hebrew word, “to linger,” does not connote slowness due to a handicap in the Bible (cf. Gen 43:10; Ex 12:39; Judg 3:26; 19:8; 2 Sam 15:28; Hab 2:3; Ps 119:60). That is, his lingering had nothing to do with his age or health condition as such.

<sup>132</sup> The Second Temple and rabbinic sources are analyzed with regard to the repercussion of this particular idea of P on the cultic practices in the Second Temple Judaism in Israel Knohl, “Between Voice and Silence: The Relationship between Prayer and Temple Cult,” *JBL* 115.1 (1996): 17–30, esp. 21–28.

<sup>133</sup> Kaufmann, *Religion of Israel*, 301–304.

Michael Fishbane, he contends that not all verbal practices were magical. P had no need to exclude prayer and song for this reason. On the contrary, the high priest's confession in Lev 16:21 and his imprecatory warning in Num 5:19–22 resemble the magical practices such as incantations in the pagan, idolatrous religions, at least externally.<sup>134</sup> The sanctuary needs another reason for being of silence. Knohl found the reason from the theology of the Priestly Torah that allegedly opposes any anthropomorphic attribution to the deity. The reason that prayer, song, and blessing are missing in P is because P does not allow any human means to communicate with the deity; the deity is holy and numinous, i.e., non-anthropomorphic.<sup>135</sup>

This idea from Kaufmann and Knohl has not been unanimously accepted. Both Fishbane and Milgrom contend that it is not the sanctuary that is *of* silence, but rather the argument itself that is *from* silence.<sup>136</sup> They think it is methodologically problematic that the cultic practices described in P can exhaust the entire picture of the Israelite temple cult. Other biblical passages, such as Num 10:35–36; 1 Chr 15:26–16:36; 1 Sam 1:12; and 2:1–10, suggest that there were music and prayer in the First Temple. Also, it is unlikely, they argue, that the temple cult in Israel might have been so radically different from other ancient Near Eastern temple cults. In response to this, Knohl defended himself that he and Kaufmann never said that there were no verbal elements in the temple at all; only the rites performed by the priests were of silence. The silence should be restricted to the center of the sanctuary and the sacrificial acts of the priests. Yet any verbal elements were popular or peripheral in origin in both preexilic and postexilic

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<sup>134</sup> Knohl, *Sanctuary*, 148; Knohl, "Between Voice," 18–20. Cf. Michael Fishbane, "Accusations of Adultery: A Study of Law and Scribal Practice in Numbers 5:11–31," *HUCA* 45 (1974): 25–45, esp. 27–28.

<sup>135</sup> Knohl, *Sanctuary*, 148–152; Knohl, "Between Voice," 20–21.

<sup>136</sup> Fishbane, "Accusations," 27–28; Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 19 and 59–61; Milgrom, *Leviticus 17–22*, 1426–1428. While both of them point out the same problem, they have different targets. Fishbane opposes Kaufmann; Milgrom singles out Knohl, while he acknowledges Kaufmann. As Knohl later points out, Milgrom seems to confuse the boundary of the silence in the temple cult, to which Knohl restricts his idea (see below). See Knohl, "Between Voice," 18–19n3.

religions of Israel.<sup>137</sup> Similarly, Nahum M. Sarna tried to explain the absence of the songs by the social or the temple hierarchy between the priests and the singers. He observes that not only are the songs absent in P's cult; there are also no psalms that were attributed to any priest. He reasoned: other biblical texts suggest the musical functionaries must have existed in the First Temple; other ancient Near Eastern cultures support that their status was inferior to that of the priests; the priestly texts which were intended to be a manual exclusive to the priests' job would naturally omit the other inferior cultic practices.<sup>138</sup>

The same problem regarding the reading of P, which I mentioned previously, repeats in this debate. First of all, they read P as genuinely reflecting the actual cultic practices in the First (or the Second) Temple. They not only place P in the broader picture of biblical cult but also place both P and other biblical texts against the backdrop of the reconstructed actual cultic context of Israel and Judah. This is well betrayed in the fact that most of them suddenly discuss the "temple" instead of the "Tent." Even Kaufmann and Knohl, as noticed above, concede that the Israelite cult was fraught with the sound of prayer and song in either the margins of the temple area or the temples outside Jerusalem. It should be considered seriously that P's literariness does not easily allow a reconstruction of the real cult.<sup>139</sup> Its cultic system as well as its entire world are not to be confused with the actual cult in some point in the history of ancient Israel and Judah, apart from the risk of the circularity when situating a biblical witness in the situation reconstructed mainly by the biblical texts. The completeness of P as literature does not need other biblical passages to supplement its plain description, having recourse neither to the

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<sup>137</sup> Knohl, "Between Voice," 18–19n3. Cf. Kaufmann, *Religion of Israel*, 303, 305–311.

<sup>138</sup> Nahum M. Sarna, "The Psalm Superscriptions and the Guilds," in *Studies in Jewish Religious and Intellectual History: Presented to Alexander Altmann on the Occasion of His Seventieth Birthday*, eds. Siegfried Stein and Raphael Loewe (University, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1979), 281–300 (esp. 281–283, 290).

<sup>139</sup> Cf. D. Wright, "Ritual Theory," esp. 197–199.

other Pentateuchal sources nor to the other biblical texts.<sup>140</sup> What needs to be distinguished is not the boundary between the core and the periphery in the temple cult, but rather that between the textual “Tent” and the historical “temple.”

In this light, one should rethink “the sanctuary of silence.” Kaufmann and Knohl could not disclaim the priest’s verbal performance in Lev 16:21 and Num 5:19–22. Knohl tried to explain them away as magical and impersonal, while Kaufmann marginalized the acts altogether as peripheral, insignificant, or historically singular. It is unclear to me in what sense the confession in Lev 16:21 would be more magical than prayer in Knohl’s view. If he regarded the confession in Lev 16:21 to be fixed, technical, automatically effective, and impersonal, I would say that the rite in Lev 16:21 is only possible by presupposing a personal deity who can listen to the verbal speech of the priest.<sup>141</sup> Also, there is at least a possibility that the verbal speech in Lev 16:21 was not fixed since P does not say anything about it.<sup>142</sup> Likewise, Kaufmann’s marginalization of the priestly blessing (Lev 9:22–23; Num 6:22–27) and confession (Lev 16:21) is a mere assertion. They are essential, performed by the priest in the very sanctuary in the very special moments.

Nonetheless, it cannot be denied that the sound is strikingly limited, as observed by Kaufmann and Knohl, in comparison to the other ancient Near Eastern rites. Various speech

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<sup>140</sup> Baden keenly qualified P as “completeness” in Baden, *Composition*, 169–192. This is not to deny the inevitability of gap-filling to some degree for the ambiguity of the Priestly narrative and law, which any narrative or law can escape. The necessity of gap-filling in reading P’s ritual is well argued from the reader-responsive point of view by William K. Gilders, *Blood Ritual in the Hebrew Bible: Meaning and Power* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), esp. 9–11. Yet the gap-filling should be sought only secondarily from other textual or archaeological evidence when internal evidence does not help. And, more importantly, the silence in P’s sanctuary is not a gap at all but a *historical claim* as Kaufmann and Knohl correctly grasped.

<sup>141</sup> Knohl, “Between Voice,” 19–21.

<sup>142</sup> While Knohl concedes this point, his inclination toward magic is based on rabbinic literature: see Knohl “Between Voice,” 20–21n6. Cf. Moshe Greenberg, *Biblical Prose Prayer: As a Window to the Popular Religion of Ancient Israel* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 59n3. Greenberg, whom Knohl cited for distinction between magic and prayer, listed the confession in Lev 16:21 as “*ad hoc* prayer.”

forms such as lament, prayer, incantation, and invocation are much more frequent in Ugaritic and Mesopotamian ritual texts even with a cursory glance. That is to say, the basic observation of the sanctuary of silence is largely correct unless they meant by silence complete speechlessness.<sup>143</sup> This leads to a search for a new explanation other than the distinction of the social standings between cultic functionaries, the avoidance of the pagan-magical sentiment or the censorship on anthropomorphism.

I think it is important to remember that environment is a character indicator in the narrative. An exemplary case is the discussion of Jeremy Schipper and Stackert on the crushed testicle, one in the list of blemishes that disqualify a priest from ministering at the altar in Lev 21:16–24, in light of the consistent character of the Priestly deity: namely, the *divine* vision, instead of the human vision.<sup>144</sup> The presence of the crushed testicle in the list have obstructed scholars from finding a unifying criterion—that is, the visibility of the disfigurements. It was argued that the crushed testicle must be considered invisible because of the priestly garment which the priest wears in his duty. The list of blemishes for sacrificial animals was allegedly imposed to the priests. The implication is that appearance was intended as a unifying criterion for the priestly defects as well as the animal defects and yet the inappropriateness of the crushed testicle for the priests was ignored for the structural parallels between the two lists.<sup>145</sup> Schipper and Stackert properly contextualize the blemish list for the priests not narrowly with the parallels to that for the animals, but broadly within the entire Priestly narrative. When the blemish lists are thus contextualized, they argue, the crushed testicle in addition to other disfigurements is well

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<sup>143</sup> Note Knohl's qualification, "*almost* total silence" (my italics).

<sup>144</sup> Schipper and Stackert, "Blemishes," 458–478. What is most important is their fresh approach from the divine point of view (esp. p.463), though, as they note, the criterion of visibility was previously proposed by Gerstenberger, *Leviticus*, 316–317 (and even by the rabbis according to Milgrom, *Leviticus 17–22*, 1838–1839).

<sup>145</sup> Elliger, *Leviticus*, 291–292; Milgrom, *Leviticus 17–22*, 1828, 1838–1839. Also cited in Schipper and Stackert, "Blemishes," 461–462.



fitted to P's (and H's) characterization of the deity.<sup>146</sup> So, while Lev 21 admittedly belongs to H, their observation is also true for both the Pentateuchal P and P or H alone.

They argued that understanding the priestly garments as a protective armor is imperfect and easily misleading.<sup>147</sup> The deficient technical spec to shield the priests from the divine assault is manifest from the death of Nadav and Avihu (Lev 10:1–3), who must have been equipped with the priestly garments. Their garments should have been sufficient at least for the protective function during the altar service, if the garments were really intended for shielding, in light Exod 28:43.<sup>148</sup> One may further argue that the priestly garments for Nadav and Avihu were not comprehensive as that of Aaron—i.e., the high priest—was. For instance, ephod was only worn by the high priest (cf. Exod 28; Lev 8:7, 13). Yet even if they had worn the high priest's garment, it might have been still insufficient in that there was always a possibility that the high priest may die during his inner-Tent service for the deity. This requires looking for another explanation of how the garments protect the priests (cf. Exod 28:43).

Schipper and Stackert concluded that the garment was prophylactic rather than defensive.<sup>149</sup> This certainly offers a more coherent answer to the more fundamental question: Why would the deity assault the priests in the first place even as they serve him? The reasons that the deity attacks and that the priestly garments can prevent the assault are one and the same: it is related to the sensitivity of the divine vision. The divine vision is mentioned in important scenes in P. On each day after God progressed in creation in Gen 1:1–2:4, it was repeated emphatically that he *saw* what he made.<sup>150</sup> Before he began to deliver Israel from Egypt, he knew

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<sup>146</sup> Schipper and Stackert, "Blemishes," 463–470.

<sup>147</sup> Pace Propp, *Exodus 19–40*, 529, 522.

<sup>148</sup> Schipper and Stackert, "Blemishes," 472–473.

<sup>149</sup> Schipper and Stackert, "Blemishes," 472–473.

<sup>150</sup> Schipper and Stackert, "Blemishes," 468–469.

their detrimental situation by seeing: וירא אלהים את-בני ישראל וידע אלהים “God saw the Israelites and knew” (Exod 2:25).<sup>151</sup> The protective effectiveness of the priestly garments should be understood in line with this. Haran observed parallels between the sanctuary and the priestly garments in terms of the materials and the (graded) manner in which they were manufactured.<sup>152</sup> While he argued that the priestly garments were not just garments but on par with ritual appurtenances in the Tent, Schipper and Stackert added that the parallels reveal that the deity has some (consistent) expectations and preferences regarding what he wants to see. They relate this to the divine inclination towards what they termed “divine repose”; what does not meet the divine expectations and preferences disturbs the deity’s repose and vice versa.<sup>153</sup> The implication is that the deity has a super-sensitive vision and he does not tolerate what irritates his vision beyond a certain degree. A tiny object that can easily escape the human vision may draw his attention, even from a great distance. God could attend to the circumcised penis of an Israelite male and bless him even before he began to dwell on the earth (Gen 17:9–14).<sup>154</sup> While the deity’s superhuman vision has a different scale in its sensitivity, the anthropomorphic nature of the divine vision still operates as the human vision. Size and proximity affect the perception. The priests who serve the deity in the proximity should have taken greater care than the ordinary Israelites so as not to disrupt his vision and intrude his repose. It is further buttressed by the fact that the high priest who served even closer wore additional garments when ministering inside the sanctuary apart from the other priests’ altar service.

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<sup>151</sup> Schipper and Stackert, “Blemishes,” 463.

<sup>152</sup> Haran, *Temples*, 165–174, 210–215. Also cited and discussed in Schipper and Stackert, “Blemishes,” 471–472.

<sup>153</sup> Schipper and Stackert, “Blemishes,” 460.

<sup>154</sup> Schipper and Stackert, “Blemishes,” 476–477.

Schipper and Stackert observe that this divine sensitivity and preference is not constricted to the vision and that P frequently describes other divine sensory perceptions as well.<sup>155</sup> Before the deity knew the agony of the Israelites in Egypt, he had to see in Exod 2:25. Yet he was not attentive to see them until he *heard* (שמיע) their *groaning* in Exod 2:23aβ–24, expressed with various words that imply sounds (נעקה, שועה, זעיק, אנ"ה).<sup>156</sup> It is likely that the golden bells on the hem of the high priest's robe may have generated euphonic sound (to the deity) that hides the inevitable noise from the high priest's service inside the Tent (Exod 28:33–35).<sup>157</sup> Not only to vision and audition but also to olfaction was the deity sensitive. The sacrificial ritual instructions, which were given through the deity's own voice, were mindful of the odors that the deity would smell. The offerings should have produced the pleasing aroma (ריח ניהח).<sup>158</sup> The deity gave strict instructions of how to make the fragrant oil<sup>159</sup> (Exod 30:22–33) and frankincense (Exod 30:34–38) to initiate and maintain the divine presence in the Tent. All this means that he prefers and expects a certain odor and rejects one that does not meet his preference. The deity did not allow anyone else to entertain these scents, on the one hand (Exod 30:33, 38); on the other, he forbade any other scents from his house, which were made apart from his specific recipes (Exod 30:8–9). The perfumes should have been made as a particular proportionate compound (מתכנת, see Exod 30:32, 37). The deity's olfactory expectations were, likely though not explicitly, further related

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<sup>155</sup> Schipper and Stackert, "Blemishes," 463.

<sup>156</sup> Schipper and Stackert, "Blemishes," 463, 476.

<sup>157</sup> Schipper and Stackert, "Blemishes," 473. It may have an additional function to indicate the high priest's location and motion: see Chavel, "Face of God," 41.

<sup>158</sup> Schipper and Stackert, "Blemishes," 463. Also, see Chavel, *Oracular Law*, 84n222: "Smelling the aroma of the sacrifice approximates the way in which the deity enjoys the gifts offered to him."

<sup>159</sup> The product name of this oil is "holy anointing oil (שמן משחת קדש)": see Exod 30:25, 31. This oil must have functioned as a perfume in light of the materials that constitute it (Exod 30:23–24) and of the exegetical attributes from the root רק"ח (Exod 30:25). Thus thought by most commentators: among others, see Cornelis Houtman, *Exodus*, 4 vols., Historical Commentary on the Old Testament (Kampen: Kok, 1993), 3:575; Propp, *Exodus 19–40*, 482–483. In Akkadian, the cognate words (e.g., *raqqû*, *riqqû*, *ruqqû*) are related to aroma: cf. Tawil, *Akkadian Lexical Companion*, 372–373; *CAD*, 173–174, 368–371, 420.

to the divine diet and taste. The recipe of each offering may have produced the pleasing aroma (ריח ניחח) not merely to satisfy divine olfaction, which was already amused by the oil and frankincense. It must have intended to rouse the divine appetite by the scent. The expression “pleasing aroma (ריח ניחח)” appears only in relation to food offerings (אֲשָׁה), i.e., the divine diet.<sup>160</sup> This expression is absent in the instructions of frankincense or other perfumes, whose main purpose is to assuage and please the divine sense of *smell*. The specific kinds of animals, the different parts of the meat, the instructed ways to burn the meat (e.g., cutting in pieces, flaying skin, removing excretions, the fixed arrangement of the parts, the wood, the fire, and the altar), on the one hand, and the different cooking directions of the grain offerings, on the other, altogether consist of divine cuisines that comply with the divine taste.

In this sense, the sanctuary of silence is a proper designation for the Tent, if the silence connotes tranquility and peacefulness rather than a complete speechless. When the deity dwelled among people, his house should have been kept silent as his disposition had continuously required. I would add that the sanctuary of silence is only one aspect of the customized sanctuary.<sup>161</sup> Every detail of the sanctuary was designed to satisfy the deity’s sensory preferences and expectations according to his *nature/character*, which would help him at home in his domestic life on earth. This sanctuary and its ritual were designed to accommodate the deity to the human neighborhood, which was not an ideal environment for him.<sup>162</sup>

That the divine sensory perceptions are related to the Priestly morality is revealed in Gen 1. They are accompanied by the value judgements from the divine point of view and/or trigger

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<sup>160</sup> This is also true in Gen 8:21 (J). For the meaning of אֲשָׁה as “food offering” rather than “fire offering,” see, among others, Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 161–162. For a recent defense of “fire offering,” see Cranz, *Atonement*, 116–118, which gives a fuller bibliography for both pros and cons.

<sup>161</sup> Similarly, Schipper and Stackert, “Blemishes,” 473: “The result is maximal maintenance of both the sanctuary’s aesthetic standard and the deity’s repose.”

<sup>162</sup> Schipper and Stackert, “Blemishes,” 474.

the subsequent divine actions. Every stage of creation was “good (טוב)” in the divine eyes (Gen 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25), which caused the deity to continue creation until its completion (Gen 1:31). Schipper and Stackert observed that this “good” is not only the functional suitability but also connotes the preference.<sup>163</sup> The deity’s aesthetic evaluation has a moral overtone for humans. The way that the divine senses are pleased is how the world should be and how the people should live. The Israelites in the narrative ought to have followed the ritual instructions given by the mouth of the deity through Moses’s conveyance because they were not so much merely commanded as intended to teach the deity’s character that the Israelites were supposed to imitate.

#### 4.4.4 Action

Bar-Efrat says “a person’s nature is revealed by deeds.”<sup>164</sup> For more significant characters, repeated actions develop constant qualities of the character and provide a measure to the character’s other idiosyncratic deeds and speeches.<sup>165</sup> The continual idol worship throughout the generations of Israel in the Book of Judges characterizes Israelites as people of no loyalty and prudence. It should be noted, however, that habitual actions do not have to be written many times in the text. In the Hebrew Bible, they are frequently expressed with the imperfective aspectual verbs (the prefix conjugation and *weqatal* form) that may imply iterations, habits, or continuous states. Job’s cautious temperament revealed by his remedial burnt offering for his children’s potential sins—in addition to his perfect (תם), upright (ישר), and pious (ירא אלהים) nature that is directly defined in Job 1:1—is emphasized by his continual actions with imperfective verbs

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<sup>163</sup> Schipper and Stackert, “Blemishes,” 468–469.

<sup>164</sup> Bar-Efrat, *Narrative Art*, 77.

<sup>165</sup> Chatman, *Story and Discourse*, 121–123.

(השכים “would rise early,” העלה “would offer,” יעשה “would do”) in Job 1:5.<sup>166</sup> P’s ritual instructions frequently use imperfective verbs. They would not only imply volitions and future time. Many times, they would also indicate that constant observance is required by the deity. In other words, the deity needs such human actions that he commanded to be done continually and regularly in order for him to stay on earth.<sup>167</sup>

The ritual instructions do not much deal with the divine action. The reason that the divine action is not frequent in the law is because its ritual instructions were a guide to the human service to the deity. Yet the immediate narrative context of the legislation also rarely reports God’s action. It is almost reticent about the deity’s action inside the inner sanctum (i.e., the holy of holies). This may suggest either that the deity really does not act much in it or that the author was not interested in what happened in the inner sanctum. The latter possibility is less likely since P takes great care of what the deity communicated verbally with Moses in the holy of holies.<sup>168</sup> The lack of the divine action in the inner sanctum supports that the Tent (especially, the

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<sup>166</sup> Cf. Lambdin, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew*, 279–282 (§197). For a detailed analysis of the verbal constructions comparable to Job 1:5 such as 1 Sam 1 and Num 19, see Pardee, “The Biblical Hebrew Verbal System in a Nutshell,” in *Language and Nature: Papers presented to John Huehnergard on the Occasion of His 60th Birthday*, eds. Rebecca Hasselbach and Na’ama Pat-El, SAOC 67 (Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2012), 285–317, esp. 296–311 (e.g., 297–298 for 1 Sam 1:4).

<sup>167</sup> That said, one-time action is no less important in literary works. More frequently in short narratives, a particular action often represents a character (Bar-Efrat, *Narrative Art*, 80). For instance, God’s destruction of the world in P’s flood narrative (Gen 6–9\*) may reveal his character, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

<sup>168</sup> Pace Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 134–139 (esp. 134). He argues that “in the Priestly tradition, Moses never passes through the veil to stand before the Ark.” But Exod 34:29–35 and Num 7:89 may describe the situation the other way around. Exod 34:29–33 admittedly reports a one-time event that happened in Mount Sinai before the construction of the Tent of Meeting. Yet the episode is intended to be an initial and *representative* occasion of what happened multiple times when Moses privately met with the deity even in the Tent of Meeting ever since Moses’s one-time ascent to (and also descent from) Mount Sinai. (For the number of Moses ascent to and descent from Mount Sinai in P, see Schwartz, “Priestly Account,” 119; Baruch J. Schwartz, “What Really Happened at Mount Sinai?” *Bible Review* 13/5 [1997]:20–30 and 46, esp. 29.) This is supported by the imperfective verbs connoting iteration in Exod 34:34–35 and the following oracular meetings in the course of the narrative after Lev 1. Such meetings, however, were not supposed to continue with the priests after Moses’s death. If the priests have succeeded the oracular function of Moses, it was not with the verbal conversation as Moses experienced, but rather with a divinatory means of Urim and Tummim. Cf. Haran, *Temples*, 213–214. Even the priestly oracular function is not a theme that is intelligibly developed in P according to Stackert, *Prophet Like Moses*, 172–174 (esp. 174).

main tent consisting of the inner and the outer sanctum) was a home for the deity to take his rest, which Schipper and Stackert termed “divine repose.”

Yet the deity’s actions outside the main tent were described a few times. The deity in his *kāḇôḏ* appeared occasionally at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting: see Exod 16:10<sup>169</sup>; Lev 9:23; Num 14:10; 16:19; and 17:7. These verses except for Lev 9:23 share the so-called murmuring motif.<sup>170</sup> In the Priestly murmuring narratives, “the Israelites challenge the authority of their leaders, complain about the wilderness conditions, reject the gift of the land and, in the later layers, openly reject God’s benevolence. They do not, however, violate the commandments.”<sup>171</sup> In other words, Yahweh appears in *kāḇôḏ* and punishes the rebels in the murmuring stories in P when the Israelites or their subgroups dishonor the deity, whether directly by complaining about God (e.g., Num 14:3) or indirectly by challenging the hierarchy that the deity established. Since the deity is depicted as regal especially with *kāḇôḏ YHWH*, it is understandable that the deity is sensitive about being dishonored. Even if it is true that the Israelites do not violate any explicit commandment in the murmuring stories, the challenges to Moses and especially Aaronide priesthood—the divinely established leadership—are to be understood as the same kind of rebellion as the violations of law, i.e., dishonoring the deity. In P, a challenge to social hierarchy in the Israelite community is actually equivalent to one against the deity (על יהוה): e.g., Exod 16:2, 7–8; Num 16:3, 11.<sup>172</sup> The divine reactivity to disgrace may not be unrelated to the divine, superhuman senses. The deity appeared at the entrance of the Tent of

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<sup>169</sup> Joel S. Baden, “The Original Place of the Priestly Manna Story in Exodus 16,” *ZAW* 122.4 (2010): 491–504, esp. 496–499 argues that the Priestly layer in Exod 16 assumes the Tent of Meeting being already established and was originally located later in the narrative in P before the compilation of the Pentateuch.

<sup>170</sup> See among others, Noth, *Pentateuchal Traditions*, 122–130; Marc Vervenne, “The Protest Motif in the Sea Narrative (Ex 14,11-12): Form and Structure of a Pentateuchal Pattern,” *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 63.4 (1987): 257–271; David Frankel, *The Murmuring Stories of the Priestly School: A Retrieval of Ancient Sacerdotal Lore*, VTSup 89 (Leiden: Brill, 2002).

<sup>171</sup> Frankel, *Murmuring Stories*, 316.

<sup>172</sup> As previously noticed by Baden, *Composition*, 153.

Meeting, coming out of the inner sanctum for which the meticulous instructions to not disrupt his repose were ordered. The murmuring sound of the community in the camp may have been loud<sup>173</sup> and cacophonous and provoked the divine audition, not to mention that its content perceived from the sound hurt his dignity.

Lev 10:1–2 is an exemplary episode that shows how the divine (re)action is sensitive to the rebellion perceived by divine senses. So, I will read the text with respect to this topic at some length here. What exactly provoked the deity to emit lethal fire to Aaron’s two elder sons, Nadav and Avihu, has been of much debate from the rabbinic to the modern time. The focus of the debate has often been the identification of the unauthorized fire. The conjectures have been, among others, privately lit fire apart from the outer altar (cf. Lev 16:12), illegitimate incense used in the offering, or the offering influenced by foreign cult.<sup>174</sup> This matter is hard to settle down and some scholars began to look for a cause beyond unauthorized fire. For instance, Gerstenberger went too far by speculating a political friction between different priestly groups, relying on another episode in Num 16.<sup>175</sup>

More plausible and still sticking to the text is to give attention to “which he had not commanded them (אשר לא צוה אתם),” instead of unauthorized fire (אש זרה). Watts suggests that the problem of Nadav and Avihu was “failure to follow instructions” and that “the story leaves

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<sup>173</sup> Considering that the groaning of the Israelites was audible even from heaven in Exod 2:23aβ–24, it may have been even louder when the entire congregation raised their voice in Num 14:1–2\*. Likewise, it may have been loud enough when a quarrel took place between Moses and Aaron on the one hand and some Levites and 250 chieftains on the other in Num 16:2–7—speaking aside from the debate on the internal compositional layers in this Pentateuchal Priestly text. Their quarrel may have already been heard and hurt the deity. Yet note that the deity did not appear until he smelled the uncustomary amount of the incense presented at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting (cf. Num 16:18–19). About the literary analyses of Num 16–17, see Martin Noth, *Numbers: A Commentary*, trans. James D. Martin, OTL (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1968), 120–122; Knohl, *Sanctuary*, 73–85, which is largely followed by Stackert, *Rewriting*, 191–198 (esp. 191–192n58).

<sup>174</sup> Cf. Haran, *Temples*, 232; Noth, *Leviticus*, 84–85; Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 598, 628–633, and 633–635; Nihan, *Priestly Torah*, 579–588; Chavel, *Oracular Law*, 84n222; Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, 527–528.

<sup>175</sup> Gerstenberger, *Leviticus*, 117–119; also, Noth, *Leviticus*, 84. Cf. Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, 521.



unspecified exactly what they did wrong in order to emphasize that any deviation from the divine instructions can have disastrous consequences.”<sup>176</sup> Somewhat similar to Watts but to elicit a different implication, Gary A. Anderson says that it is vain to search their specific cultic failure beyond the mere fact of their violation to divine holiness. He argues that the necessary information was intentionally gapped by the author. The law could have misled the priests (both in the story and in reality) to think that they had means to manipulate the deity. By their unintelligible death, the author tried to reserve the divine freedom: i.e., God is wholly other and not contained in the cultic law.<sup>177</sup> Nihan, more specifically, contends that Nadav and Avihu brought a new offering that was not previously introduced by the deity. The censer-incense offering was not commanded in Lev 1–7, according to him, because it was reserved only for the high priest on other occasions (Lev 16:12–13; Num 17:6–15).<sup>178</sup>

Though admitting that deviation from the divine cultic rulings is certainly problematic to some extent, Feldman points out that the priestly innovation is not bound to an immediate death penalty in P. The priestly innovation was of no trouble previously as it was necessary in Lev 8–9 and explicitly endorsed by both the deity and the story itself in the subsequent account in Lev

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<sup>176</sup> Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, 528.

<sup>177</sup> Gary A. Anderson, “‘Through Those Who Are Near to Me, I Will Show Myself Holy’: Nadab and Abihu and Apophatic Theology,” *CBQ* 77.1 (2015): 1–19, esp. 11–19. Anderson might be correct that the episode indicates that the priestly duty is solemn and dangerous. Yet his idea is not without problems. In his reading, though he does not explicitly say so, it appears that the violation of Nadav and Avihu, whatever it was, was inevitable and they were the victims of the divine teaching. If this is indeed what Anderson implied, their sin was sort of an inadvertence, which would not have led to death. Even if it were not what Anderson implied, the divine character he assumes and the authorial intention he postulated with the concept of apophatic theology are somewhat forced. While some belief corresponding to apophatic theology that presupposes the divine otherness and unintelligibility could well have been thought by the ancient writer in theory, prior to being articulated and labelled as such in later Christian theological traditions, it is simply not there in P as I strived to demonstrate in the second and the third chapters. The given cultic laws were by no means complete, as Anderson posits, but sufficient and intelligible. Both the narrator and the characters, the deity among others, assume that a sober priest is able to make prudent decisions to fill the gaps (e.g., Lev 10:9). Note that I do not mean that Nadav and Avihu were drunk by mentioning Lev 10:9. It is exactly because Nadav and Avihu were sober that they were expected to make a right decision in that critical moment. For priests’ freedom to some extent to interpret and innovate the given cult when needed Feldman, *Story of Sacrifice*, 104–107, 112–120; Feldman, “Ritual Sequence,” 34–35.

<sup>178</sup> Nihan, *Priestly Torah*, 102–103, 582.

10:8–20.<sup>179</sup> She proposes two underlying reasons for the death of Aaron’s two sons. First, Nadav and Avihu manipulated and exploited their official priestly status. Their own incense offering was not to secure communal good, but rather to gain private interests. Second, it was their job to comprehend the entire ritual system and they failed to grasp it. They introduced an entirely new category, ignorant of the boundary for the use of incense within the system. Their censer-incense was too much an innovation beyond the flexibility allowed to the priests’ interpretation.<sup>180</sup>

Her first reason fits well with my understanding of *kāḇôḏ*. If the continuity of the scenes is acknowledged between Lev 9:23–24 and 10:1–2 (see below), the action of Nadav and Avihu was certainly public and official; the deity had appeared before the public with his public full garment, *kāḇôḏ YHWH*, in Lev 9:23. This is also supported by Moses’s quote of the divine speech in Lev 10:3:

בקרבי<sup>181</sup> אקדש ועל פני כל העם אכבד

Through those who approach me I will be sanctified and before all the people I will be honored.

This aphorism is specific enough and might have been prompted from the death of Nadav and Avihu.<sup>182</sup> The dictum consists of two clauses connected by a *wāw*. While it has grammatically an A-B-A’-B’ structure, semantically it is A-B-C-B’. “Those who approach me (בקרבי)” is gapped in the second clause. A fuller meaning of the second would be ‘I will be honored (through those who approach me) before all the people.’ Both clauses are indicating the action of Nadav and

<sup>179</sup> Feldman, *Story of Sacrifice*, 105–106, 112–120; Feldman, “Ritual Sequence,” 34–35.

<sup>180</sup> Feldman, *Story of Sacrifice*, 106; Feldman, “Ritual Sequence,” 34–35.

<sup>181</sup> While many commentators prefer to understand בקרבי as from the adjective *qarōḇ*, I understand it as the active participial form (also, *qarōḇ*) from the verb and reflected some fientive sense in my translation. This understanding fits better with the action of Nadav and Avihu in Lev 10:1. They were not just near but brought near (the H-stem of בקרבי the censer-incense offering).

<sup>182</sup> Pace Nihan, *Priestly Torah*, 586 and 586n40. He says that the aphorism is less likely an *ad hoc* statement by the deity “since in this case it should have been placed in the mouth of Yahweh himself (as in v. 8ff.) rather than of Moses.” Yet it is more unusual for the deity to speak only to Aaron as in Lev 10:8 as he himself argues in Nihan, *Priestly Torah*, 578 (cf. Feldman, *Story of Sacrifice*, 112–113). Or simply Yahweh’s speech to Moses might have been gapped (Feldman, *Story of Sacrifice*, 104).

Avihu (and potentially the priests in general for the future). The second clause speaks poetically that the transgression of the two was *hurting the divine dignity publicly*. If Feldman is right, their personal use of the officially sanctified status could not only misrepresent them but also the deity himself.

Even though Feldman as well as Nihan and Watts are on the right track, what is missing in them is how. The narrator does not intimate the internal motivation of Nadav and Avihu in his narration of the story. How did the deity perceive that Nadav and Avihu failed to follow his instructions and honor him? How did he know they offered the censer-incense for private gains? One may say that the omniscient deity knew their internal thoughts. But it is hard to find a signal that P's deity is omniscient in the text. For instance, the deity was inattentive to the suffering of the Israelites until their groaning became great in Exod 2:23a $\beta$ –24. Mind reading is not what the deity frequently does, if ever. The deity had to see that the earth was ruined (ת'קש) in Gen 6:12 in P's flood narrative. He is not interested in what is in human hearts as J is in Gen 6:5b. The deity seems to be ignorant of what Abraham thought in his mind when the deity said he was going to have a son through Sarah in Gen 17:15–22. Unlike J's version in Gen 18:12–15, the deity does not respond to Abraham's internal skepticism, but only to Abraham's explicit speech.

If the deity is not characterized as reading the human mind and intention, what were the wrongs of Aaron's two sons and how did the deity know them?<sup>183</sup> It may be that the deity did not read the mind of the two sons of Aaron at all, but rather recognized their wrongs by perceiving their outer actions with his senses. The fire of the unauthorized fire has been variously understood, as fire, coals, or incense, in this verse. Yet Lev 10:1a should be viewed as a process; the *wāw*-consecutive clauses refer to a stage after a stage: “Nadav and Avihu took their censers;

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<sup>183</sup> I reserve a further discussion on this matter of interiority for the subsequent chapter.

and they put fire in it; and they placed incense on it.” The last *wāw*-consecutive verb in Lev 10:1b is used as a conclusion (or summary): “So they brought unauthorized fire before YHWH which he had not commanded them (to bring).”<sup>184</sup> The unauthorized fire, which comes last in the series of the *wāw*-consecutive clauses, must refer to the final product consisting of a censer, fire, and incense which appear before it. When they brought it, the deity must have easily recognized by his senses its deviation from his instructions: by seeing censers not belonging to the Tent<sup>185</sup> and by smelling a different odor from incense not composed according to his careful recipe (Exod 30:7–9, 34–38).<sup>186</sup> The deity had to infer the internal intent of Nadav and Avihu, whatever it exactly was, *only from his perception of their action*.

Finally, I would add an additional factor that rendered irritating the divine senses and hurting the divine dignity so severe a sin to the extent to incite the deity to execute the death penalty instantly. I think it was hinted in the scene that the text is describing. Many scholars think that divine fire came out from the inner sanctum in Lev 9:24; 10:2; and elsewhere.<sup>187</sup> Milgrom ascribes this to P’s *kābôd* theology “that the Lord’s *kābôd*, encased in cloud, would descend upon the Tabernacle and rest between the outspread wings of the cherubim flanking the Ark.”<sup>188</sup> However, this does not fit the description of the text. It should be noted that in two out

<sup>184</sup> For this use of the *wāw*-consecutive usage, see JM, 363–364 (§118i); WO, 550–551 (§33.2.1d).

<sup>185</sup> Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 597 (followed by Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, 527) says that the definite article before *מחטה* in Lev 16:2 and Num 17:11 suggests the possibility of the *מחטה* in these instances for the incense offering in the Tent, while *מחטה* may have been intended for removing ashes in Exod 25:38; 27:3; 37:23; 38:3; and Num 4. It was not an issue later to bring one’s own censer in Num 16–17. The case was permissible since Moses—rather than the deity if not assumed that Moses’s oracular reception is somehow gapped—commanded it to prepare the divine test that will choose the right censer-incense representing the right one to serve him, as previously noticed by Feldman, *Story of Sacrifice*, 106n92.

<sup>186</sup> In addition, the deity’s superhuman senses could possibly distinguish with his vision and olfaction fire, scent, or smoke from incense not burned by fire/coals from the outer altar (Lev 16:12).

<sup>187</sup> Among others, Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 590 and 599; Levine, *Leviticus*, 59; Schwartz, *JSB*, 216; Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, 529. A less popular option is that the fire came down from heaven (e.g., 1 Kgs 18:38; especially, 2 Chr 7:1): mentioned in Edward L. Greenstein, “Deconstruction and Biblical Narrative.” *Prooftexts* 9.1 (1989): 43–71, esp. 68–69n102. All these options are nothing new but rather appeared already in the rabbinic period.

<sup>188</sup> Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 590 (also 599).

of three instances when divine fire came out of Yahweh and consumed something in Pentateuchal P, *kāḇôḏ YHWH* has always appeared to the public outside the main tent: e.g., Lev 9:23–24; Num 16:19, 35.<sup>189</sup> It is unnecessary to assume that *kāḇôḏ YHWH* is outside and the divine fire came out from inside apart from *kāḇôḏ YHWH*. Exod 24:17 informs that *kāḇôḏ YHWH* looks like “consuming fire (אש אכלת).”<sup>190</sup>

Lev 9:23–10:2 is likewise. It is more likely to suppose that *kāḇôḏ YHWH* that appeared outside the main tent in Lev 9:23b still remains there in Lev 10:2. There is no sign of any textual break in the course of Lev 9 to Lev 10 except for the chapter division devised later for convenience. While the modern chapter division between Lev 9:24 and 10:1 gives the impression that Lev 10:1 begins a new episode, there are no para-textual devices for a paragraph division such as פתוחה and סתומה between Lev 9 and Lev 10 in the Leningrad Codex. Among Qumran manuscripts, the only one that preserves both the last word of Lev 9:24 and the first word of Lev 10:1 is 11Q2 (11QLev<sup>b</sup>).<sup>191</sup> Usually, manuscripts from the Judean Desert would give a small space for word division and have no additional indication for verses (small sense units). They would give larger vacancies for the large sense units as, for example, the vacancy in 11Q10

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<sup>189</sup> The Priestly layer(s) in Num 16–17 is normally attributed to H, if not P<sup>s</sup>. Yet at least one scholar ascribed it to P, not H: see Saul M. Olyan, *Rites and Rank: Hierarchy in Biblical Representations of Cult* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 136n36. Whether it belongs to P or H, I follow the opinion that Num 16:19 and 16:35 belong to the same source (Pentateuchal P), even if it went through a complicated editing process: e.g., George Buchanan Gray, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Numbers*, ICC (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1903), 186–188, 191–193; Noth, *Numbers*, 120–122; Levine, *Numbers*, 405–406, 428–432 (esp. 428); Baden, *Composition*, 149–168, esp. 292n7. Pace some of those who find an editorial or post-editorial layer and attribute Korah to it, which implies Num 16:19 and 16:35 not only originate from different hands but also Num 16:19 does not even have a place in Pentateuchal P: e.g., Knohl, *Sanctuary*, 73–85 (followed by Stackert, *Rewriting*, 191–198 [esp. 191–192n58]) and Frankel, *Murmuring Stories*, 203–261. For Knohl, Korah’s story may still be labelled H (his HS) and yet it has nothing to do with my Pentateuchal P. For him, H includes later layers responsible for the Pentateuchal redaction beyond the Pentateuchal Priestly source and the Korah story belongs to this later stage of H.

<sup>190</sup> Pace the solution in Hundley, *Keeping Heaven*, 46 and 46n39: he suggests that the fire came out of the divine *kāḇôḏ* that was in the inner sanctum.

<sup>191</sup> Florentino García Martínez, Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar, and Adam S. van der Woude, *Qumran Cave 11 II: 11Q2–18, 11Q20–31*, vol. 23 of *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert (= DJD)*, ed. Emanuel Tov (Oxford: Clarendon, 1998), 23:3–5 and Plate I.

(11QtargumJob) 37:2 that separates the previous text from the following line (beginning with modern Job 42:1) as expected, though this is a targumic text.<sup>192</sup> The space between Lev 9:24 and Lev 10:1 in 11Q2 f2:4 may seem a little larger than many of the surrounding word dividing space and the only other verse division preserved in this manuscript between Lev 10:1 and 10:2 in 11Q2 f2:7, which would be expectedly undifferentiated. Yet this size difference is too slight to be meaningful and seems rather fortuitous. While the photographs are too fragmentary to make a definitive decision, the size of the word-divisional space seems not exceptional in this manuscript as well as in other Qumran manuscripts. This space surely does not seem as a section divider, which corresponds to פתוחה and סתומה of the Masoretic manuscripts. If it were, it would have been much larger and extended to the end of the current line.

One can neither find any narrative break. Narratively, Schwartz correctly observed that the theophanic event in Lev 9:23–24 and the death of Nadav and Avihu comprise a single unit and the two events are continuous without an interval of time.<sup>193</sup> The end of Lev 9 and the beginning of Lev 10 together form one scene, such as a long take in a film. The deity appeared in Lev 9:23–24 for a one-time event to give the final approval for his newly built home and its service. This scene was about to end up with the people’s homage to the regal deity in Lev 9:24b. Suddenly, Aaron’s two elder sons—Nadav and Avihu—appeared on the scene. It is reasonable to assume that the deity in his *kābôd* remained until then.<sup>194</sup> The close verbal parallels between Lev 10:1–2 and Num 16:18 and 16:35 further suggest that they are depicting a similar scene, where

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<sup>192</sup> *DJD*, 23:168, Plate XX. For section division in the ancient and the medieval manuscripts, see Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, 3rd ed. (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2012), 48–49 and 198–200.

<sup>193</sup> Schwartz, *JSB*, 213 and 215; Levine, *Leviticus*, 58; Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 596. Also, the inner coherence of Lev 10 and its close relationship with Lev 8–9 are also defended by Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, 504–511; Nihan, *Priestly Torah*, 576–607; Noth, *Leviticus*, 83; Feldman, *Story of Sacrifice*, 67–108. Nihan and Noth hold that Lev 10 was from a later hand and the coherence originated in Lev 10’s presupposition of the previous Priestly traditions. Against Nihan, see Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, 510–511 and Feldman, *Story of Sacrifice*, 104–105n88.

<sup>194</sup> I found it anticipated by Nihan, *Priestly Torah*, 102–103n135.

*kəḇôḏ* YHWH is outside visible to the public and fire came out *directly* from it/him.<sup>195</sup> The almost verbatim repetitions about divine fire are particularly telling:

... ותצא אש מלפני יהוה ותאכל. . . . Lev 9:24  
“Fire came out *from before* YHWH and consumed”

... ותצא אש מלפני יהוה ותאכל. . . . Lev 10:2  
“Fire came out *from before* YHWH and consumed”

... ואש יצאה מאת יהוה ותאכל. . . . Num 16:35  
“Fire came out *from* YHWH and consumed”

A slightly different wording in Num 16:35—“from (מאת) YHWH” instead of “from before (מלפני) YHWH”—suggests that מלפני יהוה does not have to refer to the inner sanctum or any other fixed location. It may well indicate the very spot Yahweh stands on. The reference of the phrase could vary according to the context as that of לפני יהוה does.<sup>196</sup>

Aaron’s two sons appeared to present (H-stem, קר״ב) “before Yahweh (לפני יהוה)” with “unauthorized fire which he (i.e., Yahweh) had not commanded them (אש זרה אשר לא צוה אתם)” in Lev 10:1. In the debate on the identification of the transgression of Nadav and Avihu, scholars tend to focus their attention on *what* Aaron’s two sons brought. They do not deal with all given information fairly as I treated every clause in Lev 10:1 to identify the *what*. Likewise, it is important to note that the two sons *caused* the unauthorized fire *to approach* before the deity; the verb, קר״ב “to approach,” is used in the causative stem (H-stem). This stem necessarily implies *the subject that approaches* to make the object approach (i.e., to present, to bring).<sup>197</sup> In other words, Nadav and Avihu themselves *approached* the deity with the offering. This is supported

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<sup>195</sup> See Nihan, *Priestly Torah*, 584 for the comparison between the two texts. Nihan used this result to find the uniform transgression in the two stories: namely, impinging on the high priest.

<sup>196</sup> Regarding לפני יהוה, see Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, 529. The prepositional phrase לפני יהוה could be used casually for human characters as well in P: e.g., Gen 47:10; Exod 35:20; 36:3.

<sup>197</sup> This is well illustrated in Lev 21:17bβ-γ: “He may not *approach* to bring the food of his God (לא יקרב להקריב לחם) (אלהיו).”

by Lev 16:1b: “*When they approach* before YHWH they died (בקרבתם לפני יהוה וימתו).”<sup>198</sup> The discrepancy between “to approach” and “to bring” offered evidence to Greenstein that this biblical text as any other texts do not allow a uniform, coherent meaning except for diversely harmonized readings from different presuppositions.<sup>199</sup> If one considers that bringing implies the approach of the bringer, however, Lev 10:1 and 16:1 are not incompatible but rather emphasizing different points respectively. The narrator stressed the two sons’ catastrophic approach in Lev 16:1 because the entire chapter is about who, when, and how to approach the deity and be unscathed.<sup>200</sup>

Simeon Chavel offers a useful cross-cultural lens that he termed “etiquette of eye-contact,” which, he argued, ancient Israel and Judah internally developed it as their neighbor cultures did. The language for this etiquette did not come from the temple (cultic) setting, but rather derived from “the social sphere of human hierarchical interrelations, perhaps best illustrated by the royal court and its etiquette of manners.”<sup>201</sup> “In the royal sphere, one may not approach the king without first being called, or speak without being asked.”<sup>202</sup> Otherwise, one “must follow a predetermined set of protocols” carefully.<sup>203</sup> The manner of social sphere was exploited in the cultic setting. This does well accord with the regal and divine God in P. When

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<sup>198</sup> Cf. Nihan, *Priestly Torah*, 101–103 (esp. 102–103n135). The corresponding verbs in Lev 16:1 of LXX (προσάγω) and of many Targums and the Peshitta (D-stem קר"ב means “to bring” followed by the object equivalent to אש זרה as H-stem קר"ב in Lev 10:1 instead of G-stem in Lev 16:1 of MT. However, G-stem קר"ב in MT is singular and certainly more difficult reading (*lectio difficilior probabilius*, though this is not an absolute rule). It is more likely that the scribes of the *Vorlagen* of the ancient translations, if not the translators, altered original G-stem to level it with other H-stem instances in Num 3:4 and 26:61 as well as Lev 10:1. Note that the Samaritan Pentateuch and the Samaritan Targum tally with MT.

<sup>199</sup> Greenstein, “Deconstruction,” 59–60; also, Anderson, “Nadab and Abihu,” 11. The reference to Lev 10:1–2 indicate to others that Lev 16:1 is a later insertion partly because they think Lev 10 is late: see, among others, Noth, *Leviticus*, 117–118; Nihan, *Priestly Torah*, 150, 346. Yet see Feldman, *Story of Sacrifice*, 156: “The story of Nadav and Avihu is a wholly consistent and integral part of the Priestly Narrative, and there is no *narratological* reason to identify it as a later addition to the story.”

<sup>200</sup> Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, 521.

<sup>201</sup> Chavel, “Face of God,” 23.

<sup>202</sup> Chavel, “Face of God,” 41.

<sup>203</sup> Chavel, “Face of God,” 41.



*kəḇôḏ* YHWH appeared and approved what had been prepared to be effective by divine fire, Nadav and Avihu may have been overexcited. But the narrator is not interested in indicating their emotion. They were not punished because of their internal state of mind per se, but rather due to their presumptuous action. They were not summoned by the deity at this particular point in time. As newly ordained priests, i.e., a regular entourage, then, they should have been more responsible to follow the established procedure within the boundary that was set for them.<sup>204</sup> Yet they crossed the line audaciously even too close to the deity. The deity was out there; everyone else, including uninformed lay people, fell on their faces as should have been customary, if not intuitive; but Nadav and Avihu attempted to draw near with the unauthorized gift that upset the deity's senses visually and olfactorily. Their internal state of heart, whether they did out of goodwill or ill will, did not matter at all. Their abrupt proximity was offensive enough for the deity to suffer indignity. Borrowing from Chavel's terminology, their intended (perhaps) *acknowledging looking* (or *affective looking* if Feldman is right) in expectation of *receptive looking* was externally felt and judged by the deity as *violative looking* when their actions deviated from the established rules of audience.<sup>205</sup> They did not understand correctly the cultic system they should have guarded and their position and responsibility within it.<sup>206</sup> They did not realize that their *ad hoc* action arrogated the high priest's job.<sup>207</sup> The divine order including cultic and social hierarchy<sup>208</sup> is customized according to the divine nature including his senses and traits; it serves to preserve the best condition of his divine repose. *If the order is not*

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<sup>204</sup> Chavel, "Face of God," 37. Their greater responsibility is expressed backward by the graded purification offering in Lev 4 and forward by their more proximate access to the deity (Lev 10:3) and their role as the guide (Lev 10:10–11).

<sup>205</sup> Chavel, "Face of God," 9–11.

<sup>206</sup> Feldman, *Story of Sacrifice*, 106.

<sup>207</sup> Nihan, *Priestly Torah*, 582–586.

<sup>208</sup> There is no clear division between the cultic and the social hierarchy in P's world. The role of the tribal chieftains is not developed, and they are subsumed under cultic order (e.g., Lev 4; Num 7).

*maintained properly, his senses are disturbed and his repose is aroused; he realizes his authority is challenged; he suffers indignity.*<sup>209</sup>

To sum up, as the other character-indicators of the Priestly deity, such as appearance, speech, and environment, divine action reveals royal and sensory characteristics of the deity. Divine actions in P are many times divine *reactions*. The deity is normally inert and withdraws to the innermost room of his house. But he begins to react when his royal dignity is damaged. This royal character is presented in close relationship with the deity's sensory perception. The deity perceives and reacts to rebellion with his senses. The deity's royal character in P is important for P's morality in that he is the ultimate guardian of the moral order of the world he created (i.e., how the world should be). I argued this point in the previous chapters and will continue to support it in the next chapter. P's emphasis on the sensory perception of the deity also has much bearing on the mode of P's morality. P's morality does not judge the state of the clean or unclean heart, which is not easily discernible in the real world. P is simply uninterested in it. Rather, the Priestly morality is founded on the perception of right or wrong action; only action is perceivable to P's deity as well as to the real-world people. If שלום *šālôm* is a moral vision of the Priestly history as I argue, this שלום *šālôm* is certainly not just a peaceful state of mind. More importantly, it is a concrete, physical state of human life and relationship that is perceptible to

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<sup>209</sup> Though the intermediary function of the divine senses is not indicated, Chavel, *Oracular Law*, 84 keenly summarized the episode as follows:

This story illustrates perfectly the core concept of the Priestly history, the principle of gradation and order. . . . The tabernacle, the system, and all the rules . . . serve to circumscribe the presence and maintain the purity of the inner core by regulating the state and approach of the human beings in its proximity. . . . All variables . . . must proceed according to divine plan; any variation can cause massive damage. . . . The episode with Nadab and Abihu illustrates the most severe violation of all the various hierarchies – at the climactic moment, specifically, the initiation of the deity's earthly abode, precisely when he has revealed himself and indicated his satisfaction; by his most intimate attendants; in the entryway of his abode, in his immediate presence; with what is supposed to be the most pleasing of offerings.

the deity in P's narrative world and to the readers of the real world. This will become more explicit in the next chapter.

#### 4.5 Conclusion

I reached in this chapter the core argument of this study. The Priestly law is more ethical than cultic, ritualistic, and, often contemptuously charged, legalistic. The textualization and idealization of P's law suggest that one needs to be cautious to elicit any actual contemporary cult. As a historical narrative, P needed a social system to give coherence to its narrative. The narrator selected the cult as his history's legal system and theologized his morality.<sup>210</sup> The contextualization of P's law within the historical narrative indicates that it was not intended to justify, correct, or teach the actual contemporary rites. If one does not separate the law sharply from the narrative either literary, form, or tradition-historical critically, rather if one realizes the close connection between the narrative and the law literarily and source critically, one should no longer strive to find hypothetical *Sitze im Leben* of the instructions to understand them. Rather, one should read it as narrative.

My interest was in the divine characterization in the text, among many aspects of the narrativity. The divine character thus read from the law as and within the narrative revealed the deity's (super-)human senses and his inclination to the divine repose. The divine repose should have been uninterrupted by satisfying and not disturbing his senses. The divine speech was all about how to establish and maintain the divine environment to best serve his repose according to his nature and preference. After endorsing his new earthly abode, he appeared (i.e., reacted)

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<sup>210</sup> There is no reason to assume anything like the unreliable narrator. Regarding the unreliable narrator, see Booth, *Rhetoric of Fiction*, 158–159; Chatman, *Story and Discourse*, 148–149; Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction*, 103–106.

mainly when his senses were disturbed. Also, he took great care of his honor and dignity as the regal deity. He appeared and performed punitive actions when his honor hurt. In this vein, the cult and ritual in the Priestly history was nothing but the protocols to properly access the deity as to access the king; as argued previously, this nontranscendent deity is fully integrated into the social system of P's Israel. His honor and sensory delicacy—the two pillars that Israelites should take great care in their daily (not just cultic) life—are closely connected in P's presentation of the deity since the deity realizes that his dignity is belittled by feeling abnormality in his senses.

Considering all this, White's rhetorical question is all the more apropos and penetrating: "Has any historical narrative ever been written that was not informed not only by moral awareness but specifically by the moral authority of the narrator?"<sup>211</sup> P's narrator secures the moral authority by having the deity promulgate (and continue to do so throughout the wilderness period) the ritual laws and assigning it (at least the initial, main legislation) to the central position of both text and narrative. These ritual laws aimed at revealing the deity's sensory nature and preference. With this characteristic, the deity is presented by the narrator to be the personification of the moral consciousness and standard as the summit of P's social hierarchy within the story. The law giving at Sinai is the climax and certainly a significant element for the Priestly *history* to be a complete historical narrative, a *moral drama* rather than a *cultic manual*.<sup>212</sup>

Yet still more things need to be said regarding the Priestly morality. How specifically does the Priestly morality work in the narrative world? What does his obsessed care for his senses and honor have to do with the interpersonal morality? How can this reposing deity be the moral exemplary in P who secures and edifies שלום *šālôm* of the world? How is this preliminary

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<sup>211</sup> White, "Value of Narrativity," 24.

<sup>212</sup> Borrowing the "moral drama" from White, "Value of Narrativity," 24.

moral basis from the law related to what is found from the pre-Sinaitic narrative in the previous chapters? What place does *imago* and *imitatio Dei* have in this moral scheme? These questions are dealt with in the subsequent chapters.

## Chapter Five

### The Violence and the Violation

This chapter searches more articulate moral values in P. In the first section, I read the Priestly flood narrative. This has a potential to illuminate the Priestly morality because it depicts the moral wickedness of humankind, specifically violence, and the divine response. Even in this narrative, the details of violence are not clearly given. I expect that my analysis of the divine character in the previous chapter (i.e., his inclination toward the repose and sensory pleasantness) and biblical descriptions of violence elsewhere will help to fill the narrative gaps. Violence entails many components that irritate divine senses (sounds, sights, and smells). This wickedness of the world should be dealt with in some way. This is not merely wicked but evil with respect to the deity. The deity commissioned humans in Gen 1:26–28 to maintain the peaceful order of the world and thereby edify the well-being of all the creatures including themselves, as good ancient kings would do. They were responsible to do כב"ש and רד"ה properly but they did the exact opposite, i.e., שח"ת and חמס, which is analogous to the vassal's rebellion to the emperor.<sup>1</sup> As a punishment for this rebellion, the deity chose to destroy the world, almost entirely, except for a few of each species to reset the world. This divine response looks overly harsh and needs an explanation. I will try to show how his harsh action does not necessarily contradict his character that requires שלום *šālôm* in the world.

In the following section, I look at the Priestly purification/expiation system, especially in relation to the purification offering (הטאת), the reparation offering (אשם), and the Day of

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<sup>1</sup> The positive connotations of P's use of these two words in the creation account is previously discussed with respect to ancient Near Eastern royal ideology in Chapter Two. Cf. Lohfink, *Theology of the Pentateuch*, 11–13; Keel, *Symbolism*, 58–59 and figs. 60–61; also, Keel and Schroer, *Creation*, 144–145.

Atonement ritual. The Priestly ritual was intended to serve the deity best, who now dwells on earth. A pleasant dwelling of the deity guarantees the well-being of the people. The first step to make a comfortable environment for the deity is to eliminate the unpleasant elements from the environment. As I argue in the previous chapter, any elements that would potentially disrupt his repose should be carefully controlled. But rather than resetting the world as in the flood narrative, the deity devised a continuous and sustainable means. The purificatory and expiatory sacrificial offerings deal with human sins and their consequences continually and preserve a favorable environment for the deity. Though the cultic ways to expiate sins may sound ritualistic or legalistic, I argue that the cultic expiation teaches the important moral principles of P: namely, responsibility and restoration. P's ritual law is not uninterested in moral matters. It just appears so because moral concerns in P's ritual are underlying rather than forthrightly apparent. In addition, P does not require sacrifices for the sinner to escape somewhat freely or magically the evil consequence of his action. The purificatory/expiatory sacrifices in P are presented as a part of the offerer's responsibility to correct the consequence of his deed. The expiation cannot be effective until a sinner or an impure person takes all his responsibility to restore all the damages and harms his action produced. In other words, a sinner can be forgiven by the deity, reintegrated to, and properly function again with good standing in the divine community. This goal of the expiation rite and other responsibilities to restore the sinner's wrong, if any, may be called *שְׁלוֹמ* *šālôm*, the ultimate moral value that P proclaims. I think this is most explicit in Lev 5:21–26. I discuss this text in relation to my understanding of the Priestly purificatory and expiatory system, mainly from Lev 4–5 and Lev 16.

The choice of the two sections, one from the narrative and the other from the ritual law, is to indicate that the moral values and themes in P continue and develop through the law and the

narrative. This elaborates on my argument in the previous chapter that a consistent morality underlies both law and narrative in P, which constitute together a coherent literary work.

### 5.1 Violence: The Cause of the Flood

The flood narrative presents a fully narrated episode for the first time in P after the creation account in Gen 1:1–2:4a. All subsequent stories after Gen 1:1–2:4a, such as an additional creation account, the expulsion from the Garden of Eden, and Cain and Abel in Gen 2:4b–2:25, are J. In other words, Gen 5 directly continues Gen 1:1–2:4a in P.<sup>2</sup> Up to this point, the Priestly narrative did not offer information for the world situation in detail. It only gave some genealogical information of the antediluvian generation from Adam to Noah in Gen 5. The genealogical information, as noted previously, reveals that the world system operates relatively well and human beings multiplied as the deity desired in Gen 1:26–28. The genealogy may also connect a large chronological gap between the creation and the flood. In this sense, the genealogy might be considered to be “transitional.” That said, the genealogy per se does not signal any sign of human deterioration, not even close to the eating of the forbidden fruits or Cain’s murder in J.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, brief evaluations of the world situation in the beginning of the flood narrative, such as corruption (שחית) and violence (חמס), are somewhat abrupt and the readers have not been prepared to understand a reason for the flood as J’s flood account. This might demand an exegetical, word study of the key words, such as שחית, דרך, and חמס, while collecting best possible narrative clues to illuminate the cause of the flood.

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. Gunkel, *Genesis*, 133; von Rad, *Genesis*, 68; Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 347; Gertz, *Genesis*, 192.

<sup>3</sup> Pace von Rad, *Genesis*, 69–70. Von Rad argues that the genealogy in Gen 5 “describes something like a ‘transitional period, during which death caused by sin only slowly broke the powerful physical resistance of primitive human nature,’” citing Delitzsch, *Genesis*, 212. Yet how Delitzsch distinguished “the state of integrity” and “a stage of transition” is somewhat unclear to me, whether or not both stages were considered to lie in Gen 5 (as von Rad read Delitzsch).



The deity announced his decision to bring the flood to and destroy (שח"ת) the earth. The cause of the flood in the text seems explicit at first sight; the deity brought the flood because the earth was filled with "violence" and the earth was destroyed before the deity:

Gen 6:13 ויאמר אלהים לנח קץ כל בשר בא לפני כי מלאה הארץ חמס מפניהם והנני משחיתם את הארץ:

God said to Noah, "An end of every flesh has come<sup>4</sup> before me since the earth is filled with violence because of them. Behold, I am going to ruin them with the earth."

This echoes the judgement of the narrator given in the previous verses:

Gen. 6:11 ותשחת הארץ לפני האלהים ותמלא הארץ חמס: 12 וירא אלהים את הארץ והנה נשחתה כי השחית כל בשר את דרכו על הארץ:

Gen 6:11 The earth was ruined before God and the earth was filled with violence. 12 God saw the earth. And behold! It was ruined because every flesh ruined their way on the earth.

The meaning of the narrator's and the deity's speeches is not as clear as it seems. Some exegetical questions may be raised, which are not unrelated to one another. What was the violence that was full of the earth? What does it mean that the earth has been destroyed for this violence? What does the violence have to do with the ruined state of the earth? Who did this violence to whom or what? The obscurity arises because some of the words used in these verses are multivalent and ambiguous.

The deity decided to *make ruined* (H-stem שח"ת) every flesh (humans and animals) on the earth in Gen 6:13b because they made their way (דרך) *ruined* (N-stem שח"ת) in Gen 6:12b. The reference of every flesh that is responsible for the flood is obvious. The expression includes the animals as well as the humans.<sup>5</sup> Every flesh is everything having life breath under heaven, i.e.,

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<sup>4</sup> Either perfective or participle.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Gunkel, *Genesis*, 143; Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1–17*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 279; P. J. Harland, *The Value of Human Life: A Study of the Story of the Flood (Genesis 6-9)*, VTSup 64 (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 31–32; Baruch J. Schwartz, "The Flood Narratives in the Torah and the Question of Where History Begins," in *Shai le-Sara Japhet: Studies in the Bible, Its Exegesis and Its Language*, eds. Moshe Bar-Asher et al., (Jerusalem: Bialik, 2007), 139–154 (Hebrew), esp. 152; Gertz, *Genesis*, 247–248. Pace L. Wächter, "שחח" *šāḥaṭ*," *TDOT* 14:583–595, esp. 14:590; Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 416.

the humans and the animals in Gen 6:17. Every flesh refers only to the animals in Gen 6:19; 7:15, 16, 21; 8:17; 9:15. Every flesh clearly includes both humans and animals in the promise (ברית) in Gen 9:11, 16, 17 in light of the recipients of the promise in 9:15.<sup>6</sup> The two instances of “to ruin (שחית)” in Gen 6:12b (6:11a likewise) and 6:13b are considered to have different nuances as many English Bibles imply: while humans, and likely animals as well, somewhat *figuratively corrupted* their way of life (שחית), the deity would *bring physical destruction* on the earth (שחית).<sup>7</sup> The word דרך means “road” but also means “the way of life” or “lifestyle,” which is also the case for “way” in English. The latter meaning is not merely a secondary, derivative meaning from the former, but rather a much more frequent usage in Hebrew.<sup>8</sup> Therefore, whether to choose the spatial meaning or the figurative meaning of דרך is only determined by the context, along with the contextual determination of the meaning of the verb שחית that collocated with the noun דרך.

### 5.1.1 שחית and דרך

The range of meaning of the word שחית extends from a physical sense “to destroy” to a behavioral sense “to corrupt” that implies immorality.<sup>9</sup> The greater number of instances entails the concrete destruction: for example, that of the city, the nation/people, the object, body parts, or human life.<sup>10</sup> The physical meaning is metaphorized and extended. The metaphoric use is conspicuous when the D-stem or the H-stem שחית is intransitive. When שחית is used

<sup>6</sup> For the translation of ברית as “promise” in P’s flood account, see Stackert, “Distinguishing,” 382.

<sup>7</sup> For example, see Gen 6:11–13 in ESV, JPS, KJV, and NRSV.

<sup>8</sup> K. Koch, “דרך,” *TDOT* 3:270–293, esp. 3:276.

<sup>9</sup> I chose “to ruin” above in order to render שחית consistently and less awkwardly for both meanings.

<sup>10</sup> For the city, Gen 18:28; 19:13, 14, 29; 1 Sam 23:10; 2 Sam 24:16; 2 Kgs 18:25; Jer 15:6; 48:18. For the nation/people, Num 32:15; Deut 4:31; 2 Kgs 19:12; Isa 37:12; Jer 4:7. For various objects, Deut 20:20; Jer 11:19 (trees); Judge 6:4 (produce); 2 Sam 20:15 (wall); Jer 6:5; 51:11 (buildings); Jer 13:7 (loincloth); Jer 18:4 (vessel). For human life, Judg 20:21, 25, 35, 42; 1 Sam 26:9, 15; 2 Sam 1:14. For bodily disfigurement that does not necessarily imply murder, Exod 21:26 (eye); Lev 19:27 (beard).

intransitively, regardless of whether its verbal stem is the D-stem or the H-stem,<sup>11</sup> it signifies predominantly—if not entirely—the behavioral, moral corruption throughout the Hebrew Bible. This case is usually translated as “to act corruptly.”<sup>12</sup> This opens the possibility that each flesh damaged one’s way physically in Gen 6:12b because the direct object (“its way” אֶת־דַּרְכּוֹ) accompanies the H-stem שָׁחַת.

But the matter is still more complex. The verb שָׁחַת can have an abstract sense when it is transitive as well. With the abstract noun as the object, the physical sense of שָׁחַת as “to destroy, damage” may express the immoral behavior.<sup>13</sup> For instance, Ezek 28:17aβ says the king of Tyre corrupted his wisdom for the sake of his splendor (שָׁחַת חִכְמָתְךָ עַל יַפְעָתְךָ). Note that the idea is not very far from the physical meaning of the word. His greed damaged the fullness of his wisdom (cf. Ezek 28:12). As a city is destructed and disfigured, the abstract wisdom is said to be destroyed as if wisdom has a form. The use of the moral vocabulary including עוֹן, הַטָּטָא, and עוֹל in the immediate textual context (Ezek 28:16, 18) supports that שָׁחַת is related to immoral actions here. Likewise, “the priests corrupted the obligation<sup>14</sup> of Levi (שָׁחַתְתֶּם בְּרִית הַלְוִי)” in Mal 2:8ba. The abstract “obligation,” which could not be destructed in the physical sense, was

<sup>11</sup> Jenni suggested a very subtle distinction specifically between resultative meaning of the D-stem and causative meaning of the H-stem as well as that between the D-stem and the H-stem in general. The causative implies the subject’s intention whereas the resultative connotes the result that happened accidentally from the action factually described by the verb. See Ernst Jenni, *Das Hebräische Pi’el: Syntaktisch-semasiologische Untersuchung Einer Verbalform Im Alten Testament* (Zürich: EVZ-Verlag, 1968), 256–263 for the verbs attested not in the G stem as שָׁחַת. His distinction between the D-stem and the H-stem is followed in many grammars: among others, see WO, esp. 398–410 (§24.1–24.3) and 433–443 (§27.1–27.3); JM, 143–145 (§52d) and 150–152 (§54d–e). For the distinction specifically between the D-stem and the H-stem of שָׁחַת, see Jenni, *Pi’el*, 242–243, 260; Wächter, *TDOT* 14:584–585; D. Vetter, “שָׁחַת *šḥt* pi./hi. to ruin,” *TLOT* 3:1317–1319, 3:1317–1318.

<sup>12</sup> See following examples: Exod 32:7; Deut 4:16, 25; 9:12; 31:29; 32:5; Judg 2:19; Isa 1:4; Jer 6:28; Ezek 16:47; 20:44; Hos 9:9; Ps 14:1; 53:2; 2 Chr 27:2. Ps 14:1 and 53:2 are telling because of the parallel with the H-stem תַּעֲרִיב “to do abhorrence.” My observation applies only to purely intransitive use; when the object is gapped or conceptually supplemented, שָׁחַת implies original ‘physical destruction’: e.g., 2 Sam 14:11; 20:20 (cf. 20:19); Isa 51:13 (cf. LXX); Jer 5:10; 15:3.

<sup>13</sup> Wächter, *TDOT* 14:588–589 lists four such cases: Ezek 28:17; Amos 1:11; Mal 2:8; Prov 23:8 (all D stem).

<sup>14</sup> The priests’ corruption of levitical בְּרִית is failure to carry out their divine duty. “Requirement,” “obligation,” or “commitment” may be a better translation for בְּרִית here. Regarding the connotation of בְּרִית in Mal 2:8, see E. Kutsch, “בְּרִית *brîṭ* obligation,” *TLOT* 1:256–266, esp.1:263; M. Weinfeld, “בְּרִית *brîṭh*,” *TDOT* 2:253–279, esp. 2:257. For the polyvalence of בְּרִית in P and H, see Stackert, “Distinguishing,” 369–386.

damaged in the metaphoric sense. Gen 6:11a and 6:12b could be such a case. Since דרך can mean abstract “way of life,” שחית with the “way of life” can mean “to destroy, damage, harm” in an abstract, figurative sense, i.e., “to corrupt.” There is a very similar instance in Zeph 3:7: “But they eagerly made their deeds corrupted (אכן השכימו השחיתו כל עלילותם).” Here, human deeds are not necessarily evil, but it is שחית that renders the human deeds corrupted.<sup>15</sup>

The state of the earth before the flood was also said to be destroyed/corrupted with שחית in the N-stem. Out of four instances of the N-stem שחית, besides Gen 6:11a and 6:12a, three express that a concrete thing as the subject is physically destroyed (Ex. 8:20; Jer. 13:7; 18:4). One exceptional case in Ezek. 20:44 may be understood as the passive version of Zeph 3:7. While the above cited part of Zeph 3:7 uses שחית in the transitive H-stem with the human deeds as its object, Ezek 20:44 has that abstract noun (“deed”) as the conceptual subject of the N-stem attributive participle שחית: “according to your corrupted deeds (כעלילותיכם הנשחתות).” Though the cases are few, the three out of four heightens the possibility that the N-stem שחית with ארץ refers to the physical destruction of the earth in Gen 6:11, 12, if ארץ here has a concrete reference.

The noun ארץ, the subject of the N-stem שחית, is multivalent. Exod 8:20b (J) is especially comparable to the report that the land was damaged in Gen 6:11, 12:<sup>16</sup>

Exod 8:20b ובכל ארץ מצרים תשחת הארץ מפני הערב

In all the territory of Egypt, *the land was ruined* because of the swarms

Gen 6:11a ותשחת הארץ לפני האלהים

*The earth was ruined* before God.

<sup>15</sup> Similarly, Ezek 23:11 (ותשחת עגבתה ממנה) is to be understood as a transitive verb with its direct object, rather than an intransitive verb with an adverbial accusative: i.e., “She made her love corrupted more than her (sister).” Pace Wächter, *TDOT* 14:589. Rendering עגבה as the adverbial accusative seems to originate from the negative understanding of the root עגב. Yet the negative connotation may be contextual rather than lexical. While the derivatives of the root עגב appear only in negative contexts, אהב “to love” is also used negatively in the same contexts. Note the Arabic cognate ‘ajiba “to wonder, admire” (and sometimes “to love, like”) is not necessarily negative. Cf. Lane, “‘ajiba,” *Arabic-English Lexicon*, 5:1956.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Dozeman, *Exodus*, 227.

The different translation values, “land” and “earth,” are not significant.<sup>17</sup> The difference is that ארץ in Gen 6:11 extends to the entire planet whereas ארץ is the land within the limit of the Egyptian territory (also ארץ) in Exod 8:20. Both instances of ארץ may mean the ground or potentially include the humans, the animals, and their environment.<sup>18</sup> I prefer the latter since the ruin of ארץ seems to imply the damage to the inhabitants as well as to their environment. The divine flood destroyed not only the earth itself but also its inhabitants. The deity said that the flood destroyed every flesh (Gen 6:13, 17; 9:15), while he also said that it destroyed the land/earth itself as well. Gen 6:13b unmistakably says: “And behold! I am going to destroy *them with the earth* (מבול לשחת את הארץ).<sup>19</sup> “The flood to destroy every flesh (כל בשר)” in Gen 9:15 (cf. Gen 6:17) is interchangeable with “the flood to destroy the earth (מבול לשחת הארץ)” in Gen 9:11. The earth in Gen 6:11 and 9:11 is not just a metonym for its inhabitants, however.<sup>20</sup> The word ארץ is sometimes used for the ground or the environment as such that is distinguished from the inhabitants of the earth as in Gen 9:17: “every flesh that is *on earth* (כל בשר אשר על (הארץ).” As is indicated by the fact that P’s flood was not so much a heavy rainfall as J’s account describes, P’s flood was a cosmic upset that the springs of the great (primeval) ocean under the ground were split and torn apart (בק"ע) and the windows of the heavens were opened (פת"ח) in

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<sup>17</sup> The various meanings of ארץ are well-known: among others, “(cosmological) earth,” “ground,” “territory,” and “underworld.” Even within P’s flood account, the instances of ארץ have different connotations. Cf. Magnus Ottosson, “ארץ, ’erets,” *TDOT* 1:393–405; H. H. Schmid “ארץ, ’eres earth, land,” *TLOT* 1:172–179.

<sup>18</sup> Schmid, *TLOT* 1:175. “Ecosystem” could be an umbrella label for this subsumption. Yet I avoided using it in order not to confuse this ancient usage with the modern ecological concern. The “world” might be close enough for this nuance of ארץ.

<sup>19</sup> Some scholars prefer to emend the text for a couple of reasons: e.g., Gunkel, *Genesis*, 143–144 Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 417; already from the ancient versions such as LXX and the Samaritan Targum. Yet this is not necessary: see Cassuto, *Genesis*, 2:57–58; Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 279n2; Harland, *Value*, 28; Seebass, *Genesis I*, 204; Gertz, *Gen 1–11*, 218n2.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Ottosson, *TDOT* 1:396–397.

Gen 7:11.<sup>21</sup> What the deity caused to be destroyed was not just the animated beings but the entire world including them.

Likewise, while the meaning of *כל בשר את דרכו* in 6:12b is not unequivocal, the physical understanding of the clause is as much plausible as the moral, behavioral interpretation, if not more. Having said that, it may not be necessary to sharply separate the physical, concrete sense from the figurative, abstract sense as I argued in chapter three against the strict dichotomy between the spirit and the matter in the Hebrew Bible. They may be two sides of the same coin.<sup>22</sup> The earth was ruined when the deity saw it. This not only implies that the created order of the world was broken but also expresses the disfigurement of the earth in some sense. And it was the action of every flesh that caused this state, expressed with the H-stem *שח"ת*; each one's destruction of their road resulted from their corruption of their life style/conduct; the causal link between the earthly state and human deeds is most explicit in Gen 6:12. The question is, then, how the corruption of the way of every flesh is related to the physically damaged state of their road and the earth. We have to look for another clue in the text.

### 5.1.2 חמס

Gen 6:11–13 is somewhat redundant both lexically and semantically; it repeats words in different forms and refers to the same situation with different descriptions.<sup>23</sup> This might be the case with the two causal clauses in Gen 6:12b and 6:13aβ. The violence (*חמס*) that filled the world in Gen 6:13aβ is the destructive deeds that every flesh was doing in Gen 6:12b.

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<sup>21</sup> Note that the words related to the rainfall (*גשם, מט"ר*) belong to J and do not appear in P's flood account.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Harland, *Value*, 30: "to act corruptly and destroy are one concept in Hebrew thought." Likewise, regarding *דרכו*, Koch argues that "the distinction between a literal and a figurative use of *derekh* is due to a prior judgment based on modern Western languages, in which we do not view life primarily as a coherent movement," though useful for our understanding, in Koch, *TDOT* 3:271.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 414–415.

The noun חַמָּס as well as its verbal root is also multivalent and used in a few different contexts.<sup>24</sup> It is commonly translated as “violence” and the concept covers various types of violence in Hebrew as well as in English. The violence may be social and hierarchical: done by the noble against the lowly, by the rich against the poor, and by the strong against the weak. In this vein, it may occur in international relations. The mode of violence may be bodily assault, which lead to murder in its severity: e.g., Gen 49:5–7; Judg 9:24. Yet there are other modes of violence, including economic oppression (e.g., Jer 22:3; Ezek 45:9; Amos 3:10), or a false legal witness/accusation (e.g., Exod 23:1; Deut 19:16; Ps 35:11), among others. This wide range of meanings led Stoebe and Cassuto to conclude that חַמָּס is “an encompassing term for sin per se,” i.e., “generally anything that is not righteous.”<sup>25</sup> While this general understanding is supported by textual evidence, it is to be noted that the meaning in a certain attestation can still be specified from the context, as it is demonstrated by their own analyses of various attestations of חַמָּס. Gunkel is probably right for Gen 6:11–13 to say that “Gen 9:2ff. shows the specific sins the source available to P had in mind.”<sup>26</sup> Namely, what the deity repairs after the flood may well be identified as the problem of the antediluvian world. The friendly human-animal relationship has changed and is no longer. The animals now have fear and terror of humankind (Gen 9:2). Eating meat was now allowed to humans as the vegetables, along with the important restrictions (Gen 9:3); they were not supposed to eat meat with the blood, which is the life (Gen 9:4). The humans and animals were now commanded not to take human life because the human value lies in their resemblance to the image of God (Gen 9:5–6).

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<sup>24</sup> See useful analyses in H. Haag, “חַמָּס *chāmās*,” *TDOT* 4:478–487; H. J. Stoebe, “חַמָּס *hāmās* violence,” *TLOT* 1:437–439; Cassuto, *Genesis*, 2:51–53; Harland

<sup>25</sup> Stoebe, *TLOT* 1:439 and Cassuto, *Genesis*, 2:52, respectively.

<sup>26</sup> Gunkel, *Genesis*, 143. Similarly, Schwartz, “Flood,” 152–154 (esp. 153–154). Cf. Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 416.

The assumption is that the opposite of the above repair was the antediluvian state of the earth, which stirred the deity to bring the flood. Previously, both humans and animals had been only allowed to consume a vegetarian diet, while different kinds of plants were assigned to the humans and animals respectively (Gen 1:29–30). Yet humans and animals became bloodthirsty, killing one another: humans against humans, animals against humans, humans against animals, and animals against animals.<sup>27</sup> This was the nature of the violence filling the earth and the corruption done by every flesh. It may have been related to the meat-eating in light of the fact that humans were allowed to eat meat after the flood (Gen 9:3–4). Also, human lust for blood seems to have gone beyond eating animal flesh because murder does not seem to have been related to cannibalism. But the issue of humans killing humans was only briefly mentioned in Gen 9:5b and developed no more than animals killing humans in Gen 9:2 and 9:5, if not less. Considering the divine speech and action in creation but also the subsequent violence and its correction by the deity, the problem of *חַמַּס* before the flood was taking life of others against the divine order of creation.

### 5.1.3 Violence and the Deity’s Moral Value

The divine correction of antediluvian violence further discloses the most important value of the deity: namely, the deity’s care for human life. Gen 9:2–6 makes it explicit that the most vicious point of creatures’ violence was the bloodshed of human life. It is worth noting that even the animals are still accountable for *killing humans* (Gen 9:5aβ, cf. 9:2) even in the postdiluvian time. The animals had been held accountable for their violence before the flood in light of their

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<sup>27</sup> Schwartz, “Flood,” 154. Cf. Jeffrey Stackert, “How the Priestly Sabbaths Work: Innovation in Pentateuchal Priestly Ritual,” in *Ritual Innovation in the Hebrew Bible and Early Judaism, Ritual Innovation in the Hebrew Bible and Early Judaism*, BZAW 468 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2016), 79–111, esp. 83; Stackert, “Political Allegory,” 213.



destruction and their involvement in the perpetual promise (ברית עולם, e.g., Gen 9:16) of the deity, as noted above.<sup>28</sup> Yet killing and eating other animals by some animals was neither condemned nor approved explicitly as the human consumption of the animals after the flood. The silence may imply divine concession of animals eating animals. The animals were not held morally accountable as much as they were before the flood, similar to how the deity lowered his standard for humans. But the animals' accountability is not of primary interest to anthropocentric P. The sanction of the blood consumption was only given to humans. The deity decided to send external feelings (fear and terror) to fall upon the animals in order to protect human life. This means that the deity did not have optimism for them that he still had for humans. Later, P no longer shows interest in the animals' behavior; the Priestly law does not require any responsibility of the animals. Even so, what the deity could not concede was human life. The most important issue for anthropocentric P was killing humans, either by fellow humans or other animals. The most cherished value for the Priestly deity is human life even after his compromise and concession to allow for taking other animals' lives for food (see below).

What is ironic, as P. J. Harland points out, is the fact that the very deity who values the well-being of creatures within the intended creation order and, especially, human life destroys the life of the entire terrestrial and aerial animals except for, literally, a couple of each species and four human couples.<sup>29</sup> Did the author create a self-contradictory, capricious character of the deity? Or is the narrator unreliable that he betrays the narrative's norm?<sup>30</sup> While admitting the difficulty of finding satisfactory answers, Harland offers three suggestions.<sup>31</sup> First, the deity is sovereign and has the right to kill, which the creatures do not have. Even so, the divine killing is

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<sup>28</sup> For the translation of ברית, see Stackert, "Distinguishing," 382.

<sup>29</sup> Harland, *Value*, 212.

<sup>30</sup> Booth, *Rhetoric*, 155–159 (esp. 158–159).

<sup>31</sup> Harland, *Value*, 212–213.

not arbitrary because he distinguishes the righteous and the wicked. Second, the values such as order, peace, and justice can be upheld only when the deity rectifies and coerces humans. Third, the deity did not rejoice in killing humans. On the contrary, the divine mercy and patience overrode the judgement in the story. There is at least one problem in Harland's apologies to take them as such for the present study of the Priestly history. He draws his evidence from the harmonized reading of both J's and P's accounts of the flood. The distinction between good and evil by the deity is J's. P does not use J's moral vocabulary such as righteousness (צדק) and evil (רע) in Gen 6:5, 9aβ.<sup>32</sup> The root תמ"ם for moral blamelessness in 6:9aβ (J) could be used in P as in Gen 17:1 but is not present here.<sup>33</sup> It is because P's narrator was concerned with describing the behaviors of the creatures, rather than offering the definitive assessment of the internal, moral state of the human mind as J does in Gen 6:5, 9aβ. By this behavioral description, P made the human immorality more concrete and vivid than J's abstract qualifications.

Nevertheless, Harland's suggestions are on the right track. Since he mentions them only briefly in his concluding chapter, it may be worth elaborating on his idea from the Priestly perspective. Above all, the destruction of humanity and their world does not negate the deity's (also the narrator's and the implied author's) value of human life. It is to be noted that the value of human life and the creation order—at least partly, in that the hierarchy between humans and animals was bolstered by the fear and terror of humanity upon the animals and confirmed by the deity's injunction against killing humans—survived the revision of the standard of world order and peace. Realizing that humans and animals have a propensity toward violence and that it cannot be suppressed completely, the deity made two revisions for the original cosmic order. First, he allowed slaughter for meat consumption as a legitimate vent to the violent impulse of

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<sup>32</sup> Schwartz, "Flood," 147–148.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Schipper and Stackert, "Blemishes," 470.

humans.<sup>34</sup> He added, secondly, the fear and terror of humanity upon the animals in Gen 9:2. This was to bolster the hierarchy between humanity and the animals—neither among humans nor among animals—in order that the animals might not counter the set cosmic order and take human life. In spite of these lenient changes, depriving human life was still strictly banned for both animals and humans. With these two solutions, the deity’s value of human life and cosmic peace could be maintained, less ideally but more realistically. To this extent, one may say that the Priestly deity is consistent, sovereign, and merciful (to humanity) without resorting to the combined text.

The question still remains: Why did the deity who values human life and prefers the world he created have to be so destructive? Could he not just decree the new standard to humanity and the animals without the flood? I would suggest three reasons. First of all, a punishment was needed in the Priestly world order. In the Hebrew Bible, *חַטָּא* “as social crime, unjust judgment, and above all bloodguilt is directed ultimately against Yahweh and provokes his judgment” (e.g., Obd 1:10; Mich 6:12–15).<sup>35</sup> This is more vividly and dramatically presented in P. It must be noted that human dignity is not an isolated, self-standing value; it is a part of the broader value system of P—that is, the cosmic order and peace. The deity created the order of the world and only by this order could the world operate properly and peacefully. As argued in Chapter Two, humans are valuable because they were made according to the image of God. Their bodily resemblance is a basis for their royal function over the world. The deity delegated this order to humans as an emperor does to vassals. If a vassal does not maintain the order, the emperor intervenes, which is, in turn, his responsibility; for he is ultimately responsible for maintaining the peace and securing the well-being of the world as much as he likes what he

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<sup>34</sup> Schwartz, “Flood,” 153–154.

<sup>35</sup> Haag, *TDOT* 4:485.

created (e.g., Gen 1:31). If the failure to take this responsibility was an intentional rebellion, the vassal and his people would be subdued and punished by the emperor. Humans killing each other and animals killing humans (more than animals killing other animals) is analogous to the rebellious vassal case. They were willing to break the cosmic order, which must be considered a rebellion against the deity. This punitive aspect of the flood against the rebels also corresponds well to the divine reaction to the rebellions in the so-called murmuring narratives, which were mentioned in the previous chapter. There also, the regal deity did not bear his dignity being hurt.

Compare the deity's recognition and surprise of the contrastive states between the initial creation and the corrupted earth:

		טוב מאד	והנה	את כל אשר עשה	וירא אלהים	Gen 1:31a
		נשחתה	והנה	את הארץ	וירא אלהים	Gen 6:12a
Gen 1:31a	God saw	all that he made.	And behold,	it was	<i>very good.</i>	
Gen 6:12a	God saw	the world.	And behold,	it was	<i>ruined.</i>	

The two (half-)verses correspond to each other syntactically and semantically.<sup>36</sup> This parallelism reveals that what the creatures did was a complete reversal of the cosmic order. Though deviating from the verbatim repetitions, “all that he made (כל אשר עשה)” corresponds exactly to “the world (הארץ).” The punch line is the antithesis of “very good (טוב מאד)” and “ruined (נשחתה).” This contrast is emphasized by הנה, conventionally translated as “behold” or “look.” Pointing out the ambiguity of the emphatic function of הנה, Kawashima specifies that הנה expresses the consciousness of the subject as a presentative, functioning as an interjection at the

<sup>36</sup> This comparison was already noticed by many commentators: among others, Gunkel, *Genesis*, 143; Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 416; Hamilton, *Genesis Chapters 1–17*, 278; Seebass, *Genesis I*, 210; Gertz, *Genesis*, 247.

same time.<sup>37</sup> If this is correct, while *והנה* may imply the divine joy for the (subjectively) perfect cosmic condition in Gen 1:31a, it may imply the deity's shock for its absolute reversal in Gen 6:12a. The sin was a tit for tat and so was the punishment. The deity blessed, if not commanded, the life of the animals and especially of the humans to fill (*מל"א*) the earth in Gen 1:22, 28. Yet they filled (*מל"א*) the earth with violence (*חמס*).<sup>38</sup> In other words, they rebelled against the deity's life-producing actions (i.e., his creation work) by their life-reducing actions.<sup>39</sup> This was an astonishment to the deity who thought of humans as his replica in character and action as well as in appearance. Thus, the divine flood destroyed (*שח"ת*) those who destroyed (*שח"ת*) the (value of) the world with violence (*חמס*). The parallelism, repetitions, and wordplay suggest that the flood was figurative, poetic justice from God, the ultimate guarantor of the proper cosmic order.<sup>40</sup>

Secondly, the flood was a means to prevent the antediluvian violent state of the earth from being repeated. If the earthly state that the violence brought about was intolerable, the simplest option for the deity might have been eliminating the cause.<sup>41</sup> Then, why would the deity leave Noah and his family at all? One may say that Noah, who walked with the deity, was not guilty of the corrupted world and God of justice could not have destroyed the righteous with the

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<sup>37</sup> Robert S. Kawashima, *Biblical Narrative and the Death of the Rhapsode*, ISBL (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), 45–58 (esp. 56) and 77–123 (esp. 86–90). If Kawashima is right, Gen 1:31a and Gen 6:12a might be rare instances that refer to the internal, psychological state of a character in P. That said, this is still appropriate for P's narrative style, which is more interested in the description of the outward appearance and action. As elsewhere, *והנה* in Gen 1:31a and 6:12a does not define or describe directly the internal state of the deity. It only stresses the subjective perspective of the perception, compared to the mere third person report. Compare Gen 1:31a with the more typical refrain in Gen 1 that reports the fact of the divine perception objectively: "God saw that it was good (*וירא אלהים כי טוב*)."<sup>38</sup> E.g., Gen. 1:(4), 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31. The nuance of the subjective consciousness, such as joy or surprise, is only contextually inferred.

<sup>38</sup> Gertz, *Genesis*, 247.

<sup>39</sup> Chavel, *Oracular Law*, 73.

<sup>40</sup> For the sense of poetic justice that I have in mind, see the use of the expression in Chavel, *Oracular Law*, 76–77 and 76n196.

<sup>41</sup> The large-scale elimination of the cause was an option abandoned after the flood as it is known from the divine promise in Gen 9:8–17 and the ritual law that deals with the contamination of the sanctuary (esp. Lev 1–16).

wicked, as might have been the case in J.<sup>42</sup> Yet it was the deity's plan from the beginning that he would restart the world with Noah and his family in P. Saving Noah in P was not an ad hoc decision or an accident as that in J or saving Atrahasis in a Mesopotamian flood narrative.<sup>43</sup> Why could he not expect the violent state to be repeated with Noah's descendants when they filled the earth again (cf. Gen 9:7), even though he knew the human violent impulse is not completely removable and, thus, lowered his standard to allow meat consumption? The answer may be inferred from the deity's general optimism in P that humans would obey his commands.<sup>44</sup> This is why he was surprised when it turned out otherwise. Even though the previous generation disobeyed him to his surprise, his "positive anthropology" might have operated here: the offspring of *Noah* who was not in accompany with his generation would do better with the *lowered standard*.

Thirdly, Tikva Frymer-Kensky proposes an interesting possibility that the deity might have had to remove the pollution that the violence brought to the earth. She argues: "The Flood is not primarily an agency of punishment (although to be drowned is hardly a pleasant reward), but a means of getting rid of a thoroughly polluted world and starting again with a clean, well washed one."<sup>45</sup> Viewing the flood as purification does not have to exclude the view of the flood as punishment as I argued above that the divine punishment is a perfect fit in P's worldview. The

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<sup>42</sup> Schwartz, "Flood," 150 points out that it is J's theme that the righteous cannot be punished together with the wicked (cf. Gen 18:23).

<sup>43</sup> Atrahasis's survival was Enki's encroachment on the divine counsel's (at least Enlil's) scheme (cf. W. Lambert and Millard, *Atra-ḥasis*, 100–101, III.vi:5–13).

<sup>44</sup> For P's "positive anthropology," see Stackert, "Darkness," 671–674 and the other references he cites in 671n43.

<sup>45</sup> Tikva Frymer-Kensky, "The Atrahasis Epic and Its Significance for Our Understanding of Genesis 1-9," *Biblical Archaeologist* 40.4 (1977): 147–155, esp. 153. See also, Tikva Frymer-Kensky, "Pollution, Purification, and Purgation in Biblical Israel," in *The Word of the Lord Shall Go Forth: Essays in Honor of David Noel Freedman in Celebration of His Sixtieth Birthday*, eds. Carol L. Meyers and M. O'Connor (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1983), 399–414, esp. 406–412.

question is whether one can make a connection between the flood and the purification. Her argument is based on her judgment of the biblical worldview:

The idea of the pollution of the earth is not a vague metaphor to indicate moral wrongdoing. On the contrary, in the biblical worldview, the murders before the flood contaminated the land and created a state of physical pollution which had to be eradicated by physical means (the flood). Although this concept may seem strange to us, it is not surprising to find it here in the cosmology of Israel, for Israel clearly believed that moral wrongdoings defile physically. This is explicitly stated with three sins—murder, idolatry, and sexual abominations.<sup>46</sup>

If one reads back the later Priestly purification into the flood narrative, Frymer-Kensky's idea may be further elaborated and defended from a slightly different perspective. Although blood is not considered to be a typical impurity that is contagious to other objects and people, it is still a sort of pollutant, at least conceptually. Both blood and sins are sometimes described as stains.

The blood—literally, life juice (נצח)—causes stains on garments as the grape juice from the trodden winepress (Isa 63:3). The bloodstains on the garments or on the body should be washed (e.g., Isa 1:15–16; 4:4; 9:4; 59:3). As Joseph Lam observed, not only the blood but also the sins in general, one of which is murder of course, are described to cause stains (Jer 2:22–23; Jer 33:8; Job 33:9).<sup>47</sup> While Lam may be right that many of these biblical references to sin as a stain seems to be better understood as metaphorical,<sup>48</sup> it does not have to be so in the world of P's narrative. In P, (the concomitants of) sins and physical impurities have real material forces on the sancta in the Tent of Meeting; the latter does on the human body as well. P requires some duration or ablution to remove the impurities on the human body and also the purification

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<sup>46</sup> Frymer-Kensky, "Atrahasis," 154.

<sup>47</sup> Joseph Lam, *Patterns of Sin in the Hebrew Bible: Metaphor, Culture, and the Making of a Religious Concept* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 179–206 (esp. 181–187).

<sup>48</sup> Lam, *Patterns of Sin*, 179–206.

offering (חטאת) to release, eradicate, and move away (on the Day of Atonement) both impurities and sins from the Tent.<sup>49</sup>

In this vein, I may use some imagination to fill the narrative gap. It may be said that the flood was necessary to remove the taints on earth. As noted above, the violence in Gen 6:11 and 6:13 turns out to mean bloodshed in light of Gen 9:4–6.<sup>50</sup> As widely acknowledged, the flood was not just a destruction but “uncreation” and reset.<sup>51</sup> The blessing for life and productivity was revoked and reversed to start over again. The core mode of the Priestly creation—separation and classification—was annulled; the boundary between heaven and earth and that between the earth and the primordial under-waters were torn down; the earth and the waters were mixed again.<sup>52</sup> In this way, שחית ארץ/דרך may be understood tangibly and materially in Gen 6:11–12 as I suggested. This may possibly mean that the creatures physically ruined anywhere they went (דרך) and collectively covered the entire world with bloodstains.<sup>53</sup> In light of Gen 4:11 (J) and Isa 26:21 in which the earth is thought to contain blood shed by murder, the earth perhaps absorbed and contained it to the extent that it could not be easily washed by usual means. In addition, the corpses of humans (Num 6:6–7) and the carcasses of animals (Lev 11), produce

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<sup>49</sup> Cf. Jacob Milgrom, “Israel’s Sanctuary: The Priestly ‘Picture of Dorian Gray,’” *Revue Biblique* 83.3 (1976): 390–399; Baruch J. Schwartz, “The Bearing of Sin in the Priestly Literature,” in *Pomegranates and Golden Bells: Studies in Biblical, Jewish, and Near Eastern Ritual, Law, and Literature in Honor of Jacob Milgrom*, eds. David P. Wright, David Noel Freedman, and Avi Hurvitz, (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1995), 3–21. For different understandings, see Hyam Maccoby, *Ritual and Morality: The Ritual Purity System and Its Place in Judaism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Roy E. Gane, *Cult and Character: Purification Offerings, Day of Atonement, and Theodicy* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2005); Roy E. Gane, “Privative Preposition מן in Purification Offering Pericopes and the Changing Face of ‘Dorian Gray,’” *JBL* 127.2 (2008): 209–222; Hundley, *Keeping Heaven*, 137.

<sup>50</sup> The conceptual relation between violence (חמס) and blood is also found in their parallel appearances throughout the Hebrew Bible: e.g., Judg 9:24; Isa 59:3aa, 6bβ; Jer 51:35; Ezek 7:23; Joel 4:19; Hab 2:8, 17; Ps 72:14.

<sup>51</sup> Harland, *Value*, 102–106. Cf. Sarna, *Genesis*, 55; Hamilton, *Genesis Chapters 1–17*, 291.

<sup>52</sup> Harland, *Value*, 101–102.

<sup>53</sup> I found at least one case that שחית is interchangeable with the impure state (טמא): compare כל עלילותיכם אשר בם נטמאתם “all your deed with which you defiled yourselves” in Ezek 20:43 and עלילותיכם הנשחתות “your corrupted deeds” in 20:44. Prov 25:26 may be added potentially if מקור משחת “a ruined source of water” in parallel with מעין נרפש “a muddied spring” does not imply a destroyed well to which the surrounding mud slipped into the water, but implies a dirty water source.



impurities in the Priestly imagined world, proleptically speaking.<sup>54</sup> Even one corpse generates impurities that require a seven-day purification process with a specially composed sanitizer in Num 19.<sup>55</sup> The numerous slain bodies might have produced a great amount of the impurities, which could not be purged by the normal means such as the progress of time and ablution of the usual rainfalls. Yet the cosmic flood could have wiped away the thick and widespread bloodstains that might have soaked the earth and impurities that the corpses and the carcasses produced. The heavy laundry demands a heavy-duty washing machine.

Even so, I may have to admit that this is not explicit in this narrative. The narrative does not reveal any anticipation of the law. The bloodstain of the murder is not something that P picks up and develops elsewhere. If one tries to find the texts that connect the murder and the pollution of the earth directly and explicitly, Frymer-Kensky's evidence may turn out to be tenuous. This connection is not as frequent in the Hebrew Bible as she insists. The only biblical text supporting this is Num 35:33–34, which is later than P.<sup>56</sup> Other than this, her evidence of the land pollution is not from the bloodshed but from sexual sins and idolatry (e.g., Lev 18:24–30; Ezek 36:18). There is no intimation that the latter two sins contributed somehow to bringing about the flood in P's flood narrative. Of the three sins that Frymer-Kensky lists, bloodshed is not a usual cause of land pollution (א"טמ, ה"ג).<sup>57</sup> Even though bloodshed is mentioned along with idolatry as the cause of the defilement in some biblical texts, what defiles is not the murder or the blood from it

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<sup>54</sup> Impurities from various origins will appear when the deity legislates regulations about them. They must have been generated from the beginning of the world. They were of no great importance with the presumed moderate amount when the deity dwelled from afar in heaven.

<sup>55</sup> The original layer was edited by a later hand. For the stratification of the chapter between P and H, see Knohl, *Sanctuary*, 92–94. This division is not unanimous: cf. Milgrom, *Numbers*, 437–443, who considers Num 19:21b–22 to be late.

<sup>56</sup> For a source description of Num 35:33–34, see Stackert, *Rewriting*, 76–77.

<sup>57</sup> For fuller studies on these three sins in P and elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible, see Adolf Büchler, *Studies in Sin and Atonement in the Rabbinic Literature of the First Century*, Jew's College Publication 11 (London: Oxford University Press, 1928), 212–269 (esp. 212–218); Jonathan Klawans, *Impurity and Sin in Ancient Judaism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), esp. 21–42.

but idolatry (e.g., Ezek 22:3, 4; 36:18). In Ps 106:38, the innocent (human) blood poured on the ground indeed defiles the land, and yet it is not any murder but one that is connected with the child sacrifice to the Canaanite idols. The blood that is shed by murder, unlike that of a woman on her period or after parturition, rarely causes impurities (e.g., חג"ף, טמ"א) or requires purification rites (e.g., כב"ס, רה"ץ, טה"ר) in P and elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible; it rather contracts guilt and its main metaphor is related to the concepts such as accounting and revenge (e.g., בק"ש, נק"ה, שו"ב, גא"ל). Deut 21:7–8, one of her few remaining proof texts, may not be as inambiguous as she thinks. Compared to P, D may be said to be more civilly and politically oriented and describe a more realistic world.<sup>58</sup> Deut 21:7–8 seems to deal, somewhat abstractly and symbolically, with the fear of the deity revenging the dead on the land for the bloodguilt, rather than with the pollution of the land by the blood and its literal cleansing by the ritual oration and action.<sup>59</sup> Therefore, I would leave the third reason as possible, but it is less likely than the previous two reasons.

Whether or not one includes the third reason, the other two establish a sufficient basis, I think, to argue that the deity did not contradict his character nor deny his value even as he destroyed humanity and the world with the flood. He chose a handy remedy, i.e., destroying the comprehensively broken world to start over with the reset world. So as to preserve the cosmic peace, he had to punish the uncontrolled rebels as kings. Also, in order to prevent the potential recurrence of the planet-scale contamination, he wanted to remove these ill-natured creatures, i.e., the cause of the pollution.<sup>60</sup> Rather consistent was he by flooding the humans and the earth.

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<sup>58</sup> Cf. Weinfeld, *Deuteronomie School*, esp. 233–243. By no means does this imply that D is completely secular, as Levinson correctly points out: see Levinson, *Deuteronomy and the Hermeneutics*, esp. 144 and *passim*.

<sup>59</sup> Pace Frymer-Kensky, "Atrahasis," 154. For the symbolic nature of this ritual, see Weinfeld, *Deuteronomie School*, 210–211; S. R. Driver, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Deuteronomy*, 3rd ed., ICC (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1902), 241–244 (esp. 243),

<sup>60</sup> Removing the cause was a means that was no longer necessary and, so, abandoned afterwards because of the divine optimism on Noah's descendants as well as because of his promise (ברית) in Gen 9.

With this reading, the divine character in the primeval narrative is further consistent with his bodily senses, which are diffused in ritual instructions as I argued in the previous chapter. The world was launched perfectly according to the divine nature and preference in the beginning. The properly working world did not mean a world without any impurities or even any wrongdoings because “proper” here is reckoned from the perspective that the deity is distant enough that a certain amount of impurity (which also dissolves over time) cannot affect him. The deity is likely to have distanced himself from the world as soon as he completed and ceased from his creation work, probably dwelling in heaven (Gen 2:1–3). Humanity as well as the animals increased over a thousand and a few hundred years before the flood.<sup>61</sup> It is likely that the deity was not anxious about the management of the earth and inattentive to it possibly except for rare occasions.<sup>62</sup> Gen 6:12 suggests that the deity looked at the earth for the first time in a long time and was surprised by its corrupted state, which he did not expect. It seems that he did not know what had been going on in the world due to his detachedness, both physical and psychological. Then, how could he have realized the prevalent violence? The most explicit factor that the text provides is his eyesight. From afar, he saw the earth was ruined. Some other elements may have attracted his attention in light of the broader Priestly plot. The deity had super-human vision that allowed him to see much better and much farther than human vision. He was able to see the adversity of the Israelites from afar when he was willing to look in Exod 2:25. The divine knowledge from the visual perception in Exod 2:25 is also implicated in Gen 6:12. Also, the blood is the material that draws the divine attention; note the blood was specifically chosen by

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<sup>61</sup> According to the Masoretic text, the flood began 1656 years after creation. LXX and the Samaritan Pentateuch present related but different numbers.

<sup>62</sup> Gen 5:21–24 is the only reference to the deity in the antediluvian human history between Adam and Noah. Gen 5:29 is probably J, if not the compiler or the post-compiler: cf. Baden, *Composition*, 68, 216.

the deity to be a cognitive sign for identification in Exod 12:13.<sup>63</sup> Both the substance and its extraordinary amount must have attracted his vision.

Though not as explicit as the divine vision, one may infer that the divine audition and olfaction have drawn his attention as well. In a biblical understanding, the auditory aspect of violence (סמך) makes the deity realize the occurrence of violence on earth probably from his abode in heaven. The violence gives rise to uproar: the noise of war, beating, killing, and screaming. It often generates a cry by the oppressed to the deity (e.g., Hab 1:2; Jer 20:18; Job 19:7).<sup>64</sup> Violence is something heard and irritates the divine auditory sense (e.g., Isa 60:18; Jer 6:7). P's implied author who shows great interest in the divine senses might well have this aspect in mind for its violence. This inference is supported by the comparison with the Mesopotamian parallel, which is likely to have influenced the Priestly flood account as I argued in chapter two. The noise (*rigmu*) and uproar (*hubūru*) that were generated by the increased human population disturbed the sleep (i.e., the rest) of Enlil, one of the highest deities who dwells on earth. Failing to eliminate the population by the previous means, Enlil with the other deities brought the flood on the earth. Enki, another of the three highest deities, delivered Atrahasis by giving him instructions to make a boat and survive.<sup>65</sup> Even from a distance, the Priestly deity, who dwelt in heaven unlike Enlil, must have been distressed by the noise from the human turmoil. It is both

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<sup>63</sup> Michael V. Fox, "Sign of the Covenant: Circumcision in the Light of the Priestly 'ôl Etiologies," *Revue Biblique* 81.4 (1974): 557–596, esp. 574–575; see especially "Remarks (2)."

<sup>64</sup> Whether the cry—"violence!"—reveals a legal tone is less relevant for my argument. Even if they do invoke a divine trial, it is a desperate shout and prayer to the deity who does not seem to be nearby. Note the verbs of the cry-out in the cited texts: קר"א, צע"ק, זע"ק, and שר"ע.

<sup>65</sup> W. Lambert and Millard, *Atra-ḥasīs*, 66–105 (I.vii:352–IV.viii:18), and also 8–13 for a summary of the story. For other helpful summaries and discussions on Atrahasis (some in relation to the biblical parallels), see Frymer-Kensky, "Atrahasis," 147–155; Anne Draffkorn Kilmer, "The Mesopotamian Concept of Overpopulation and Its Solution as Reflected in the Mythology," *Orientalia* 41.2 (1972): 160–177; Tigay, "Image of God," 169–182; Moran, "Atrahasis," 51–61; William L. Moran, "Some Considerations of Form and Interpretation in Atrahasis," in *Language, Literature, and History: Philological and Historical Studies Presented to Erica Reiner*, American Oriental Series 67 (New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1987), 245–255. More recently, Helge S. Kvanvig, *Primeval History: Babylonian, Biblical, and Enochic: An Intertextual Reading*, JSJSup 149 (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 13–316.

because he has super-human hearing and because the human population that has been greatly increased over approximately one and half thousand years (cf. Gen 5) made a phenomenal clamor. P's antediluvian violence must have entailed this auditory component.<sup>66</sup> Remember the cry of the Israelites (זע"ק, שר"א) stimulated the divine hearing (שמ"ע) which, in turn, drew the deity's attention (זכ"ר) to look at (רא"ה) in Exod 2:23b–25; the antediluvian violence must have been even louder. The deity's vision and audition are closely related in P.

An additional sensory possibility that might have drawn the divine attention to the earth is the stench of the spoiled earth. Its evidence is admittedly less explicit in the Priestly flood narrative and somewhat more speculative without external biblical and extrabiblical parallels, compared to the vision and audition. That said, one may empirically presume that there is a stench where there are dead bodies, which the authors of the Hebrew Bible share, of course. Both corpses (e.g., Isa 34:3; Amos 4:10) and carcasses (e.g., Exod 7:18, 21; 8:10) produce an odor.<sup>67</sup> If, once the population grew, there were uncontrolled violence among humans and animals, one may infer that there must have been a stunning number of corpses. The excessively strong and substantial stench could have reached the deity's heavenly abode and irritated his sense of smell.

The Priestly flood account claims that the sin—specifically, the kind of sin that harms human life and human relationship such as violence—has a cosmic effect. P describes the divine nature and preference not in an abstract manner but in a concrete and physical way with his bodily senses. The cosmos is created and supposed to function according to his nature and preference. Humans were entrusted with the world since the deity created them according to his

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<sup>66</sup> Stackert, "Political Allegory," 213n12.

<sup>67</sup> Joel 2:20 may be added to the dead body of either the human or the animal according to one's understanding of "the northerner (הצפוני)." Some consider it to be locusts: e.g., James L. Crenshaw, *Joel: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 24C (New York: Doubleday, 1995), 150–151; G. W. Ahlström, *Joel and the Temple Cult of Jerusalem*, VTSup 21 (Leiden: Brill, 1971), 32–34. Others regard it as some mythological army: e.g., Wolff, *Joel and Amos*, 62; Willem S. Prinsloo, *The Theology of the Book of Joel*, BZAW 163 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1985), 73–74.

image and expected them to manage it in accord with his nature and preference as it was supposed to be. Yet the humans, along with other creatures, did exactly opposite and reduced the life of both humans and animals. As the action was not abstract, nor was the result. Their life-reducing action produced what disrupted the divine vision, audition, and, possibly, olfaction. The regal deity, the ultimate authority of the universe, perceived what was going on earth through his sensitive anthropomorphic bodily senses and punished the entire world.

Speaking generally, violence and its consequences that deviate from the divine nature and preference is recognized by the deity not so much abstractly and conceptually as physically and materially. The same relationship among the deity, the world, and sin continues in the law. This is why the law is so careful to satisfy best the divine senses. P's obsessiveness to the heedful construction of, the vigilant maintenance of, and the strictly guarded/guided access to the sancta is not because P is fanatically legalistic and ritualistic.<sup>68</sup> It is rather because P presents its moral vision physically and outwardly throughout the Priestly history as much in the law as in the narrative. In the law, the narrative plot that the deity dwells in the midst of the Israelites interweaves divine repose with human peace and well-being. Wrongful actions can damage his earthly abode and cause discomfort for the deity in a physical and material way. The discomfort of the deity is a potential threat to human peace and well-being if the wrong is not corrected and the damage is restored properly and in a timely manner. The ritual law was given as "damage control" necessary to maintain this peace, both on a divine level and a human level, instead of

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<sup>68</sup> Pace Wellhausen, *Prolegomena*, esp. 499–513.

the total destruction of the world.<sup>69</sup> And P does not concern too much about the threat because of its optimism for human obedience.<sup>70</sup>

In the rest of this chapter, I continue to argue that moral sins are not sharply distinguished from ritual sins, and moral matters are within the purview of P's law. Afterwards, I try to demonstrate that this law, given by the deity within a universe that P's implied author carefully modulated, teaches that it is humans' responsibility to maintain both divine and human peace, which is P's moral end. The peace can be easily threatened, physically and not merely conceptually, by various human actions. P's moral idea of responsibility requires counteractions that restore the damage materially. This moral value of responsibility, which is a necessary condition for the Priestly ethical aim at the life of שלום (peace and well-being) has been consistent in the pre-Sinaitic time as discussed in this section as well as in Chapter Two, especially with Gen 1:26–28 and Gen 9:5–6. My analysis in the following section will reveal that the same moral values and ethical vision are consistently underlying the Priestly cult, no matter how it is implicit. I think that the Priestly purification and expiation system best represent this idea.

## 5.2 The Violation of the Law

If it was the violence that irritated the deity in the flood narrative, it is the violation of the divine law that troubles him in the Mosaic time within the Priestly narrative. This is most conspicuous in Lev 4–5, which deals with the purification offering (חטאת) and the reparation

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<sup>69</sup> I borrowed the phrase “damage control” from Hundley, *Keeping Heaven*, 119. Yet I do not share with him the idea of divine otherness and, consequently, the precariousness of P's ritual system. I find no reason to see that neither P's implied author nor narrator nor deity considers the system precarious. With the law, P's world operates well for both deity and humans.

<sup>70</sup> Stackert, “Political Allegory,” esp. 216–223.

offering (אִשָּׁה). Especially notable is the general condition for the purification offering in Lev 4:2: “If anyone sins inadvertently any of the commandments of YHWH that should not be done and does one of them (נפש כי תחטא בשגגה מכל מצות יהוה אשר לא תעשינה ועשה מאחת מהנה).” The problem is that it is not clear what “the commandments of YHWH that should not be done (מצות)” refers to. Feldman observed that not only “the commandments of YHWH (מצות יהוה)” but also the word “commandment (מצוה)” appear here for the first time.<sup>71</sup> The other instances of מצוה outside Lev 4–5 in the Pentateuchal Priestly source may belong to later hands.<sup>72</sup> Though the verb “to command (צוה)” has appeared fairly frequently up until Lev 4, Feldman also observed that the negative commands have been given only a few times in passing.<sup>73</sup> It is less likely that these few cases cover the entire category of the prohibitive commandments. Rather, it may be that “the commandments of YHWH (מצות יהוה)” is not a fixed subset of the law but a generic category that a reader may infer from the Priestly history.<sup>74</sup>

A related debate regarding the (prohibitive) commands is their scope: purely cultic or inclusive of moral commands? Knohl claims that “the formula ‘any of the Lord’s commandments about things not to be done’ (Lev 4:2, 3), refers to a relatively restricted corpus of negative commandments in the cultic-ritual sphere (such as Exod 30:32, 37; Lev 7:15, 19; 11:4–5, 11–20; 12:4).”<sup>75</sup> Milgrom seems to admit that the prohibitive commandments are not civil but only religious. Yet his distinction of “religious” versus “civil” classifies “moral” to

<sup>71</sup> Feldman, *Story of Sacrifice*, 62.

<sup>72</sup> Lev 22:31; 26:3, 14–15; 27:34; Num 15:22, 31, 39–40; 36:13.

<sup>73</sup> Feldman, *Story of Sacrifice*, 62 and 62nn91–92.

<sup>74</sup> Somewhat similarly, Hundley, *Keeping Heaven*, 144; Gerstenberger, *Leviticus*, 52.

<sup>75</sup> Knohl, *Sanctuary*, 138n55 (his parentheses). One may add Lev 1:17; 2:11; 3:17: see Feldman, *Story of Sacrifice*, and 62n92. Whereas these restrictive instances of the *ḥattā’at* offering suggest to Knohl the exclusively cultic concern of P (about Mosaic laws), Marx, “Theology of the Sacrifice,” 115 interprets this restrictiveness, in some sense, in contrast with Knohl: “This provision plainly shows that P cannot be accused of ritualism: only in the case of a transgression of a divine prohibition, and not in the case of a transgression of a divine commandment, and only in very restrictive instances, can a transgression be atoned for by a sacrifice.”



“religious,” not “civil.” While he defines the religious laws to be punishable and “enforceable solely by God” and the civil ones only by the human court, the religious laws are “beyond the bounds of ritual law to include ethics, an area that is also unenforceable in human courts.”<sup>76</sup> So, he claims that ethics and cult are not separable in P as well as in other ancient Near Eastern culture.<sup>77</sup> He supports his claim with a Mesopotamian incantation rite (*šurpu*) that lists cultic and ethical sins together without distinction, as well as mentioning other parallels in Egypt and Hatti.<sup>78</sup> Along with the extra-biblical evidence, he does not circumvent the apparent absence of the moral rulings in P’s law that still needs an explanation. He finds a solution from the circumstances where P refers to the kind of wrongs designated as עון in Lev 5 and 16. For him, עון implies an ethical aspect in P’s law as elsewhere in the Bible.<sup>79</sup>

Knohl opposes that Milgrom misunderstood P’s use of עון. In his view, most of Milgrom’s examples of עון in P (and H) deal with cultic matters.<sup>80</sup> This corresponds well with his dispensational understanding of the Priestly history. According to Knohl, all morality had been revealed to humans universally in the primordial and patriarchal times. The particular revelation for Israel at Sinai and onward was strictly cultic and numinous.<sup>81</sup> Milgrom’s fusion of the cult and ethics occurs not in P but in H’s revised edition according to Knohl.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 230; followed by Gane, *Cult and Character*, 202, 202–203n21; Hieke, *Leviticus 1–15*, 246; Budd, *Leviticus*, 81. See also, Nihan, *Priestly Torah*, 194–195 and Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, 329–330. Though not directly discussing Lev 4:2, Gerstenberger thinks the Priestly atonement offering covers ethical sins (Gerstenberger, *Leviticus*, 57, 67). Milgrom’s tripartite distinction (followed by Hieke) is too intricate. As “civil” and “moral” overlap to some degree in any society, I do not see the sharp separation between moral and civil not only in P but also throughout the Hebrew Bible. Even for heuristic and etic purposes, his separation is irrelevant to the present study since the aspect of the morality in which I am interested is P’s interpersonal concerns.

<sup>77</sup> See Schwartz’s summary of Milgrom’s idea that the ethical sense is “intrinsic to priestly thought per se and that it is characteristic of P as well as H although he admits that the latter substantially intensifies it” (Schwartz, “Introduction,” 9).

<sup>78</sup> Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 21–24, 230.

<sup>79</sup> Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 25. He lists such biblical texts as Gen 4:13; 15:16; 19:15; Exod 20:5; 34:9; Num 14:34.

<sup>80</sup> Knohl, *Sanctuary*, 227–228. Cf. Lev 5:1, 17; Num 5:15, 31; 30:16.

<sup>81</sup> Knohl, *Sanctuary*, 226.

<sup>82</sup> Knohl, *Sanctuary*, esp. 175–180.

While I agree that there is a narrative turning point with Moses, the sharp contrast between pre-Mosaic and Mosaic eras is unfounded. Moral matters were quite important in P's narrative, and it must be still important in its law if the law and the narrative in P make up a coherent literary work. Also, at least one of Knohl's readings of עון did not successfully mitigate Milgrom's. In Num 5:15 and 31, adultery is designated as עון. Knohl argues that adultery was considered in the Hebrew Bible as an affront to the deity, rather than an ethical evil. He cites Ps 51:6 in which David confesses his adultery with Bathsheba as a sin only to the deity.<sup>83</sup> While Knohl may be correct in saying that adultery was considered a religious sin in the Bible, it was also an interpersonal matter judged by secular courts, according to Mesopotamian legal collections and biblical passages.<sup>84</sup> The mention of a witness in Num 5:13 assumes that the ordeal in Num 5:11–31 is an alternative, if not additional, procedure availed when an adultery case cannot be resolved by the usual legal means. If adultery was conceptually a sin against the deity in the Hebrew Bible and other ancient Near Eastern literature and if Num 5:11–31 is P as Knohl acknowledges, it rather supports that P does not distinguish the cultic and the moral sins as sharply as Knohl does. Also, Bruce Wells argue that the phrase “to bear one's iniquity (נשׂא עון)” implies a separate legal liability in addition to the required sacrificial offering in Lev 5:1, and perhaps in Lev 5:17 as well.<sup>85</sup> It seems that עון is rather inclusive of both cultic and moral sins. Thus, Milgrom's reservation concerning Knohl's narrow understanding of the prohibitive

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<sup>83</sup> Knohl, *Sanctuary*, 228.

<sup>84</sup> Raymond Westbrook, “Adultery in Ancient Near Eastern Law,” *Revue Biblique* 97.4 (1990): 542–580; Bruce Wells, *The Law of Testimony in the Pentateuchal Codes*, BZAR 4 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2004), 103–104, 104n65; cf. Milgrom, *Numbers*, 348–350. The theological aspect Knohl points out is also acknowledged in Milgrom, *Numbers*, 348. Milgrom admits that this theological idea had little bearing on the legislation in the ancient Near East except for Israel. Thus, for Milgrom, adultery in Israel is not just a religious sin but a religious *and* moral sin.

<sup>85</sup> Wells, *Law of Testimony*, 73–82.

commandments is understandable: Do the few cultic prohibitions “really warrant the designation ‘all of the Lord’s prohibitive commandments’?”<sup>86</sup>

Milgrom and others must be right that P does not distinguish cultic and moral matters sharply.<sup>87</sup> Yet his evidence from the surrounding cultures cannot be decisive. His conjecture that the moral laws had been previously included in P but later replaced by H’s moral law is not impossible, but it is unprovable by any means.<sup>88</sup> He also links “all the commandments” in Lev 4:2 to a general demand given to Abraham in Gen 17:1 (“walk before me and be blameless” (התהלך לפני והיה תמים)), arguing that the violation of this ethical demand in Gen 17:1 is bound to Abraham’s descendants. Any deviation from the demand, says he, requires the offender to bring a *ḥaṭṭā’* offering.<sup>89</sup> The text never explicitly suggests that the Israelites in the narrative knew and were concerned about this command. Searching for the explicit moral regulations in P is an unfruitful task. The vivid and graphical cultic details on the surface may disguise the moral aspect, but it is certainly there. It is my task in the rest of this chapter to argue that the morality that I argued in this and the previous chapters from the Priestly historical narrative underlies the Priestly law. Since the purification offering and the reparation offering in Lev 4–5 treat sin and guilt, which are more or less moral matters, I will attend to this text, situating it in the broader Priestly cultic system.

### 5.2.1 The Object of the Purification Offering

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<sup>86</sup> Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 21 (his italics); similarly, Milgrom, *Leviticus 23–27*, 2440.

<sup>87</sup> Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 230; Gane, *Cult and Character*, 202, 202–203n21; Gerstenberger, *Leviticus*, 57, 67; Hieke, *Leviticus 1–15*, 246. See also Nobuyoshi Kiuchi, *A Study of Ḥāṭā’ and Ḥaṭṭā’ in Leviticus 4–5*, FAT 2/2 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 30–31; Nihan, *Priestly Torah*, 183–184 (only passingly).

<sup>88</sup> Milgrom, *Leviticus 23–27*, 2443–2444.

<sup>89</sup> *Pace* Milgrom, *Leviticus 23–27*, 2445–2446.

One of the debates on the purification offering is about its object and effect. The traditional rendering of *ḥattā' t* (חטאת) has been “sin offering.” It has been thought that the sin offering effects atonement and forgiveness and redeems the sinner from the sin. This understanding can misrepresent the Priestly use of the *ḥattā' t* sacrifice. It was Milgrom who portrayed and systematically reasoned the Priestly expiation cult, as is well known. He argued that the common translation of *ḥattā' t* as “sin offering” is contextually and morphologically wrong. His argument is supported by the condition that this offering was required. The *ḥattā' t* was offered, for example, when a mother gave birth to her son and when the Nazirite vow was completed (successfully!), which must have nothing to do with sin (neither cultic nor moral).<sup>90</sup> Even the Hebrew designation for the offering *ḥattā' t* has nothing to do with sin grammatically, according to Milgrom. He argued that the noun pattern with the second consonant doubled (*ḥattā' t*) must have been derived from the D-stem, instead of the G-stem (“to err, sin”). The D-stem (*ḥittē'*) means “to cleanse, purge.”<sup>91</sup> Thus, he suggested the designation of the offering *ḥattā' t* should be rendered as “the purification offering,” even grammatically.

The new rendering captures well Milgrom’s understanding of the expiatory mechanism of P. He points out that the חטאת blood was never applied to the sinner directly. Instead, the blood was always used for the sancta<sup>92</sup> in various manners by daubing (נתן), pouring (שפך), tossing (צק), flicking (זרק), or squeezing (מצץ).<sup>93</sup> This means that the *ḥattā' t* is a

<sup>90</sup> Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 253–254.

<sup>91</sup> Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 253. But others allow for a more nuanced meaning, “de-sin,” in the context of Lev 4, while not turning down “to purge, cleanse”: e.g., Baruch A. Levine, *In the Presence of the Lord: A Study of Cult and Some Cultic Terms in Ancient Israel*, SJLA 5 (Leiden: Brill, 1974), 101–102; Gilders, *Blood Ritual*, 29–32; Jay Sklar, *Sin, Impurity, Sacrifice, and Atonement: The Priestly Conceptions*, Hebrew Bible Monographs 2 (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2005), 109–112.

<sup>92</sup> Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 254–256; Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, 332–333; Hieke, *Leviticus 1–15*, 88–92.

<sup>93</sup> The translation values of these Hebrew terms may vary, and the variety sometimes causes confusions for the implied actions. For helpful discussions, see Naphtali S. Meshel, *The “Grammar” of Sacrifice: A Generativist Study of the Israelite Sacrificial System in the Priestly Writings with a “Grammar” of Σ* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 147–153; Gilders, *Blood Ritual*, 25–28.

sacrifice that does not deal with the sinner in a direct manner but with the sancta such as the outer altar, the inner altar, the *pārōket* (פרכת, the veil between the inner room and the outer room) and the *kappōret* (כפרת, the cover of the ark). The D-stem כפ"ר, which has been traditionally related to atonement, means “to purge, cleanse”; it is a synonym of *ḥittē*’ and *tihar* in the context of the *ḥattā’ t* offering.<sup>94</sup> Milgrom made a sharp distinction between sins and impurities in relation to the human body. The *ḥattā’ t* offering only purges the impurities on the sancta, not the impurities or sins on the human body; it is cleaning. The impurity on the person is cleansed by ablution and with the lapse of time. Human (inadvertent) sins are neither cleansed from the humans by ablution nor forgiven by the offering. Spiritual impurity (sin) should be remedied by spiritual cleansing, i.e., remorse.<sup>95</sup>

If the sinner’s wrongful act is not forgiven by the offering, why is the sinner required to offer the *ḥattā’ t*? It is because the consequence of his sin contaminated the sancta, Milgrom argues. He observed the graded power of the sins and impurities—namely, impurities in varying degrees defile different locales of the sanctuary—from Lev 4 and 16. First, an individual’s inadvertent sins or major impurities (those impurities that require the purification offering and at least seven days of withdrawal to be reinstated in the community) defiles the outer altar. Second, the inadvertent sin of the high priest or the entire community defiles the outer room of the sanctuary, especially the inner altar and the veil (פרכת). Third, the ill-willed, rebellious sin penetrates the veil all the way to the divine seat, *kappōret*, the innermost part of the sanctuary.<sup>96</sup>

A person polluted with a major impurity or one having committed either inadvertent or deliberate

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<sup>94</sup> Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 255. But some think that כפ"ר is a supernym that covers the other two words: e.g., N. Kiuchi, *The Purification Offering in the Priestly Literature: Its Meaning and Function*, JSOTSup 56 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1987), 97–99; Gilders, *Blood Ritual*, 28–29, 135–139. See also other discussions about the use of כפ"ר in the context of the *ḥattā’ t* offering in Levine, *In the Presence*, 56–77; more recently, Sklar, *Priestly Conceptions*; Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, 344–346; Hieke, *Leviticus 1–15*, 131–136.

<sup>95</sup> Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 256.

<sup>96</sup> Milgrom, “Israel’s Sanctuary,” 393–394; Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 257–258.

sins defiles the sanctuary from afar even without any direct contact. To explain this non-contact gradation, he supposes the dynamic, aerial quality of the impurity. When a person contracts a major impurity, it generates something like miasma, and the sanctuary, as if it were magnetic, attracts it.<sup>97</sup> Here, unlike his previous distinction between impurities and sins about how they affect a person in different manners and demand different means for removal, he equates the consequences of the two; they both produce pollutants that defile the sancta. Although he understands that the inadvertent offender does not have the need for purification because sins do not defile the sinner physically and are not contagious like impurities,<sup>98</sup> his gradation scheme proposes that sins also generate pollutants that are inclined to stick to the sancta. This eventually requires the purification offering to purge the sancta as does the physical impurities.<sup>99</sup>

This becomes clearer in his understanding of the Day of Atonement rite in Lev 16. This annual event is important for Milgrom to understand the Priestly expiatory system. It includes three peculiar components: namely, the entrance to the inner room of the Tent of Meeting, the confession of sins, and the so-called scapegoat that is sent just outside the camp. The *raison d'être* of this Day of Atonement is to remove rebellious sins (פְּשָׁעִים) that penetrated the inner room, in addition to somehow untreated sins and impurities by the procedures in Lev 4–5 and 11–15. It is the sole day that exclusively allows the high priest to enter and clean the most restricted space in the Tent.

The centrality of the rebellious sins for the entire ritual on the Day of Atonement is also indicated by the other components of the annual rite, i.e., the confession and the scapegoat. The confession and the scapegoat are inseparable in this rite for Milgrom. He thinks the confession is

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<sup>97</sup> Milgrom, "Israel's Sanctuary," 392–393; Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 256–257.

<sup>98</sup> Milgrom, "Israel's Sanctuary," 391–392; Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 256.

<sup>99</sup> Cf. Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 1034.

a legal embodiment of remorse and mitigates unforgivable severity of the rebellious sins. By this confession, the condonable sins—including the now mitigated rebellious sins—are transferred from the humans to the scapegoat directly.<sup>100</sup> All this understanding of the Priestly expiation system, according to Milgrom, betrays “the priestly theodicy” that answers a theological aporia of the prosperity of the wicked. He famously called it “the priestly ‘Picture of Dorian Gray,’” borrowing the idea and wording from a novel by Oscar Wilde. An individual sinner never bears the consequence of sin, but the sanctuary does. Yet the sin-impurities not properly purged and accumulated in the sanctuary beyond its capacity will prompt the divine departure. The loss of the benevolent presence of the deity is itself a collective doom for the entire community, not to mention the individual sinners.<sup>101</sup>

While Milgrom’s understanding of the Priestly purificatory and expiatory system is widely accepted, it has been not without some major and minor dissensions, especially concerning his conceptualization of impurities as miasmata. For instance, Hyam Maccoby, among others, claims that the sancta are contaminated only through direct contact. He suggests some possible occasions of physical contact that might have been assumed in P. He also criticizes Milgrom’s idea as elliptical interpretation, the kind of interpretation Milgrom himself would reject if done by others.<sup>102</sup> Yet Milgrom distinguishes inferences based on the text from

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<sup>100</sup> Milgrom, “Israel’s Sanctuary,” 396; Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 1042. Similarly, Budd, *Leviticus*, 232; Mary Douglas, “Go-Away Goat,” in *The Book of Leviticus: Composition and Reception*, eds. Rolf Rendtorff and Robert A. Kugler, VTSup 93 (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 121–141, esp. 129–133; Elliger, *Leviticus*, 206; Gerstenberger, *Leviticus*, 220–221; Hartley, *Leviticus*, 241; Thomas Hieke, *Leviticus 16–27*, HThKAT (Freiburg: Herder, 2014), 587–589; Hundley, *Keeping Heaven*, 167–168; Levine, *Leviticus*, 106; Nihan, *Priestly Torah*, 190–193, 373–374; David P. Wright, *The Disposal of Impurity: Elimination Rites in the Bible and in Hittite and Mesopotamian Literature*, Dissertation Series 101 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987), 18–19. Kiuchi, *Purification Offering*, 144–156, though somewhat outdated, still offers a useful survey of and critique to varying opinions about the scapegoat rite.

<sup>101</sup> Milgrom, “Israel’s Sanctuary,” 397–398; Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 260. Stackert, “Political Allegory” points out that Milgrom overread Lev 16 with his knowledge of Ezekiel; P is not concerned about the possibility of the divine absence. P’s optimism concerning its purificatory system is previously observed in Stackert, “Darkness,” 67–674.

<sup>102</sup> Maccoby, *Ritual and Morality*, 165–208 (chs. 14–16) and esp. 172–173. See also Gane, *Cult and Character*, especially 144–197 and 217–284 (chs. 7–8 and 10–12); Cranx, *Atonement*, 108–112. See Milgrom’s responses to

dangerous ellipses. He demonstrated well that his idea is based on the text and refutes other rejections of Maccoby.<sup>103</sup>

More scholars problematized his consideration of the *ḥattā' t* sacrifice only as purification apart from atonement. They aver that Milgrom's reading is based on his forced interpretation of the preposition מן as a causative, rather than as a privative.<sup>104</sup> It is true that there is at least one case and, perhaps, a few more in which מן should be rendered unequivocally as privative in the purificatory/expiatory context, such as Lev 12:7a that even Milgrom rendered as privative.<sup>105</sup> Yet Classical Hebrew prepositions are frequently ambiguous to modern interpreters. It should also be noted that Hebrew prepositions are multivalent. Some of their semantic fields overlap and it is often difficult to choose the correct meaning. In other words, one could very well render מן as privative in one case and as causative in another without assuming any grammatical strains. Having this in mind, Milgrom's reading for the causative מן at least in some cases such as Lev 15:15, 30 is no less plausible than his opponents.<sup>106</sup> Also, even if the causative מן is correct, it does not necessarily mean that the sins or the impurities are cleansed by the purification offering directly from the offerer. For instance, "And the priests shall effect purgation on behalf of him from his sin (כפר עליו הכהן מחטאתו)" may mean that this purification rite removes the offerer's sin stuck on the sancta. I think Milgrom's reading of the Priestly purificatory and expiatory system is generally correct and continue to elaborate on his idea below.

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Gane: Jacob Milgrom, "The Preposition מן in the חטאת Pericopes," *JBL* 126.1 (2007): 161–63. See also Gane's counterargument in Gane, "Privative Preposition מן," 209–222. A helpful summary and critique of Gane in favor of Milgrom's miasma is in Nihan, *Priestly Torah*, 190–192.

<sup>103</sup> See Jacob Milgrom, "Impurity Is Miasma: A Response to Hyam Maccoby," *JBL* 119.4 (2000): 729–733; Milgrom, *Leviticus 23–27*, 2458–2463.

<sup>104</sup> Most thoroughly, Gane, *Cult and Character*, 106–143, 273–274. See also Nihan, *Priestly Torah*, 178–179; Hundley, *Keeping Heaven*, 136–141, esp. 137; Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, 321.

<sup>105</sup> Gane, "Privative Preposition מן," esp. 213–215, 218–219; Nihan, *Priestly Torah*, 178. See Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 742, 761.

<sup>106</sup> Milgrom, "Preposition מן," 161–163; followed by Hieke, *Leviticus 1–15*, esp. 136, 265.



Having said that, some qualifications are still needed for Milgrom's reading. Schwartz points out that Milgrom neglected the effect of the penitent actions. If sins are transferred to the scapegoat directly, says Schwartz, there is no point of the fasting and work-cessation in Lev 16:29, 31. Milgrom may have answers for this demur. He would say that this is a mitigating factor for the inexcusable, rebellious sins, along with the confession. Or, more likely, he might say that the fasting and work-cessation is not P's remedy for sins borne by the humans, but rather H's appendix.<sup>107</sup> What is nonetheless significant in Schwartz's observation is that the direct transference of sins from the people to the scapegoat makes the other means of removing sins that Milgrom might acknowledge, such as remorse and confession, superfluous and vice versa. I would add that Milgrom's reconstruction of the priestly theodicy makes the scapegoat secondary and unnecessary. If the sins of the individuals do not really injure them personally, the goat sacrificed as the purification offering is sufficient. What difference does it make that sins are transferred to the scapegoat directly from the people and the goat is sent away? As a matter of fact, there is no need for repentance and forgiveness at all. Even remorse that Milgrom thinks removes inadvertent sins from the sinner at any time, apart from rebellious sins, does not change the consequence in the life of the sinner. He is safe in his private life, whether or not he repents, in Milgrom's understanding of the Priestly expiation. Repentance is inessential for the well-being of an individual sinner. An offender would repent only if he has some moral complacency

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<sup>107</sup> Milgrom assigns Lev 16:29–34a to H in Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 1064–1065. See also Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 1065–1067 for his reconstruction of the historical development of the Day of Atonement from merriment to gloom. Cf. Hieke, *Leviticus 16–27*, 568–570, 593–594; Knohl, *Sanctuary*, 27–29, 105; Nihan, *Priestly Torah*, esp. 346–350; Stackert, “Darkness,” 673–674n46. At least some part of Lev 16:29–34 has been widely acknowledged as secondary, though not necessarily assigned to H: among others, Koch, *Priesterschrift*, 96; Noth, *Leviticus*, 117–126; Rendtorff, *Gesetze*, 59–60;

to become a good person, expecting no incentives except for a good will to follow the universal law.<sup>108</sup> Yet it is unlikely, if not impossible, that such a Kantian concept is articulated in the Bible.

Considering the positive anthropology in P that I acknowledged above, someone may think that this scenario is possible. What I said to be the weakness in Milgrom's idea could potentially be support for Milgrom's thesis that forgiveness in P requires repentance, not sacrifice. Spontaneous repentance that does not even expect compensation, if ever, would correspond well with P's positive anthropology. Yet this picture does not match with the details of the Priestly cult nor with the divine character that P describes with its narrative and cult, which I will discuss below. I will only proleptically give a brief remark here. P's positive anthropology expects Israel's obedience to the divine command. Milgrom's repentance is based almost solely on his rendering of אשׁׁם as "to feel guilt," an expression for remorse.<sup>109</sup> This rendering is less likely and there is a better alternative. Also, the feeling of remorse may be a concept that was later read into the text, as David A. Lambert cogently demonstrated.<sup>110</sup> Repentance is not something that was commanded to the Israelites in P.

Schwartz refines Milgrom's understanding of the Day of Atonement ritual. He does not accept Milgrom's coalescence of sins and impurities that defile the sancta. He argues, the natural reading of Lev 16:16a—"He shall purge the holy place (הקדש)<sup>111</sup> of the impurities of the

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<sup>108</sup> Something similar to the Kantian categorical morality, articulated in Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals: A German-English Edition*, trans. Mary Gregor and Jens Timmermann (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

<sup>109</sup> Cf. Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 256.

<sup>110</sup> David A. Lambert, *How Repentance Became Biblical: Judaism, Christianity, and the Interpretation of Scripture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 151–187 and *passim*.

<sup>111</sup> While הקדש may indicate only the outer room of the Tent in contrast to קדש הקדשים (the inner room, lit. "the holy of holies") as in Exod 26:33, it usually refers to the main tent covering both inner and outer rooms. Yet הקדש in Lev 16 seems to be a superlative that is equivalent to קדש הקדשים. (For the superlative use of the definite article ה, see *WO*, 269 [§14.5c]; *JM*, 490–491 [§141j].) It is supported by the fact that Lev 16:2 qualifies הקדש with מבית לפרכת אל ("inside the veil in front of the cover that is on the ark"); alternatively, this הקדש might be in apposition even with פני הכפרת אשר על הארן ("in front of the cover that is on the ark"). If הקדש here means either the outer room or the main tent, Lev 16:2–3 contradicts the fact that Aaron was not forbidden to regularly enter the

Israelites *and* of their rebellious sins among all their sins ( וכפר על הקדש מטמאת בני ישראל ומפשעיהם ) (לכל הטאתם)”—suggests that there are two different types of pollutants in the sancta: sins and impurities.<sup>112</sup> Both are cleansed by the same detergent, i.e., the *ḥaṭṭā’ī* blood. In Lev 16, it is the blood of the bull *ḥaṭṭā’ī* for the high priest’s family and that of the goat *ḥaṭṭā’ī* for the entire people. After the purgation of the inner room, the sins and the impurities<sup>113</sup> from the outer room and the sacrificial altar<sup>114</sup> are purged with the blood of the same purification offerings (Lev 16:16b, 18–19). Once the blood is applied on the various sancta, impurities and inadvertent sins are either decomposed or absorbed into the carcasses of the sacrificed animals. They do not require further disposal. Yet the rebellious sins that have been released from the inner room are so pernicious and permanent that they are not completely decomposed by such means. The high priest’s imposition of both hands and confession are actions to carry these very residues on the scapegoat so that the goat may *bear away* the rebellious sins (נשׂא עון) in Lev 16:22.<sup>115</sup>

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outer room (e.g., Exod 30:7–8; Lev 4:5, 16 unless one regards these texts as late). This chapter distinguishes הקדש (the inner room) and אהל מועד (probably, also idiosyncratically here, referring only to the outer room; usually referring to the main tent consisting of the inner and the outer rooms): e.g., Lev 16:16, 20, 23, 33. Cf. Budd, *Leviticus*, 225; Elliger, *Leviticus*, 203–204; Hartley, *Leviticus*, 226, 234; Hieke, *Leviticus 16–27*, 573–574, 584; Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 1013; Nihan, *Priestly Torah*, 367–368; Noth, *Leviticus*, 119–120. Milgrom says that the designation for the inner room (his “adytum”) with הקדש is singular here and supports the different origin of Lev 16:2–28 prior to P; yet Hartley (226) finds another in Ezek 41:23. See also another peculiar, though similar, designation for the inner room in Lev 16:33 (H): מקדש הקדש. Cf. Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 1058.

<sup>112</sup> See Schwartz, “Bearing of Sin,” 17–19; followed by Hundley, *Keeping Heaven*, 136, 167.

<sup>113</sup> Lev 16:19 mentions the impurities alone and yet Schwartz thinks inadvertent sins were also intended in light of Lev 4:22–35. See Schwartz, “Bearing of Sin,” 19. Alternatively, he could say that the inadvertent sins generate impurities as Milgrom suggests, while only the ill-willed sins that stick to the כפרת are distinct pollutants. This does not contradict his observation that the inadvertent sins are completely eradicated if not absorbed to the carcass of the sacrifices when they are released by the blood of the purification offering, whereas the rebellious sins released from the inner room are not removed until they are borne and sent away by the scapegoat. Yet see my critique below.

<sup>114</sup> Literally, it is “the altar that is before YHWH.” It is possible that this refers to the incense altar. If so, Lev 16:18a would mean that Aaron comes out of the inner room to the outer room. Yet Lev 16:16–17 renders this interpretation unlikely. The purgation inside both inner and outer rooms was concluded in Lev 16:16–17. Lev 16:20 (also 16:33) makes it explicit that the altar belongs neither to the inner room nor to the outer room.

<sup>115</sup> See the enumerated arguments (1)–(6) in Schwartz, “Bearing of Sin,” 17–19. I believe what I said is his conclusion (6), though he previously stated as if all sins released from the various places of the sanctuary were transferred to the scapegoat especially in (2). Cf. Feldman, *Story of Sacrifice*, 161–165 (esp. 163–164). Though Feldman largely follows Schwartz, she makes a modification. While Schwartz equates עון with פשע both as rebellious sins, Feldman distinguishes עון, פשע, and הטאת (largely anticipated by Gane, *Cult and Character*, esp. 292–298; cf. Hundley, *Keeping Heaven*, 167). The scapegoat carries away not only the rebellious sins (Schwartz’s

It should be noted, though, that his natural reading of the distinction between sins and impurities does not completely accord with the context. Lev 16:16a explicitly reveals that it is concerned about the purgation of the inner room (הקדש). If the impurities are so distinct from the sins in their origins as he argues, how could the impurities infiltrate the inner room where only the ill-willed sins do?

This issue may be approached compositional-historically. Some scholars argued that “and of their rebellious sins among all their sins (ומפשעיהם לכל הטאתם)” in Lev 16:16a and “and all their rebellious sins among all their sins (ואת כל פשעיהם לכל הטאתם)” in Lev 16:21a are later insertions.<sup>116</sup> Nihan contends that this phrase was inserted when Lev 4, which merged “the two originally distinct function of the הטאת” (atonement and purification), supplemented an earlier version of P.<sup>117</sup> Milgrom recognizes the unique attestation of פשע here, apart from the word’s attestations elsewhere in P. He considers it to be a sign that Lev 16:2–28 is an older ritual tradition that P subsequently “adopted and adapted,” which Nihan does not necessarily contradict.<sup>118</sup> This is a possible scenario. The peculiar references to טמאה (see below), הקדש, and אהל מועד potentially may suggest a prehistory of the text. If the present form of Lev 16:2–28 has a prehistory, one may think of something like *KTU* 1.40 could have existed in ancient Israel and

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עון (פשע = עון) but also at least some inadvertent sins expressed by עון, if not all kinds of sins including הטאת (all released from the various sancta and not from the people directly). This has an advantage that can explain why the different terms were used, for which Schwartz merely asserted that פשע and עון are one and the same. Even so, her reading is not entirely compatible with mine. First of all, it needs an explanation for the impurities (טמאת) in the inner room in Lev 16:16a. This is not a problem for Feldman since she thinks הקדש as the main tent and אהל מועד as the entire complex of the Tent of Meeting including the courtyard. (Yet I proposed otherwise above.) Second, it does not explain the absence of פשע in the actual carrying in Lev 16:22a if עון and פשע are so distinct. Finally, I see no good reason that the unrecognized inadvertent sins (her עון) need such a further disposal means as the scapegoat, while the other, recognized inadvertent sins (her הטאת) do not in Lev 4. Even if she meant that even the recognized inadvertent sins should be carried away by the scapegoat in Lev 16:21–22, the question still remains. What happens to the recognized inadvertent sins that were already released from the sancta by the purification offerings throughout the year (in Lev 4)? Does the residue of these pollutants stay around at the bottom of the sanctuary until the Day of Atonement since they had not been carried away?

<sup>116</sup> Elliger, *Leviticus*, 205–206; D. Wright, *Disposal*, 18; Nihan, *Priestly Torah*, 361.

<sup>117</sup> Nihan, *Priestly Torah*, 368. Cf. Elliger, *Leviticus*, 205–206.

<sup>118</sup> Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 1034, 1043, 1063; Nihan *Priestly Torah*, esp. 353–354.

Judah. As some scholars point out, the ritual described in *KTU* 1.40 has some parallels with that in Lev 16.<sup>119</sup> Gregorio del Olmo Lete sees an “atoning character” in this ritual.<sup>120</sup> The text includes *ḥṭā*, the Ugaritic cognate word for Hebrew חָטָא, “to sin.” Scholars also find the national character of this ritual.<sup>121</sup> Diverse social groups including the king, men and women, and foreigners are mentioned in this ritual text; this was not only for the royal family or the elites. In addition, there are both animal sacrifices and confession in this ritual.

If this is the case, whether the present form of Lev 16:2–28 is a second layer of P or P using an earlier cultic source, the appearance of עוֹן alone in Lev 16:22 can mean that “and all their rebellious sins among all their sins (וְאֵת כָּל פְּשָׁעֵיהֶם לְכָל חַטָּאתָם)” in Lev 16:21 and “and of their rebellious sins among all their sins (וּמִפְּשָׁעֵיהֶם לְכָל חַטָּאתָם)” in Lev 16:16 are later than the surrounding text.<sup>122</sup> The earlier text might have only the impurities (טְמֵאָה) in Lev 16:16 and only the iniquities (עוֹנָה) in Lev 16:21. Yet this Priestly hand who is responsible for the present form of Lev 16:1–28<sup>123</sup> had to make this gloss to explicate the existing text according to P’s expiation system. The impurities cannot penetrate the veil, not even to the outer room. The impurities that infiltrated the inner room (הַקֹּדֶשׁ) should have been explicated as the impurities generated by the rebellious sins. This Priestly hand juxtaposed this phrase with *wāw*. Therefore, this *wāw* is not a

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<sup>119</sup> For the reconstruction of the original text, its translation, and thorough philological and literary studies for *KTU* 1.40, see Gregorio del Olmo Lete, *Canaanite Religion: According to the Liturgical Texts of Ugarit*, trans. W. G. E. Watson, 2nd English ed., rev. and enl., AOAT 408 (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2014), 115–127, 351–355; Dennis Pardee, *Les Textes Rituels*, 2 vols., RSO 12 (Paris: Éditions Recherche sur les Civilisations, 2000), 1:92–142. An English summary of Pardee’s French study is found in Dennis Pardee, *Ritual and Cult at Ugarit*, *Writings from the Ancient World* 10 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2002), 77–83. For more comparative focuses, see Seth L. Sanders, *The Invention of Hebrew* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009), 58–66; Weinfeld, *Social Justice*, 212–214.

<sup>120</sup> Del Olmo Lete, *Canaanite Religion*, 115.

<sup>121</sup> Note especially, Pardee’s English label for this ritual as “Ritual for National Unity” in Pardee, *Ritual and Cult*, 77. Cf. S. Sanders, *Invention of Hebrew*, 59–60.

<sup>122</sup> Elliger, *Leviticus*, 200–201, 206; D. Wright, *Disposal*, 18; Nihan, *Priestly Torah*, 192–193; Hundley, *Keeping Heaven*, 166–167.

<sup>123</sup> Lev 16:29b–34a is generally agreed to be H. Among others, see Knohl, *Sanctuary*, 27–34 (esp. 28). Many interpreters Lev 16:1 as a later insertion together with Lev 10. Yet this is unnecessary as cogently argued in Feldman, *Story of Sacrifice*, 156.

usual conjunctive or coordinate (“and”) but an explicative, expegetical *wāw*.<sup>124</sup> This, in turn, discloses that P thinks that what sins generate is טמאה (pollutant) and calls it טמא contra Schwartz, at least in the present form of Lev 16.<sup>125</sup> Both physical impurities and sins leave on the sancta (not on the human body) respectively pollutants in varying degrees. This implies that I see two uses for טמא in P’s purificatory and expiatory context. On the one hand, the word may refer to physical impurities that people contract. On the other, it may be also used as a general designation for the different pollutants stuck to the sancta, caused by the contraction of physical impurities and sinful action. If so, the generic term for pollutants may be conceptually distinguishable according to the context (e.g., purificatory or expiatory) into impurities, on the one hand, and, on the other, sins.<sup>126</sup> Yet this use of טמא seems to be unique and found nowhere else in P, which would potentially corroborate the arguments for the different origin of Lev 16.

Yet the literary development is not an inevitable possibility. The above signs of the compositional prehistory of Lev 16:2–28 can be differently interpreted. *KTU* 1.40 is chronologically remote and its connections with Lev 16 are conceptual and too general. No one would argue they are textually related. The relation between the two rituals is also vague. The ritual in Lev 16 is about purification (i.e., housecleaning, as I argue here) rather than atonement, though it is conventionally called the Day of Atonement. There is no sign of the purification of

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<sup>124</sup> Cf. Rendtorff, *Leviticus*, 229; also implied in Büchler, *Studies in Sin*, 264. Pace Gane, *Cult and Character*, 287. Gane’s objection to the semantic extension beyond the physical impurity is irrelevant to my argument since I posit the two sources of the impurities that contaminate the sancta: namely, impurities and sins (see below). For this usage of *wāw*, see *WO*, 652–653 (§39.2.4). Or, possibly, this hand intended to make a hendiadys by the juxtaposition.

<sup>125</sup> Cf. Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 1033–1034; Büchler, *Studies in Sin*, 264–267 (esp. 267). In spite of some differences, Milgrom and Büchler largely anticipated my thinking in regards to this point. But I part with them regarding the purpose of the scapegoat (see below).

<sup>126</sup> In this way, the distinction between impurities and sins that cling to the sancta (Schwartz, “Bearing of Sin,” 17–19) is partly preserved. Another possibility is that טמא always means “impurity”; what sins generate to defile the sancta is the same impurity that the people contract and defile the sancta from afar. In this case, the effects that physical impurities and sins leave on the sancta (not on the human body) respectively differ not as much in kind as in degrees. In either case, the designation of טמא is more or less peculiar.

the sancta and of the scapegoat in this Ugaritic ritual. We do not have any concrete evidence that Lev 16:2–28 was based on a preexisting ritual text. The Ugaritic ritual text does not guarantee the presence of a similar text in Israel and Judah. The peculiar references to *טמאה*, *הקדש*, and *אהל מועד* in Lev 16, if I am correct, is not an absolute support for a different literary stratum. P is not always consistent in using its technical terms. For example, *אהל מועד* can mean both the main tent and the entire Tent of Meeting in a single pericope (cf. Exod 40). The epexegetical *wāw* is not reserved only for later scribes. The authors could use it readily.<sup>127</sup> In sum, the unity of the text in Lev 16:2–28 is as much possible as the literary history of the text.

While the use of some words with the peculiar references is a tempting sign to me for the prehistory of Lev 16, I hesitate to give a definitive conclusion about whether or not Lev 16 has a prehistory before the present form, unless I find some stronger evidence. Either way, it does not affect my reading of the present form of the text. Thus, I think it is more productive for my study to discuss the present form, without resorting to the compositional arguments.

The result of the epexegetical *wāw* in Lev 16:16a and 16:21a is a sort of syllogism. The pollutants (i.e., the generic *טמאה*) purged from the inner room in Lev 16:16a are rebellious sins (*פשעים*); the iniquities (*עונות*) that Aaron confessed in Lev 16:21a are rebellious sins (*פשעים*); therefore, the pollutants purged from the inner room in Lev 16:16a are the iniquities borne through Aaron's imposition of both hands and confession and dispatched by the scapegoat in Lev 16:21–22. By this syllogism, the pollutants that contaminated the inner room may well be designated as “rebellious sins (*פשעים*)” and “iniquities (*עונות*)” as well as “pollutants (*טמאה*).” P also qualified *ופשעיהם* with *לכל חטאתם* (“with respect to all their sins”) in order not to generalize but to emphasize that the pollutants of the inner room and the iniquities borne by the scapegoat

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<sup>127</sup> Without supposing a compositional history, some recognize the epexegetical *wāw* in Lev 16:16a and 21a: e.g., Büchler, *Studies in Sin*, 264; Levine, *In the Presence*, 76; Levine, *Leviticus*, 105.

in the source text should be understood not as any, general sins but as deliberate, rebellious sins.<sup>128</sup> If my reasoning is correct, the present form of the text does not make a sharp separation between the purpose of the sacrificed goat (and the *ḥaṭṭā ʾē* bull) and that of the live goat, although there is a functional distinction.<sup>129</sup> Pollutants generated by rebellious sins are not so much eradicable as other pollutants produced by physical impurities or inadvertent sins. As Schwartz argued, it should be borne and dispatched by the scapegoat to a distant place. So, the two goats do not have two respective aims. The scapegoat rite is subsequent to the purification offering and the latter's blood manipulation (and the *ḥaṭṭā ʾē* bull) to serve together a sole purpose for the completion of housecleaning. Without the scapegoat dispatch, pollutants (out of ill-willed sins) still remain in the divine abode. Therefore, it was suitable to nominate both goats together as *ḥaṭṭā ʾē* in Lev 16:5.<sup>130</sup>

Admittedly, the syllogism is not the only possible interpretation for the function of the expegetical *wāw* in this text. One may say that the sacrificed animals purge the pollutants of the inner room that were generated by rebellious sins, while the scapegoat bears the iniquities of the people as many interpreters would argue, which are the same rebellious sins that were the source of the pollutants of the inner room. And these rebellious sins may have needed such special

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<sup>128</sup> Kiuchi, *Purification Offering*, 154, 187n50; similarly, Schwartz, "Bearing of Sin," 18n59 with the possessive understanding of the ל preposition. Pace Elliger, *Leviticus*, 205–206; D. Wright, *Disposal*, 18; Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 1034; Hartley, *Leviticus*, 240; Hundley, *Keeping Heaven*, 165–166. The reading of the preposition ל as qualifying the antecedent "rebellious sins" was objected by Gane, *Cult and Character*, 289–293; followed by Nihan, *Priestly Torah*, 189n346. Gane's main argument is twofold: 1) הַטָּאָה is not general but specific to the expiable sin in P; 2) לְכֹל may mean "as well as" in light of Lev 11:46, though he admits it is commonly "with respect to." His second, grammatical understanding is faulty since he curiously ignores *wāw* preceding לְכֹל in Lev 11:46; וְלֹכֵל is not comparable to לְכֹל in Lev 11:42; 16:16, 21. So, this syntactic construction, in turn, suggests to me that פִּשְׁעַי and עֲוֹנוֹתַי are subspecies of הַטָּאָה. As he admits, הַטָּאָה is a fairly generic term for sin throughout the Hebrew Bible. P may have used this generic term for the expiable sins since there were no other terms for the latter vis-à-vis the terms for the inexpiable sin (פִּשְׁעַי, עֲוֹנוֹתַי). For פִּשְׁעַי and הַטָּאָה in these verses, see also Kiuchi, *Purification Offering*, 187n49; his view has been altered later in Kiuchi, *Study*, 33.

<sup>129</sup> Pace Milgrom, "Israel's Sanctuary," 396; Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 1033, 1043; Nihan, *Priestly Torah*, 192, 373.

<sup>130</sup> For the higher-level sacrifice constituting of the lower-level sacrifices, see Meshel, "Grammar" of Sacrifice, 104–129, even though there is no perfectly matching case with the scapegoat since it is unlikely itself a sacrifice.



treatment that was not required for inadvertent sins, since their severity dwarfed remorse. By this, one may still stand with those who separate the purification rite and the direct transference of sins from the people to the scapegoat and maintain the two separate functions for the sacrificed animals and the scapegoat, respectively.<sup>131</sup> Nevertheless, I believe that the syllogism explains the broader Priestly expiation system more coherently. In Lev 4–5, the sinners need divine forgiveness: Lev. 4:20, 26, 31, 35; 5:10, 13, 16, 18, 26. The statement of forgiveness is absent in only two places where it is expected besides Lev 16: namely, at the end of Lev 4:11 and Lev 5:6. Divine forgiveness must be implied there, however; otherwise, there is no point in performing these rites. It is also true for the absence of the forgiveness statement in Lev 16. Yet the direct transference of sins from the sinners to the scapegoat makes the divine forgiveness superfluous and the absence of the statement intentional. If the sinners' iniquities and guilt were already removed by the scapegoat, they are no longer culpable and do not need forgiveness from the deity. One may say that the scape goat's action, נשׂא עון "to carry away sin/guilt," is an alternative expression for forgiveness (סלח), as is the case in some places: e.g., Gen 50:17; Exod 10:17.<sup>132</sup> It should be remembered, however, that the subject of the verb is the forgiver when the phrase implies forgiveness. The subject in Lev 16:22 is not the deity but the scapegoat; the scapegoat is by no means the offended but the third party, who cannot forgive but can merely bear away sins. Moreover, the transference, if it really happens, does not occur by divine action,

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<sup>131</sup> Among others, Budd, *Leviticus*, 232; Elliger, *Leviticus*, 206; Hartley, *Leviticus*, 241; Douglas, "Go-Away Goat," 129–133; Hundley, *Keeping Heaven*, 167–168; Levine, *Leviticus*, 106; Milgrom, "Israel's Sanctuary," 396; Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 1042; Nihan, *Priestly Torah*, 190–193, 373–374; D. Wright, *Disposal*, 18–19.

<sup>132</sup> For נשׂא עון, see Sklar, *Priestly Conceptions*, 20–23, 88–99 (esp. 92–99); Schwartz, "Bearing of Sin"; Mark J. Boda, *A Severe Mercy: Sin and Its Remedy in the Old Testament*, Siphut 1 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2009), 57–58; Wells, *Law of Testimony*, 60–63, 73–82; Bruce Wells, "Liability in the Priestly Texts of the Hebrew Bible," *Sapientia Logos* 5.1 (2012): 1–31. From a conceptual and metaphorical perspective in the wider biblical context, Gary A. Anderson, *Sin: A History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 15–26; Lam, *Patterns of Sin*, 16–86. See further below. The sins borne by the high priest (e.g., Exod 28:38; Lev 10:17) imply the impurities generated by the sin; it does not mean the direct transference from the sinner to the high priest, in my mind. Cf. Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 623–624.

but only by Aaron's cultic action. It is the high priest, the representative of the sinners, who transfers the sins by his imposition of both hands and confession.

There are varying degrees of pollutants on the sancta. Sins and various human impurities generate pollutants that vary in intensity, somewhat parallel to the gradation of the locations reveals. All the pollutants defiling the varying locations of the sanctuary are removed by the *ḥaṭṭā'ṭ* blood. Yet the most tenacious pollutants from the inner room are persistently not dissolved (or absorbed into the *ḥaṭṭā'ṭ* animal carcass). It needs to be collected and dumped in a landfill where Azazel dwells.

### 5.2.2 The Nature of Divine Forgiveness in the Priestly Expiation

One of the most important, and most controversial, claims in Milgrom's understanding of the Priestly expiation system is the function of the *ḥaṭṭā'ṭ* (and also *'āšām*) offering in P. Lev 4, according to him, assumes that inadvertent sins generate pollutants that eventually cling to the sancta.<sup>133</sup> The *ḥaṭṭā'ṭ* offering purges the sancta of pollutants, rather than the sinner of the sin.<sup>134</sup> In this way, the expiation system is basically equated with the purification system; the *ḥaṭṭā'ṭ* offering purges the sancta (not the defiled offerer) of pollutants even as its offerer aims at the expiation of his sin. It is why the "purification offering" is enough a translation for the *ḥaṭṭā'ṭ* sacrifice, whether the *ḥaṭṭā'ṭ* was made by a defiled person or by an inadvertent sinner. Then, what happens to the offerer, besides the purification of the sancta? Concerning a defiled person, a contraction of impurities is itself not a sin, if it undergoes the prescribed processes in a timely manner. The defiled person may bathe, wash clothes, and/or be secluded for a certain designated

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<sup>133</sup> Milgrom, *Leviticus 1-16*, 230-231.

<sup>134</sup> Milgrom, *Leviticus 1-16*, 254-258.

period according to the severity of the contracted impurities. The sin cannot be removed from the sinner with the same means; the sinner needs divine forgiveness.

Milgrom, as I mentioned above, argues that confession is a legal means to mitigate the rebellious sins that were originally unpardonable because this legal means is a verbalized expression of remorse.<sup>135</sup> In other words, confession is a prerequisite for the forgiveness of rebellious sins. This, in turn, depends on his fundamental argument that remorse is enough of a prerequisite to obtain forgiveness for expiable sins, such as the inadvertencies in Lev 4. He noted well that repentance, whether remorse or confession, is only a prerequisite and not a sufficient condition.<sup>136</sup> Yet what he really means seems to be that the sinful act is forgiven “because of the offender’s inadvertence and remorse” but the sinner still needs sacrificial expiation “because of the consequence of his act,” namely, the contamination of the sancta.<sup>137</sup> This has some bearing on the Priestly morality and I will elaborate on this below, while considering other suggestions.

### 5.2.3 The Meaning of אָשָׁם

Milgrom’s evidence is primarily from his understanding of the word, אָשָׁם, traditionally understood as “to be guilty.”<sup>138</sup> Leviticus 4:13–14 reads: “If the entire community of Israel erred inadvertently and the matter was hidden from the eyes of the congregation, that is, they do any of the commandments of YHWH that should not be done and they become guilty (אָשָׁם) and (ו) the sin regarding which they sinned is known, then the congregation shall offer a bull of the cattle as

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<sup>135</sup> Jacob Milgrom, “Priestly Doctrine of Repentance,” *Revue Biblique* 82.2 (1975): 186–205, esp. 193–196, 200; Milgrom, *Cult and Conscience*, 106–110, 118–119; Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 301–303, 374–375, 1042. Followed by Wells, *Law of Testimony*, 140; Boda, *Severe Mercy*, 65–67; Hieke, *Leviticus 1–15*, 272. Cf. Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, 360–361.

<sup>136</sup> Milgrom, “Priestly Doctrine,” 203; Milgrom, *Cult and Conscience*, 122; Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 377.

<sup>137</sup> Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 256.

<sup>138</sup> This traditional understanding is still held by some: e.g., Janowski, *Sühne als Heilsgeschehen*, 255–256; Levine, *Leviticus*, 22–23; Schenker, *Studien zu Opfer*, 61.

a purification offering and bring it before the Tent of Meeting.” Here, those who become guilty and those whose sin (necessarily, the fact that one is guilty) is known to themselves are the same; the congregation acquired sufficient knowledge to bring a proper offering by the clause “the sin regarding which they sinned is known (וְנוֹדְעָה הַחַטָּאת אֲשֶׁר חָטְאוּ עָלֶיהָ).” But the alternative conjunction ‘or (אוֹ)’ in the beginning of Leviticus 4:23 and 4:28 makes it apparent to Milgrom as well as to many others that this traditional rendering of אִשָּׁם does not fit in Leviticus 4:22–23 and 4:27–28. See 4:22–23: “If a chieftain sins, namely, he does inadvertently (בְּשִׁגְגָה) any of the commandments of YHWH his God that should not be done and he becomes guilty (אִשָּׁם) or (אוֹ) and someone makes known (הוֹדִיעַ) to him his sin against which he sinned, then he shall bring a domesticated male goat, a male without blemish.” Here, the alternative conjunction “or (אוֹ)” makes a distinction between the one who is guilty but cannot know that he is guilty because he violated one of the commandments inadvertently, on the one hand, and, on the other, the one who is made known of his sin. The former, in other words, cannot bring his purification offering because he has no chance to recognize his sin; only the latter can. Thus, אִשָּׁם must include some cognitive sense here. Milgrom made a further observation that “to be guilty” is not attested in the cultic context; it always has a consequential meaning there. By the consequential meaning, he included both physical and psychological components. But he blended the two components as not distinguished in the ancient world and singled out the psychological aspect eventually. The psychological אִשָּׁם was alleged to imply the internal suffering of conscience as the consequence of wrongdoings; thus, Milgrom rendered it as “to feel guilt.”<sup>139</sup>

Milgrom’s extremely subjective interpretation of אִשָּׁם has induced some objections. Nobuyoshi Kiuchi argued that a close look at the contexts that אִשָּׁם appears in Lev 4–5 requires

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<sup>139</sup> Milgrom, *Cult and Conscience*, 3–12.

emphasis on the cognizant aspect of אָשָׁם, preferring to render it “to realize guilt.”<sup>140</sup> Yet Kiuchi’s three cases that allegedly do not fit to Milgrom’s “to feel guilt” are not insurmountable. To begin with, the conditions in Lev 5:21–22 must imply the awareness of sin and does not require a further recognition of sin because the offenders committed deliberate sins. This is why Milgrom rejected “to realize guilt” in preference over “to feel guilt.”<sup>141</sup> Yet Kiuchi argues that feeling guilt is not sharply separated from the consciousness of sin. Even if the sinner had knowledge of his sin, “when he is conscience-smitten (*’āšēm*), he is *then* acutely conscious about his sin and guilt.”<sup>142</sup> Though it may be true that remorse and cognition are somewhat related, he seems to think of a different level of consciousness than the sinner’s initial awareness of the illicitness of his act in Lev 5:21–22. This fuller consciousness is nothing but Milgrom’s remorse. If the reader has to distinguish two different meanings of “to realize guilt,” I am not sure of the benefit from the consistent translation.

Kiuchi’s criticism on Milgrom’s interpretation of Lev 5:17 is even subtler. Milgrom and some other scholars understand אָשָׁם יָדָע as that a sinner is ignorant not only of the implication of his act but also of the act itself. Then, the sinner cannot realize guilt by himself but only suspect.<sup>143</sup> Yet Kiuchi argues that this is unlikely because this law “presupposes as an objective fact that a person has committed a sin.” He continues: “The law does not envisage a case in which the person suspects either unnecessarily or wrongly that he has done wrong. Rather *since* he has done wrong, he feels guilty: when he feels guilty, he knows what the sin was.”<sup>144</sup> This is

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<sup>140</sup> Kiuchi, *Purification Offering*, 31–34, esp. 34. See also Rendtorff, *Leviticus*, 152–153; Hartley, *Leviticus*, 62.

<sup>141</sup> Milgrom, *Cult and Conscience*, 9–10; Jacob Milgrom, “The Cultic אָשָׁם and Its Influence in Psalms and Job,” *Jewish Quarterly Review* 58.2 (1967): 115–125, 117n11.

<sup>142</sup> Kiuchi, *Purification Offering*, 32 (his italics).

<sup>143</sup> Milgrom, *Cult and Conscience*, 9, 76; Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 332–333; Levine, *In the Presence*, 94; Levine, *Leviticus*, 32; Rendtorff, *Leviticus*, 205; Nihan, *Priestly*, 249; Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, 370; Hieke, *Leviticus 1–15*, 284–285. Milgrom seems to subsume “to suspect/fear guilt” under “to feel guilt.” I talk about this more below.

<sup>144</sup> Kiuchi, *Purification Offering*, 33 (his italics).

simply unfounded. The law presupposes an objective fact of the sinner's sinfulness *and a subjective state of the sinner* with ולא ידע. Also, Kiuchi's argument is based on his interpretation of ולא ידע contra Milgrom and others: namely, the sinner is conscious of what he did, though not its implication that that act was sin.<sup>145</sup> He concluded that the use of “ו[הוא] לא ידע” in Lev 5:17–19 presents an identical situation with one in Lev 4 using “בשגגה.”<sup>146</sup> Yet this makes Lev 5:17–19 rather idiosyncratic and foreign to Lev 4. Why would the same situation that required the purification offering in Lev 4 require the reparation offering in Lev 5:17–19? Even if one admits Kiuchi's understanding of “ו[הוא] לא ידע,” Milgrom's suspected guilt can be a sufficient reason to bring an expiatory offering as in Job 1:5; the realization of guilt is not the only condition to bring an offering. That said, it is best to assume that the addition “ו[הוא] לא ידע” to the otherwise almost verbatim wording in Lev 5:17a (cf. Lev 4:22, 27) is there to make difference from Lev 4.<sup>147</sup> If not, the purpose of this law is unintelligible. In light of Lev 5:18 “the priest shall make expiation on behalf of him regarding his inadvertence that he erred inadvertently but he did not know ( וכפר ) ידע, (עליו הכהן על שגגתו אשר שגג והוא לא ידע)” should be supplemented as the gapped object of ידע, as Kiuchi correctly observed.<sup>148</sup> Yet the noun שגגה basically means an “inadvertent *act*” rather than “inadvertent *sin*”; remember the noun is accompanied by חט"א “to sin” when it implies an inadvertent sin (Lev 4:2, 22,27; 5:15), though the verb from the same root may entail the notion of sin (Lev 4:13; 5:18). I think the best rendering of “ו[הוא] לא ידע” in Lev 5:17–18 is “but he did

<sup>145</sup> Kiuchi, *Purification Offering*, 26–27, 31. But see Kiuchi, *Study*, 7–10 (esp. 8–9). In this later study, Kiuchi now thinks the sinner does not know his act at all, as understood by Milgrom and others.

<sup>146</sup> Kiuchi, *Purification Offering*, 27; cf. Nihan, *Priestly Torah*, 249.

<sup>147</sup> Also, from Lev 5:15: cf. Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 334.

<sup>148</sup> Kiuchi, *Purification Offering*, 27.

not know (what he did inadvertently).”<sup>149</sup> Then, there is no way “to realize guilt” in Lev 5:17–19; rather this text makes more sense with, “to feel (a suspicion of) guilt,” as Milgrom suggests.<sup>150</sup>

Perhaps, Kiuchi’s best case against Milgrom is found in Lev 4:13–14a, 22–23a and 27–28a (and also applicable to Lev 5:17). He correctly said that suspicion is inadequate to trigger guilt feelings.<sup>151</sup> Yet this is not a sufficient answer for why sure knowledge of sin, more than suspicion, is necessary. Though his stress on the cognizant aspect of אָשָׁם is correct, he did not succeed in demonstrating that “to realize guilt” is more beneficial than “to feel guilt” in my mind, especially as the latter includes the suspicion or fear of sin for Milgrom. In fact, “to realize guilt” is even a less likely candidate because of its inability to explain Lev 5:17–19.

Jay Sklar critiques all the above options about the meaning of אָשָׁם. Contra Kiuchi, he points out that the cognizant aspect of אָשָׁם does not have to be expressed by its lexical meaning; the cognizance of sin may be a result of אָשָׁם as “to suffer guilt’s consequence.” Above all, “to realize guilt” renders 4:3 nonsensical, according to Sklar: “If the anointed priest sins to make the people realize guilt.”<sup>152</sup> Likewise, he criticizes Milgrom that “to feel guilt” cannot be consistent in Lev 4:3 and 4:13 where the same meaning is expected. Also, he contends that Milgrom cannot be consistent for Lev 5:17–19 where remorse is not possible because of the sinner’s total ignorance of his action.<sup>153</sup> As Sklar points out, Milgrom’s “to feel guilt” includes two different feelings. Milgrom wants to use it primarily to express psychological remorse, the internal suffering of conscience. In the places where remorse is unlikely, however, Milgrom rather takes

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<sup>149</sup> This morpho-syntactic construction does not have to be anterior contra Ziony Zevit, *The Anterior Construction in Classical Hebrew*, Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series 50 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998), esp. 15–32. See Dennis Pardee, review of *The Anterior Construction in Classical Hebrew*, by Ziony Zevit, *JNES* 60.4 (2001): 308–12. 1 Kgs 1:4 (p.309) is especially telling against the anterior understanding of “[היא] לא ידע.”

<sup>150</sup> Milgrom, *Cult and Conscience*, 9.

<sup>151</sup> Kiuchi, *Purification Offering*, 33–34.

<sup>152</sup> Sklar, *Priestly Conceptions*, 32–34.

<sup>153</sup> Sklar, *Priestly Conceptions*, 36–38.

the physical suffering or just suspicion that the sinner feels that he might have sinned as the meaning of אָשָׁם.<sup>154</sup>

To avoid the above problems, Sklar suggests an alternative meaning, which was already implied by Milgrom: “to suffer (physically) the consequence of sin.”<sup>155</sup> This has some merits according to him. First of all, “to suffer the consequence of sin” is actually an attested meaning of אָשָׁם elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible (Ps 34:22; Hos 10:2; Hos 14:1; Isa 24:6; Jer 2:3).<sup>156</sup> Second, this understanding can explain consistently all the instances of אָשָׁם in Lev 4–5, including Lev 4:3 and 4:13 where the other renderings are allegedly not the best match. Third, it entails the cognizant aspect such as the realization (or possibly, suspicion or remorse) of sin. Lastly, it can best explain the turning of a deliberate sinner in Lev 5:23. The deliberate sinner might not be able to bear the suffering and will come to correct the wrong to stop the adversity; otherwise, why would he fix his wrong, if he was not afraid to commit the sin in his full consciousness?<sup>157</sup>

Nonetheless, these reasons Sklar offered are collateral and not definitive so as to renounce “to realize or to feel guilt.” First of all, Sklar’s above citations of אָשָׁם to mean “to suffer guilt” outside Lev 4–5 may well be rendered “to be guilty” or “to incur guilt,” though they may possibly anticipate the consequences of the guilt. Second, since Lev 4:3 has a different derivative of the root אָשָׁם (a noun, אִשְׁמָה), a different rendering may be permitted.<sup>158</sup> Even if this

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<sup>154</sup> Cf. Milgrom, *Cult and Conscience*, 9, 74–83.

<sup>155</sup> Sklar, *Priestly Conceptions*, 39–41. Cf. Nihan, *Priestly Torah*, 237–239; Hieke, *Leviticus 1–15*, 86–87, 260–261. This was anticipated by the former scholars: among others, Levine, *In the Presence*, 130–131; Milgrom, *Cult and Conscience*, 3; and K. van der Toorn, *Sin and Sanction in Israel and Mesopotamia: A Comparative Study*, *Studia Semitica Neerlandica* 22 (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1985), 92. Milgrom added the psychological component to this idea and stressed the former more than the latter: see Milgrom, *Cult and Conscience*, 7–11.

<sup>156</sup> Sklar, *Priestly Conceptions*, 39–40.

<sup>157</sup> Sklar, *Priestly Conceptions*, 40–41.

<sup>158</sup> Similarly pointed out by Boda, *Severe Mercy*, 63. See his overall argument for “to recognize guilt” in pp.62–65. This is basically identical with Kiuchi’s “to realize guilt.” What is idiosyncratic comes from his reading of *wāw* and





illnesses, plagues, or catastrophes and sometimes even referred to specific diseases.<sup>162</sup> The misfortunes include a variety of physical and psychological diseases, childlessness, broken personal and familial relationships, and social humiliations and demotions.<sup>163</sup> There are many such instances also in the Bible. For instance, tumors afflicted Philistines when they arrogantly appropriated the ark of God in 1 Sam 5.<sup>164</sup> Also, there was a famine in Israel for three consecutive years in the days of David. It was informed to have occurred as a retribution of Saul's sin (2 Sam 21:1). If a person was killed by accident, it was expressed as if God moved the hand of the manslaughter (והאלהים אנה לידו) in Exod 21:13.<sup>165</sup> The causes of these misfortunes thought as divine punishments are curses, oaths, and sacrileges, and ethical wrongs, among

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Jo Ann Scurlock and Burton R. Andersen, *Diagnoses in Assyrian and Babylonian Medicine: Ancient Sources, Translations, and Modern Medical Analyses* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2005), 11 and *passim*; Magdalene, *On the Scales*, 13–25; D. Lambert, *How Repentance*, 54; Cranz, *Atonement*, 39. For some of the sample primary texts and secondary literature that deal with them, see, among others, Erica Reiner, *Šurpu: A Collection of Sumerian and Akkadian Incantations* (Graz, 1958); Takayoshi Oshima, *Babylonian Poems of Pious Sufferers: Ludlul Bēl Nēmeqi and the Babylonian Theodicy*, ORA 14 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014); Thomas Krüger, “Morality and Religion in Three Babylonian Poems of Pious Sufferers,” in *Teaching Morality in Antiquity: Wisdom texts, Oral Traditions, and Images*, eds. T. M. Oshima, and Susanne Kohlhaas, ORA 29 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2018), 182–188; T. M. Oshima, “When the Godless Person Thrives and a Wolf Grows Fat: Explaining the Prosperity of the Impious in Ancient Mesopotamian Wisdom Texts,” in *Teaching Morality in Antiquity: Wisdom texts, Oral Traditions, and Images*, eds. T. M. Oshima, and Susanne Kohlhaas, ORA 29 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2018), 189–215.

<sup>162</sup> To list a few, Hebrew יד יהיה or the like in Exod 9:3; 1 Sam 6:9; Ps 38:3. For Ugaritic “*yd ilm*,” e.g., *KTU* 2.10:11–12; see Dennis Pardee, “As Strong as Death,” in *Love & Death in the Ancient Near East: Essays in Honor of Marvin H. Pope*, eds. John H. Marks and Robert M. Good (Guilford, CT: Four Quarters, 1987), 65–69, esp. 67–68. For Akkadian “*qāt DN*” or the like, see *KAR* 44:r10 with Cynthia Jean, *La Magie Néo-assyrienne En Contexte: Recherches Sur le métier d'exorciste et le Concept d'āšipūtu*, SAAS 17 (Helsinki: Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, 2006), 70; *Ludlul Bēl Nēmeqi* I:9, 11 and III:1 in Oshima, *Babylonian Poems*, 78–79, 94–95, 175; and many diagnostic cases in Scurlock and Andersen, *Diagnoses*, 429–528. Cf. J. V. Kinnier Wilson, “Medicine in the land and times of the Old Testament,” in *Studies in the Period of David and Solomon and Other Essays: Papers Read at the International Symposium for Biblical Studies, Tokyo, 5–7 December 1979*, ed. Tomoo Ishida (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1982), 337–365, esp. 349, 349n36; van der Toorn, *Sin and Sanction*, 78, 199n302, 199n304; Magdalene, *On the Scales*, 17.

<sup>163</sup> Van der Toorn, *Sin and Sanction*, 56–93. See a sample list of such adversities from the mouth of the sufferer and narrator (Šubsi-mešrê-Šakkan) in *Ludlul Bēl Nēmeqi* I:49–120 and II:49–120 (Oshima, *Babylonian Poems*, 80–85, 88–93); also, see the *Babylonian Theodicy*, lines 27–32 in Oshima, *Babylonian Poems*, 150–153.

<sup>164</sup> Cf. Yitzhaq Feder, *Blood Expiation in Hittite and Biblical Ritual: Origins, Context, and Meaning*, Writings from the Ancient World Supplements Series 2 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011), 106–107.

<sup>165</sup> This clause allows a couple of different translations. But the nuance is the same, however it is rendered.

others. At least some of them are present in Lev 5 and, in turn, support that the meaning of אֲשָׁם in Lev 4–5 is related to the consequence of sin.<sup>166</sup>

Even though misfortunes and adversities, especially severe ones, were generally attributed to divine retribution of sin, one may wonder if this was always the case—namely, whether any adversity would have automatically prompted the sinner to bring the offerings in Lev 4–5. Yitzhaq Feder seems to think that, at least, it had been the case in the earlier version of P. Drawing on some biblical texts that leprosy (צִרְעָת) <sup>167</sup> and genital flux (זֹבַח) such as David’s curse on Joab in 2 Sam 3:28–29, he claims that the purification offering required to those who were cured from these diseases in Lev 14–15 (and also the parturient in Lev 12) “was intended to address the suspected sin.”<sup>168</sup> And Milgrom asserts that each of the three offerings (an אֲשָׁם, a חֲטָאת, and an עֲלֵה with an adjunct מִנְחָה) covers all possible inadvertent sins the leper might have committed even in the present form of Lev 14.<sup>169</sup> K. van der Toorn argues more generally that pure, purposeless chance is not a Semitic but a Greek concept, apart from a teleological, determined force such as Akkadian *šīmtu* (fate).<sup>170</sup>

It is true that Milgrom is in good company regarding the sinful origin of leprosy in P.<sup>171</sup> In a similar vein, Kiuchi argues that leprosy has an educational function to teach the general

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<sup>166</sup> Compare a list of sins (and virtues that were expected to be rewarded) in Reiner, *Šurpu*, 13–15 (II:1–81) and in Oshima, *Babylonian Poems*, 86–87 (*Ludlul Bēl Nēmeqi* II:10–32). A cultural similarity between *Šurpu* and Lev 4–5 is particularly observed by Westbrook, *Cuneiform Law*, 27–29 and Cranz, *Atonement*, 44–49.

<sup>167</sup> I adopted the conventional translation of צִרְעָת, “leprosy,” only for convenience. The Hebrew term may cover various skin diseases.

<sup>168</sup> Feder, *Blood Expiation*, 107–108.

<sup>169</sup> Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 858.

<sup>170</sup> See van der Toorn, *Sin and Sanction*, 71–72.

<sup>171</sup> Elliger, *Leviticus*, 187; Gray, *Numbers*, 66; Levine, *Leviticus*, 75; Nihan, “Forms and Functions,” 332; van der Toorn, *Sin and Sanction*, 75. Olyan carefully avoids explicitly labeling P’s leprosy as punishment. Yet he discusses it in the broader biblical texts outside P: see Saul M. Olyan, *Disability in the Hebrew Bible: Interpreting Mental and Physical Differences* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 47–61, esp. 54–56. More scholars with this view are found in Joel S. Baden and Candida R. Moss, “The Origin and Interpretation of *Ṣāra ‘at* in Leviticus 13–14,” *JBL* 130.4 (2011): 643–662, esp. 656.

sinfulness of human nature since there is no specific sin related to leprosy.<sup>172</sup> Yet Joel S. Baden and Candida R. Moss cogently argue that these scholars uncritically draw on a non-Priestly narrative when reading Lev 13–14.<sup>173</sup> They claim that the Bible contains various ideas within it. One should not assume P would naturally share a non-Priestly view. The text never insinuates that leprosy is a punishment. The only statement that clearly says that the deity sent leprosy is found in Lev 14:34. Yet this verse may be edited by H, as they and some other scholars contend.<sup>174</sup> Admittedly, not all these scholars' stylistic arguments are equally persuasive. Their exclusion of the divine first person from P, among others, is especially on shaky ground as Nihan and Feldman demonstrated with textual evidence.<sup>175</sup> Nihan further argues that Lev 14:33–53 is P's editing of a preexisting source rather than H's editing of P. In other words, Lev 14:33–34 is P's introduction of the pericope.<sup>176</sup> While its language accords with P's (cf. Deut 32:49, ארץ כנען, אשר אני נתן לבני ישראל לאחזה),<sup>177</sup> however, Baden and Moss acutely connected the idea in Lev 14:34 with H's idea that "disease in general is a sign of divine disfavor (Lev 26:16, 25)" with a caution.<sup>178</sup> This caution, which correctly qualifies this connection, that Lev 26 is about the collective rather than the individual punishments does not necessarily deny the connection and H's editing of Lev 14:34.<sup>179</sup> H is not unaware of individual punishments (e.g., כר"ת).

Apart from the compositional argument, Baden and Moss add the possibility that Lev 14:34 only reveals the divine origin of leprosy. P assumes everything comes from the deity but

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<sup>172</sup> Nobuyoshi Kiuchi, "A Paradox of the Skin Disease," *ZAW* 113.4 (2001): 505–514, esp. 511–513.

<sup>173</sup> Baden and Moss, "Origin and Interpretation," 643–662, esp. 655–657.

<sup>174</sup> Baden and Moss, "Origin and Interpretation," 652–653. Cf. Knohl, *Sanctuary*, 95n119; Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 886–887.

<sup>175</sup> For the divine first person in P, see Feldman, *Story of Sacrifice*, 148–149 and Nihan, *Priestly Torah*, 276.

<sup>176</sup> Nihan, *Priestly Torah*, 276; anticipated by Noth, *Leviticus*, 104, 110. At least the possibility of the existence of the pre-Priestly *Vorlage* of Lev 13–14 is not denied in Baden and Moss, Baden and Moss, "Origin and Interpretation," 653n32.

<sup>177</sup> Cf. Knohl, *Sanctuary*, 95n119 (note the typo as Deut 32:39).

<sup>178</sup> Baden and Moss, "Origin and Interpretation," 652–653.

<sup>179</sup> Baden and Moss, "Origin and Interpretation," 652n31.

not everything is a reward or a punishment. Thus, leprosy is not necessarily a divine punishment in P. This is a little difficult to accept in my mind. As I will argue below, there is no sign that P would deny pure chance in the world. P's deity is neither omniscient nor omnipotent. Things happen in the world that the deity did not intend. For instance, the text does not indicate the origin of the impurities, whether they were intended to be by the deity or not; they are just there. I doubt the deity would have deliberately made impurities that so contrast with his nature.<sup>180</sup> It is also uncertain why the deity, who wants to make the Israelites prosper for his own well-being, would bring leprosy to a house if it is not punishment.<sup>181</sup> I think the compositional argument is sufficient to exclude Lev 14:34 from my discussion.

Lev 12–15 assumes that those who suffer from these diseases (including the parturient) could come to the Tent of Meeting (courtyard) and offer the prescribed offerings only after they were healed. Yet Lev 4–5 apparently demands sinners to act as soon as they suffer the consequences of their guilt—most explicitly, ביום אשמתו “when (or more literally, ‘on the day’) he suffers guilt” in Lev 5:24b. If P considers these diseases to come as divine punishments, this should mean that the patients should offer another *sin-* or *guilt-*offering of Lev 4–5, once the purificatory rites prescribed in Lev 12–15 are completed. This is unlikely. If these diseases were meant as divine punishment for some sin, is the healing not a sign of forgiveness?<sup>182</sup> After being healed (i.e., forgiven) and purging the sancta with the purificatory rites in Lev 12–15, would he need an additional offering? If he would, it should have been voluntarily offering subtypes of the well-being offering (שלמים) such as the thanksgiving (תודה) or the freewill offering (נדבה).

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<sup>180</sup> Cf. Klawans, “Pure Violence,” esp. 143–145; Klawans, *Purity, Sacrifice*, 56–58; David P. Wright, “Unclean and Clean (OT),” *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, 6 vols., ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 6:729–741, esp. 6:739; Frymer-Kensky, *In the Wake*, 189; Philip Peter Jenson, *Graded Holiness: A Key to the Priestly Conception of the World*, JSOTSup 106 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992), esp. 79–80, 87–88; Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 1002–1003.

<sup>181</sup> Cf. Stackert, “Political Allegory,” 217.

<sup>182</sup> Thinking in analogy with Isa 40:2.

Also, Milgrom's speculation for the leper's offerings seems artificial and induces more questions in light of his own interpretation of Lev 4–5. If leprosy were an outcome of sin in Lev 13–14, why would the patient offer both *'āšām* and *ḥaṭṭā 't*? If he could guess what sin he may have potentially committed since he knew his act as in Lev 4, then a *ḥaṭṭā 't* must be sufficient. If he could not guess since he does not remember his previous act as in Lev 5:17–19, then an *'āšām* is enough. This was indeed how Milgrom made sense of the obligation of offering a reparation offering in Lev 5:17–19, *instead of* a purification offering.<sup>183</sup> So, there is hardly any reason to offer both sacrifices in the leper's case if they were for sins. They were rather both required for purification. The offerer brought a *ḥaṭṭā 't* to purge the sancta that had been polluted by his physical impurities and an *'āšām* probably to purge his body to be ritually clean from the severe impurities to come to the courtyard of the sanctuary.<sup>184</sup> Also, if the *'ōlā<sup>h</sup>*'s expiatory function in Lev 1:4 was indeed meaningful in P's expiation system and not just a trace from a pre-Priestly or extra-Priestly tradition,<sup>185</sup> the fact that its expiatory function always appears subsequent to *ḥaṭṭā 't*<sup>186</sup> suggests to me that the *'ōlā<sup>h</sup>*'s expiation function is not independent; it is secondary if not superfluous with respect to *ḥaṭṭā 't*.<sup>187</sup>

This can only mean that the deity legislating Lev 12–15, as well as the narrator and the author, was not thinking of the possibility that leprosy and genital flux came out of unrepented sins, not to mention childbirth. Also, it should be noted that the declaration of purification (e.g.,

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<sup>183</sup> Milgrom, *Cult and Conscience*, 74–83.

<sup>184</sup> Baden and Moss, "Origin and Interpretation," 648–650. Cf. Noth, *Leviticus*, 108–109; Levine, *Leviticus*, 87; Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 851; Schwartz, *JSB*, 226–227.

<sup>185</sup> The *'ōlā<sup>h</sup>* may have been the main expiatory and propitiatory sacrificial offering outside P. Cf. Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 153–154, 175–177; Nihan, *Priestly Torah*, 169–170.

<sup>186</sup> Cf. Rendtorff, *Leviticus*, 36–38.

<sup>187</sup> Milgrom's acknowledgement of the expiatory function of *'ōlā<sup>h</sup>* raises some questions. For Milgrom, as well as for many others, the *ḥaṭṭā 't* is the only sacrifice that purges the sancta. Does the *'ōlā<sup>h</sup>* also purge the outer altar with its blood manipulation? If not, did a sin that required the *'ōlā<sup>h</sup>* expiation not contaminate the sanctuary? How come? Is it because the sin that required the *'ōlā<sup>h</sup>* expiation is not the violation of the commandments (cf. Lev 4:2)?

וטהר “he shall be clean”) replaces the declaration of forgiveness (e.g., ונסלח לו “he shall be forgiven”), among others, in Lev 12:7–8; 14:19–20, 53.<sup>188</sup> Though it may be possible that the D-stem כפ"ר implies the removal of sin and the consequent forgiveness at least in some cases,<sup>189</sup> the G-stem חט"א and אש"ם verbs that refer to sinfulness and culpability are completely absent, apart from the two instances of the D-stem חט"א and the designations for the relevant offerings חטאת and אשם; טה"ר and טמ"א dominate, instead.<sup>190</sup> This means that Lev 12–15 is only about purification and not about expiation. Furthermore, the diagnostic procedures in Lev 14–15 are not about the investigation of concealed sin.

Elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible, such great and punitive diseases as leprosy and genital flux are not necessarily punitive in P’s world.<sup>191</sup> So, Feder correctly concedes that the present form of Lev 12–15 does not indicate an original context and the offerings brought by these patients were purificatory in the Priestly system.<sup>192</sup> In a similar manner, van der Toorn admits that the natural causes of disease were recognized and diagnosed in Mesopotamia and in ancient Israel and Judah: e.g., 2 Kgs 4:38–40.<sup>193</sup> Note his more general qualification following his turning down of pure fortuitousness in the Semitic worldview:

On account of the world-view of causality illness could not be interpreted as a purely fortuitous event; *yet* it was by no means automatically considered a sign of divine reproof. Nature was an objective reality, invested with powers that could have a detrimental effect on human health. Man himself was subject to the contingencies of all living creatures, unable to escape their common fate: weakness and decay, culminating in

<sup>188</sup> Cf. Baden and Moss, “Origin and Interpretation,” 646–647. More broadly, Klawans, *Impurity and Sin*, 21–42 sharply distinguishes ritual purification and (moral) expiation.

<sup>189</sup> Cf. Gilders, *Blood Ritual*, 135–139 (esp. 138).

<sup>190</sup> The D-stem חט"א in these two cases (Num 14:49, 52) refers to the decontamination of the fungous house and has nothing to do with sin.

<sup>191</sup> Most thoroughly argued by Baden and Moss, “Origin and Interpretation,” 643–662. *Pace* van der Toorn, *Sin and Sanction*, 72–76; Kiuchi, “Paradox,” 505–514; Levine, *Leviticus*, 75; Milgrom, *Cult and Conscience*, 80–82; Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 856–857; Christophe Nihan, “Forms and Functions of Purity in Leviticus,” in *Purity and the Forming of Religious Traditions in the Ancient Mediterranean World and Ancient Judaism*, eds. Christian Frevel and Christophe Nihan, *Dynamics in the History of Religion 3* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 311–367, esp. 332.

<sup>192</sup> Feder, *Blood Expiation*, 142. See also Feder, “Behind the Scenes,” 1–26, esp. 16–18. In this later study, he attributes this idea of P to P’s monotheistic scheme, adopting Kaufmann, *Religion of Israel*, 60–121 in general.

<sup>193</sup> Van der Toorn, *Sin and Sanction*, 69–70; also, Scurlock and Andersen, *Diagnoses*, 11.

death. Only the extraordinary was directly reduced to the “supernatural”, and even then sorcerers and spirits disputed the authorship of the gods. Thus the diseases that were explained as indubitable sanctions are few.<sup>194</sup>

Moreover, a pure accident was not unthinkable, at least theoretically, in the Hebrew Bible. The following texts are worth considering:

#### A. 1 Sam 6:9

וראיתם אם דרך גבולו יעלה בית שמש הוא עשה לנו את הרעה הגדולה הזאת ואם לא וידענו כי לא ידו נגעה בנו מקרה הוא היה לנו:

And you will see: if it goes up toward its territory, i.e., Beth-shemesh, he did this great disaster to us. But if not, we will know that it was not his hand that struck us. It happened to us *by chance*.

The word מקרה is straightforwardly contrasted with divine punishment. The only possible nuance of מקרה, at least here, is a pure accident. Yet van der Toorn argues that מקרה must divulge the Aegean background of the Philistines since he thinks that this concept is close to the Greek τῦχη and appears predominantly in Ecclesiastes of the Hellenistic period.<sup>195</sup> Whether or not Ecclesiastes is Hellenistic<sup>196</sup> and whether or not the origin of the Philistines is Aegean, his historical conjecture of the Aegean background of 1 Sam 6:9 is overly historicist and tenuous. And it does not explain the other attestation of מקרה in 1 Sam 20:26.

#### B. 1 Sam 20:26

ולא דבר שאול מאומה ביום ההוא כי אמר מקרה הוא בלתי טהור הוא כי לא טהור:

But Saul did not say anything on that day because he thought it is coincidence that he is not clean, i.e., (thought) that he is not clean.<sup>197</sup>

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<sup>194</sup> Van der Toorn, *Sin and Sanction*, 72 (my italics).

<sup>195</sup> Van der Toorn, *Sin and Sanction*, 71–72.

<sup>196</sup> While many scholars date Ecclesiastes to the Hellenistic era because they allegedly find Greek ideas in it, see the objection in C. L. Seow, *Ecclesiastes: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 18C (New York: Doubleday, 1997), 16, 21. Seow dates it to the Persian era mainly because there are no Greek loanwords. For the majority view, see Michael V. Fox, *The JPS Bible Commentary: Ecclesiastes* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2004), xiv, xxix.

<sup>197</sup> The present text is redundant and perhaps conflated. See McCarter, *I Samuel*, 338.



Saul thought that David was not able to participate in the royal cult because he was ritually impure. Saul by no means considers David's impurity to have happened by divine providence. Thus, מקרה is likely an authentic Hebrew word apposite, even if not exclusively, to express the pure accident if one does not think that this text is also Hellenistic.<sup>198</sup>

### C. Deut 19:4b–5a

אשר יכה את רעהו בבלי דעת והוא לא שָׁנָא לוֹ מִתְּמַל שְׁלֶשֶׁם: אֲשֶׁר יבֹא אֶת רֵעֵהוּ בִיעֵר לַחֲטָב עֲצִים וְנִדְחָה יָדוֹ  
בְּגֵרוֹן לְכַרֵּת הָעֵץ וְנִשְׁלַח הַבְּרִזָּל מִן הָעֵץ וּמָצָא אֶת רֵעֵהוּ וּמָת

If anyone kills his neighbor unknowingly, while he had never hated him previously—namely, if he goes with his neighbor to the forest to cut wood and his hand swings with the axe to cut off the tree and the axe loosens from the wooden handle and it finds his neighbor and he dies . . . .

The idea of pure chance is telling when Exod 21:13a is compared with Deut 19:4b, which reused the former<sup>199</sup>: “If he did not lie in wait but God moved his hand (אֲשֶׁר לֹא צָדָה וְהָאֱלֹהִים אָנָּה) (לידו).” Deut 19:4b hypothesizes a purely accidental manslaughter case, whereas Exod 21:13a ascribes this case to the deity. It is hard to decide whether the author of Exod 21:13a meant literally a divine intervention or merely used a frozen idiom, like the phrase “Oh, my God” in English, and whether the author of Deut 19:4 understood the divine cause (וְהָאֱלֹהִים אָנָּה לִידוֹ) in Exod 21:13 as merely frozen and idiomatic or intentionally secularized the pious expression. What is indisputable is that neither the killer nor the victim met this situation in Deut 19:4b–5a by the scheme of anyone including the deity, not to mention their own volition. This case was fortuitous. This is supported by the later revisionary texts of Deut 19:1–13, i.e., Num 35:9–34

<sup>198</sup> For a brief, general consideration of מקרה, see H. Ringgren, “קָרָה *qārā*; קָרָא *qārā*’ II; מִקְרָה *miqreh*; קָרִי *qerī*,” *TDOT* 13:159–162, esp. 13:161–162.

<sup>199</sup> Stackert, *Rewriting the Torah*, 45–46.

and Josh 20:1–9, which emphatically add בפתע “abruptly” (Num 35:22) and בשגגה “inadvertently” (Num 35:11, 15; Josh 20:3, 9).<sup>200</sup>

In addition, there are illnesses neither from (either known or hidden) sins nor from fortuitousness in the ancient Near East. Even in these cases, the causes are divine but of the lesser gods, i.e., demons. While the latter may act according to the will and assignment of the higher (angry) gods, some of them also do so by their own sinister character.<sup>201</sup> Yet this is not the case in P. First, the Priestly deity is not an angry god by nature. Rather, he cares for his people, which benefits his own well-being because they can serve him better with opulence and plenty.<sup>202</sup> Also, there are no autonomous demons in P. As mentioned previously, there are certainly potential demons in the sense of lesser divine beings in P: e.g., the destroyer (משחית) in Exod 12:13, 23 and Azazel in Lev 16:8, 10, 26. Isabel Craz attributes autonomy to these beings as demons in the sense that they can act on their own will, even against God’s will.<sup>203</sup> I wonder if this can be supported with the text. The destroyer acts according to the divine will in Exod 12. Also, P avoids mentioning Azazel’s personality and its relationship with the Priestly deity. It is mentioned only to designate an impure place. There is no good reason to exclude the possibility that P considered Azazel as Satan in Job 1–2, who is subordinate to YHWH and cannot act without the deity’s permission. At best, these two beings, especially Azazel, are blind motifs.<sup>204</sup> The causes of the demons apart from hidden sins for illnesses, therefore, should have been

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<sup>200</sup> See Stackert, *Rewriting the Torah*, 31–112 for the literary reuses among Exod 21:12–14; Deut 19:1–13; Num 35:9–34; and Josh 20:1–9

<sup>201</sup> See van der Toorn, *Sin and Sanction*, 70; Hundley, *Keeping Heaven*, 124–125; F. A. M. Wiggermann, “Lamaštu, Daughter of Anu. A Profile,” in *Birth in Babylonia and the Bible: Its Mediterranean Setting*, by M. Stol, CM 14 (Groningen: Styx, 2000), 217–249 esp. 224–236 (the earlier Dutch version is referred to by van der Toorn, *Sin and Sanction*, 193n202).

<sup>202</sup> Stackert, “Political Allegory,” 217.

<sup>203</sup> Isabel Craz, “Priests, Pollution and the Demonic: Evaluating Impurity in the Hebrew Bible in Light of Assyro-Babylonian Texts,” *JANER* 14.1 (2014): 68–86, esp. 83–86.

<sup>204</sup> Cf. van der Toorn, *Sin and Sanction*, 70–71; Hundley, *Keeping Heaven*, 197–199.

redistributed either to the hidden sins or to fortuitousness in P's world. (This demonology does not necessarily represent actual religious sentiments in historical Israel and Judah.)

I have strived to show that not every suffering reminds an ignorant or unrepentant sinner of his hidden sin. In other words, "suffering guilt" cannot suggest a purely objective situation to bring an expiatory offering. Some subjective aspect should still be there in the meaning of אָשָׁם. To suffer *guilt*, the sufferer needs to be *conscious* of his guiltiness; otherwise, that suffering is supposed by the sufferer as random misfortune. We have to avoid two extremes, one being too subjective and the other being too objective. Both positions have their own merits. Therefore, Milgrom's "to feel guilt" or Kiuchi's "to realize guilt" should not be taken out altogether. At the same time, that consciousness does not have to be so articulate as remorse or sure knowledge, which I argued does not render all the attestations of אָשָׁם consistently.

I think Milgrom's underemphasized aspect of "to feel guilt" should be foregrounded in the understanding of the consequential אָשָׁם. Though Milgrom championed the feeling of remorse for the sinner's forgiveness in the Priestly expiation, he knows it cannot explain some attestations. It is particularly untenable especially with his own reading of Lev 5:17–19, as I explained above, if his understanding of אָשָׁם is "*guilt feeling*." So, he includes the fear or the suspicion of guilt in his idea of "*guilt feeling*" for Lev 5:17–19, along with remorse.<sup>205</sup> Yet fear or suspicion may be relevant to but is not remorse; I am skeptical that the two different feelings constitute the consequential אָשָׁם as if they are two sides of the same coin. Rather, fear/suspicion is a better candidate for the meaning of the consequential אָשָׁם. To have fear of hidden sin is a frequent motif in biblical texts as well as other ancient Near Eastern texts. Hidden sins were considered to potentially affect the relationship between a deity and a human being and

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<sup>205</sup> Milgrom, "Cultic אָשָׁם," 117n11; Milgrom, *Cult and Conscience*, 74–83.

eventually cause adversities to the latter. Thus, the consequential אשׁוּׁ in P’s cult should be a more internal experience than “to suffer guilt’s consequence” and a less confident psychological state than “to feel remorse” or “to realize guilt.” I propose “to suspect or fear (to have incurred) guilt.”<sup>206</sup> The suspicion might come to mind from various venues. A sheer subjective fear or suspicion without any external, objective sign could be possible, as in 2 Sam 24:10 mentioned above. Then, חטאת and אשׁם could have been offered even prophylactically as Job’s burnt offerings for his children in Job 1:5, at least, in theory. Yet P is silent about this matter. Rather, the majority of the biblical and extra-biblical evidence shows that a trigger to suspect guilt is much more frequently an unexpected and unmanageable suffering.<sup>207</sup> This corresponds well to the deity who punished sins in the flood narrative. Sklar’s “to suffer guilt’s consequence” should necessarily imply “to suspect/fear that one is suffering guilt’s consequence.”<sup>208</sup>

That said, remorse is not even a prerequisite for forgiveness in the Priestly expiation contra Milgrom. Such a psychological state is not even directly and explicitly required for forgiveness in the Hebrew Bible. D. Lambert argues that biblical scholarship has uncritically read a contemporary concept of repentance in the sense of an interior, agentive, reflective event into biblical languages and practices such as fasting, prayer, confession, and שׁוּׁב (commonly understood with respect to “repentance”). These practices were never conceptualized in the Hebrew Bible as modes of repentance until later development in rabbinic Judaism and early

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<sup>206</sup> This feeling might come with varying degrees. If one experiences suffering, he might search its cause. If he knew his wrong, as in Lev 5:1 and 5:21–22, his suspicion might be more or less strengthened. If he remembered his past acts, not knowing his sin, as in Lev 4 and 5:15a, he might suspect one of those acts as the cause of his suffering but may not be sure. If he did not even remember what he had done, as in Lev 5:17a, he still might be afraid of the potential wrong but would never be able to guess what sin he might have committed.

<sup>207</sup> Milgrom, *Cult and Conscience*, 74–83; van der Toorn, *Sin and Sanction*, 94–99.

<sup>208</sup> In this latter case, it is more a matter of the place of emphasis, while the differences are subtle between mine, Sklar’s and even the other options. A view similar to Sklar was also raised by Hieke, *Leviticus 1–15*, 86–87, 260–261. Yet he stresses the cognizant aspect as Kiuchi and reflects it in his translation “die Schuld wird bewusst (the sin becomes known).” He broadens and somewhat abstracts the triggers to realize guilt as any case that separates the sinner from God (*ein von Gott trennenden Tatbestand, eine Trennung von Gott*, cf. pp.87, 261).

Christianity. They were rather appeals, pleas, and oracle-seeking activities to mitigate the affliction ensuing sin.<sup>209</sup>

His observation tallies well with the character of the Priestly deity in the law and narrative together. The Priestly narrator describes the deity as not so much interested in reading people's minds, even if he could, as the other Pentateuchal sources. The deity immediately penetrates Sarah's skeptic mind in Gen 18:12–15 (J). Yet while the Priestly narrator reveals Abraham's thoughts to the reader, the deity seems to be ignorant of it until the narrator lets Abraham speak out his internal skepticism explicitly in Gen 17:15–22 (P). Abraham's internal skepticism was about his old age as well as Sarah's, but the deity does not respond to this, as noted in the previous chapter.<sup>210</sup> Compared to E and D, the deity rarely appeals to human feelings or volition to motivate the Israelites to obey the law in P. For instance, D stresses the sincerity and loyalty (אה"ב) of the mind (לב and ללב) numerous times.<sup>211</sup> The Deuteronomic deity is obsessed with figuring out people's minds, so he bothered to try the Israelites with tricky tests even as they were otherwise supposedly obeying (e.g., Deut 8:2 and especially 13:4). Yet P's deity does not need to search the human mind since he assumes a "positive anthropology" that the people are willing to obey his commands.<sup>212</sup> As far as the Israelites *behave* according to his commandments, the deity does not doubt the sincerity of their hearts if he is ever interested in it. This accords with my previous observation in the earlier narrative that the deity delivered Noah because of his *actions* in Gen 6:9b in contrast with J's evaluation of the inner state of the human mind with some moral labels such as righteousness (צדק) and evil (רע"ע) in Gen 6:5, 9aβ. If

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<sup>209</sup> D. Lambert, *How Repentance*, 151–187 and *passim*.

<sup>210</sup> I do not mean by this and the following comparisons that P knew or responded to the other Pentateuchal sources.

<sup>211</sup> Though the main speaker in D is Moses, he is conveying the divine words that he previously received and what he requires may not be different than what the deity would. Moreover, there are a few times that Moses either quotes the divine speech directly, as in Deut 5:29, or explicitly attributes his own speech to the divine will, as in Deut 8:2; 10:12; 13:4.

<sup>212</sup> Stackert, "Darkness," 671–672; Stackert, "Political Allegory," 217.

there is any intimation of remorse or contrition, it is only assumed and subsumed in the external actions, i.e., compliance with the divine commandments.

I raised three objections to the idea that repentance, if it implies such emotions as remorse and contrition, is a prerequisite for forgiveness declared at the end of the sacrificial ritual in Lev 4–5. First, the word אָשׁוּם is unlikely to mean “to feel guilt.” It does not consistently explain all the conditions in Lev 4–5, especially Lev 5:17. Second, the guilt feeling is not really conceptualized in the Hebrew Bible in general, as D. Lambert argued. Third, the deity is not interested in reading human minds in the Priestly narrative and law. The deity judges humans by their actions. If not remorse, what enables divine forgiveness? It is the entire sacrificial rite since וְנִסְלַח לוֹ “he is forgiven” appears always at the end of each ritual prescription in Lev 4–5. Yet the question still remains: Why and how does the sacrificial rite effectuate forgiveness? I will try to answer this question with more concrete examples in Lev 4–5.

#### 5.2.4 Forgiveness and Human Responsibility

The answer is simple. The declaration of forgiveness וְנִסְלַח לוֹ comes always at the end of the given sacrificial expiatory process in Lev 4–5. This means that forgiveness comes after the sacrificial rite is completed and not before. Then, what is forgiven? Milgrom said what the purification offering expiates is the contamination that the sinner’s sin polluted the Tent of Meeting. The sinner’s act of sin was already forgiven by repentance.<sup>213</sup> The sins that consequently polluted the sancta, as the physical impurities, were yet to be cleansed, by the purification offering. The purification offering did the same function in both expiatory and purificatory contexts as the *only* sacrificial offering that purges (כִּפֵּר) the sancta. This is why

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<sup>213</sup> Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 245, 256. But see critiques in Gane, *Cult and Character*, esp. 273–274; Gane, “Privative Preposition,” 209–222; Nihan, *Priestly Torah*, 178–179; Hundley, *Keeping Heaven*, 137.

Milgrom maintained to render *hattā' t* as “purification offering” and כפִּיר as “to purge” in both contexts of the purification offering. Sklar, though not as radical as to argue that the sinful act was forgiven before the sacrificial offering, largely follows Milgrom in this point that the contamination of the sancta is considered sin in P. Sklar is reluctant to call this sin, and he is also reluctant to call the defiled person who contracted major impurities and consequently contaminated the sancta a sinner. Yet he certainly implied it when he said “the major pollutions do not only *defile*, they also *endanger*” because they incite the divine wrath; not only the sinner but also the defiled person needs expiation in addition to purification.<sup>214</sup> For Sklar, the D-stem כפִּיר is a denominative verb derived from *kōp̄er* “ransom” throughout P,<sup>215</sup> while he cannot deny that כפִּיר refers to a rite of purgation in the impurity context.<sup>216</sup> Hence, he thinks there is no exclusively purificatory offering and כפִּיר was consistently used with the expiatory nuance for both the sin and the impurity contexts of the purification offering.

I think Sklar articulated well his point that sins and impurities are so close in P in terms of their consequences and remedies. Even so, it is hard to believe from the text that the contamination of the sancta from afar, whether by a sinful act or by a contraction of impurities, is considered sin in P. Most of all, it is never explicitly said so.<sup>217</sup> I already discussed that no sinfulness is at least verbally (or even conceptually) indicated in contracting impurities in Lev 12–15. Sklar’s more or less explicit example comes from Num 6:9–11 when a Nazirite vower was inadvertently contaminated by a human corpse. I cite relevant parts of Sklar’s translation of

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<sup>214</sup> Sklar, *Priestly Conceptions*, 130 (his italics).

<sup>215</sup> Sklar, *Priestly Conceptions*, 127–134 for his understanding of כפִּיר and “ransom” in the impurity context. In general, see his chapter two. Cf. Levine, *In the Presence*, 56–67; Janowski, *Sühne als Heilsgeschehen*, 153–174; Kiuchi, *Purification Offering*, 106–107.

<sup>216</sup> Sklar, *Priestly Conceptions*, 105–127 (esp. 127).

<sup>217</sup> Even the remote contamination of the sancta is an inference, though the best one in my mind. It has not been without oppositions and alternatives: see among others, Maccoby, *Ritual and Morality*, esp. 165–208 (chs. 14–16); Gane, *Cult and Character*, especially 144–197 and 217–284 (chs. 7–8 and 10–12); Cranx, *Atonement*, 108–112.

the text: “And if a person dies very suddenly (בְּפֶתַע פְּתָאִים) beside him [i.e. the Nazirite], and he defiles his consecrated head, . . . the priest shall offer one for a purification offering and the other for a burnt offering, and make atonement for him, *because he sinned* by reason of the dead body (וְכִפֶּר עָלָיו מֵאֲשֶׁר חָטָא עַל־הַנֶּפֶשׁ).”<sup>218</sup> According to him, the Nazirite’s sinful state is undeniable because of the G-stem חט”א “he sinned.” Though the Nazirite did not do anything wrong deliberately but merely contracted the corpse-impurities inadvertently, he was said to have committed sin. Since the Nazirite’s head that he contaminated is a sanctum, Sklar concludes that the contamination of any sancta, including the sanctuary remotely, is considered sin.<sup>219</sup> Yet at least two scholars have pointed out that the sin in Num 6:11 is not the contraction of a physical impurity but a violation of YHWH’s interdiction in Num 6:6–7 that a Nazirite should not be defiled by anyone’s dead body.<sup>220</sup> The Nazirite’s sin being hypothetically discussed is his *inadvertent violation* of the divine command, and he is responsible to purge the sanctuary.<sup>221</sup> There is no reason whatsoever that the sin here is the remote contamination of the sanctuary out of the contraction of the corpse impurity. Thus, the ransom is not required to purge the remote contamination of the sancta in Num 6:11: “The priest shall offer one for a purification offering and the other for a burnt offering, and *effect purgation* for him, because he sinned *by reason of the dead body*” (my italics).

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<sup>218</sup> Sklar, *Priestly Conceptions*, 131 (his italics, brackets, and parentheses).

<sup>219</sup> Sklar admits that this is an indirect support for his argument since what the Nazirite defiled is his head, not the sanctuary.

<sup>220</sup> Gane, *Cult and Character*, 145n3; followed by Nihan, *Priestly Torah*, 173n280. Gane, of course, does not relate Num 6:11 with the remote contamination of the sancta since he denies it anyways. In addition to the violation of the divine command, the contamination and the desecration of the sancta corresponding to the situation in Lev 5:15–16 is a problem here. This is why the Nazirite brings the reparation offering ( *’āsām*) in Num 6:12 as Nihan also pointed out; previously in Milgrom, *Numbers*, 47–48.

<sup>221</sup> Most likely, the outer altar is purged because this is a lay person’s private ritual. Even if the Nazirite’s holiness was considered commensurate with the priests, at least temporarily, the inner room rite was preserved only for the high priest or the community. The sacrificial animals offered (two birds, cf. Num 6:10) disqualify the latter possibility.



What then? In Lev 4:35b, the reason that the sinner had to bring a *ḥaṭṭā'ūt* was “because of his sin that he sinned (על הטאתו אשר הטא),” namely, the act that he should have not done by the divine command.<sup>222</sup> Likewise, “his sin that he sinned” in Lev 5:6 and 5:10 refers to the unfulfilled obligations that he should have done in four enumerated cases in Lev 5:1–4; Lev 5:13 explicitly says “because of his sin that he sinned *in one of these things* (על הטאתו אשר הטא מאחת (מאלה)).” YHWH required a *ḥaṭṭā'ūt* offering not to forgive<sup>223</sup> the sin of the remote contamination of the sanctuary, which is a *consequence* of a sin rather than an additional sin. This is true for the reparation offering (*'āšām*) as well. A similar expression “because of his inadvertence that he erred inadvertently (על שגגתו אשר שגג)” supports that the aim of the *'āšām* offering is to deal with his “wrongful act,” not the latter’s derivative, as I mentioned above. Lev 5:26 is most explicit: “he shall be forgiven for anything that *he does* to (consequently) incur guilt with it (ונסלה לו על (אחת מכל אשר יעשה לאשמה בה)).”<sup>224</sup>

<sup>222</sup> The meaning is identical even as the preposition *מן* replaces *על*. See Milgrom, “Preposition *מן*,” 161–162.

<sup>223</sup> The conceptual subject of the impersonal passive N-stem verb *סליח* is YHWH, whether forgiveness depends on the divine will (Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 245) or is automatic (Knohl, *Sanctuary*, 135). I think they both are partially right; the truth must be somewhere between them (see below).

<sup>224</sup> As I argued with Lev 4:3, whether *אשמה* is a feminine form of the infinitive construct or a feminine noun, the preposition *ל* prefixed to *אשמה* may be understood as resultative. Sklar insists that this infinitive construct form *אשמה* should be translated with the stative meaning consistently with the other verbal uses of the word in Lev 4–5. One of his reasons may be that the preposition *ל* with a personal object is not modifying *אשם* in this verse as in Lev 5:19, following Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 243, 334–335, 339 (cf. Sklar, *Priestly Conceptions*, 30n61). Even if *אשמה* is an infinitive construct rather than a noun, however, it may mean “to incur guilt” in this verse *pace* Sklar, *Priestly Conceptions*, 24–25n47. In at least two other cases (Ezek 22:4; Hos 13:1), *אשם* with the preposition *ב* (of cause or of instrument) potentially means “to incur guilt.”

Some may still argue from a morphological perspective that the feminine infinitival form comes usually from stative verbs (GKC, 123, §45d) and that “to incur guilt” is not correct for this form. However, only in Lev 5:19 within Lev 4–5 (and in Num 5:7 in the similar context), *אשם* appears in the *qātal* (*qatala*, usually fientive/active) form and means “to incur guilt.” The rest of the instances in Lev 4–5 have the *qātēl* (*qatila*, usually stative) form and may likely be translated differently. Yet it should be noted that this morphological distinction is not found in the prefix conjugation of *אשם*, for which only *yiqtal* is attested. While *yiqtal* form is stative and paired with the *qātēl* suffix conjugation form in most of the verbs, it is fientive and paired with *qātal* in rare instances (cf. *למי*, *למי*, *למי*). The fientive meaning of *אשם* may be added to this rare *qātal-yiqtal* group (cf. Lev 5:19; Num 5:7; Ezek 22:4; Hos 13:1). Alternatively, the *qātal* form of *אשם* is merely a trace of an old form. Simply, we do not have enough attestations of the infinitive construct or other indisputable forms of *אשם* to differentiate its fientive and stative forms. Thus, we cannot expect that the morphological form of *אשמה* will necessarily inform its meaning. Its meaning is neither morphologically nor syntactically fixed with the present evidence. Its context should decide between stative and fientive. There is no reason that *אשמה* has to be rendered identically in Lev 5:24 and 5:26. Cf. Lambdin

How does the purification offering, which purges (the pollutants of) sins that clung to the sancta, bring about forgiveness? I think this reveals the core idea of the Priestly expiation: the responsibility and restoration. The sinner's sinful act always produces a consequence. Even a private violation of moral values or of religious norms results in a substantial consequence in P, even as they are not necessarily related to interpersonal matters. The Priestly (implied) author literarily created a world that every sin, however conceptual in the real world, brings about a physical outcome. The connection and continuation of the Priestly narrative and law is no more striking than in the idea of the Priestly expiation. The deity who made the humans in his image is physical, anthropomorphic, and the summit of the social hierarchy in the Priestly world. The sins that pollute his house are sensorily dirty and annoying to the deity as much as the physical impurities. Both the sinner and the person who contracted physical impurities bear responsibility to cleanse the divine house that he messed up. There is always a consequence of a sinful act, and the consequence cannot be simply cancelled. He cannot revoke his sinful act. Yet he is able and ought to restore the consequence of what he did. That is his responsibility.

In the Priestly expiation, the sinner can cleanse what he defiled in the sanctuary as a consequence of his sin. After making that restoration, he can expect divine forgiveness with respect to his sin. In this sense, Milgrom is at least *partially* right to say that the offering does not bring forgiveness, but rather forgiveness depends on remorse and divine will.<sup>225</sup> Divine forgiveness is a prerogative reserved for the deity. Yet as I said above, the deity is not interested in the sinner's mind and emotion. If any such psychological state exists in the Priestly expiation, it is implied in bringing his offering. The violator of the divine law now follows the divine

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and Thomas O. Lambdin and John Huehnergard, *The Historical Grammar of Classical Hebrew: An Outline* (unpublished), 56; JM, 116–120 (§41b–f); WO, 363–364 (§22.2.1).

<sup>225</sup> Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 245, 256. Similarly, Gane, *Cult and Character*, esp. 380; Hundley, *Keeping Heaven*, 146.

remedy regulation. And his restoration of the purity of the sancta brings forgiveness. He sinned by his act and now he is forgiven also by his (counter-)act. Repentance is action, not emotion, if there is such a concept in P. When he takes responsibility, then the deity may know his willingness to repent. Yet such action might be more precisely appreciated as the restoration of loyalty instead of repentance/remorse in light of the royal presentation of the deity in both P's narrative and law. P has no word for repentance and does not seem to describe it even in a roundabout way.<sup>226</sup>

But Milgrom's supposition that the deity is yet to determine the offering's efficacy is less likely.<sup>227</sup> The deity already set the principle as he had set the order for the operation and maintenance of the world in Gen 1:1–2:4a. In relevant conditions, the prescribed procedures bring forgiveness automatically by the efficacy of the deity's own set of rules, namely, his own predetermination of efficacy. Divine pardon has already been determined and guaranteed when the law was given. Knohl, opposing Milgrom, is also partially right to say that the passive construction of *סל"ה* expresses "the impersonal nature of the ritual" as if forgiveness is "independent of God's response, but an automatic and necessary consequence of the cleansing act performed by the priest."<sup>228</sup> It is automatic because the deity *willed* and set it to be so. Knohl is further supported when forgiveness is compared to the declaration of purity. After the priest effects purgation of the sancta by the purification offering, the purity of the defiled person is obtained and declared. This is obviously an automatic result after cleansing both his body and the sancta. As is "and s/he shall be clean (*וטהר*)"<sup>229</sup> in the impurity context, so is "and he shall be

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<sup>226</sup> See a similar understanding in the case for the Day of Atonement ritual in Gane, *Cult and Character*, 379.

<sup>227</sup> Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 245.

<sup>228</sup> Knohl, *Sanctuary*, 135, 135n42. Similarly, Feder, "Mechanics of Retribution," 155–156; cf. Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, 346–347.

<sup>229</sup> Cf. Lev 12:7, 8; 14:20.

forgiven וְנִסְלַח לוֹ” that replaces the former in the sin context. Of course, this similarity by no means cancels the distinction between sins and impurities, which I argued above. If how he acted was not sin but the contraction of major impurities, and he goes through the ritual decontamination for both his body and the sancta, he is now officially integrated in the community since he was in quarantine; the declaration is more or less a diagnostic certificate. He fully restored his relationship with his community by owning his responsibility. In the sin context, on the other hand, the declaration of forgiveness is more to restore his relationship with the deity, which was broken by his violation of the divine law.<sup>230</sup> Taking responsibility to restore the consequence of sin is the only means to restore his broken relationship with God. Integration, restoration, and forgiveness may be called the sub-values to establish שְׁלוֹמַם *šālôm*, the ultimate moral vision of the good life at which P aims.

The idea of the Priestly purification and expiation goes beyond the personal responsibility toward the deity as Marx warns after discussing the individual responsibility to the deity in Lev 1–7.<sup>231</sup> It is also a responsibility toward the community. Sins, even though they are inadvertent, contaminate the divine abode. If pollutants accumulate and are not removed properly and in a timely manner, the deity will not be able to bear it and will either depart from or punish the community. In fact, the departure of the deity is itself ominous and disastrous.<sup>232</sup> There are no such things as entirely private sins. Sins always entail communal consequences in P. The damage in the personal relationship with the deity necessarily causes cracks in the communal relationship with the deity. On the other hand, the community also bears the responsibility of personal sins. If there were rebellious individuals who refused to take their personal responsibilities, the

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<sup>230</sup> Cf. Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 245; Hieke, *Leviticus 1–15*, 261.

<sup>231</sup> Marx, “Theology of the Sacrifice,” 119.

<sup>232</sup> This is only a theoretical possibility and not a real concern in the Priestly thought because of P’s positive anthropology. See Stackert, “Darkness,” 671–672; Stackert, “Political Allegory,” 217.

community should have covered the untaken responsibilities; there were communal means to remove the untreated sins and impurities, such as the Day of Atonement ritual. Later, H elaborated on but somewhat re-personalized this communal responsibility in Lev 19:17b: “Reprove surely your neighbor so that you may not bear sin because of him.” This does not approve Milgrom’s label of the Day of Atonement ritual as “the priestly theodicy.”<sup>233</sup> Nowhere does P ignore personal responsibility.

### 5.2.5 A Potential Moral Case that Appears in the Sacrificial Law

Lev 5:20–26

<sup>20</sup> וידבר יהוה אל משה לאמר: <sup>21</sup> נפש כי תחטא ומעלה מעל ביהוה וכחש בעמיתו בפקדון או בתשומת יד או בגזל או עשק את עמיתו: <sup>22</sup> או מצא אבדה וכחש בה ונשבע על שקר על אחת מכל אשר יעשה האדם לחטא בהנה: <sup>23</sup> והיה כי יחטא ואשם והשיב את הגזלה אשר גזל או את העשק אשר עשק או את הפקדון אשר הפקד אתו או את האבדה אשר מצא: <sup>24</sup> או מכל אשר ישבע עליו לשקר ושלם אתו בראשו וחמשותיו יסף עליו לאשר הוא לו יתננו ביום אשמתו: <sup>25</sup> ואת אשמו יביא ליהוה איל תמים מן הצאן בערך לאשם אל הכהן: <sup>26</sup> וכפר עליו הכהן לפני יהוה ונסלח לו על אחת מכל אשר יעשה לאשמה בה:

20 YHWH spoke to Moses, saying: 21 When a person sins and commits a sacrilege against YHWH; namely, he lied to his neighbor in (the matter of) a deposit or security<sup>234</sup> or robbery, or oppressed his neighbor, 22 or found a lost thing and lied about it, and he swore falsely regarding one of all (matters) by which a person does to sin; 23 namely, if he sins and fears guilt, then he shall return the item he robbed or the item he exploited by oppression or the deposit that was deposited to him, or the lost item that he found 24 or anything about which he swore falsely, he shall restore it in its full price, with adding one-fifth to it, to him (the wronged), whom he (the wrongdoer) should give it, on the day when he fears his guilt. 25 Then, his reparation offering shall he bring to YHWH, an unblemished ram from the flock in your valuation<sup>235</sup> as a reparation offering to the priest. 26 The priest shall effect expiation on his behalf before YHWH and he will be forgiven regarding one of all that he did to incur guilt because of it.

<sup>233</sup> Pace Milgrom, “Israel’s Sanctuary,” 397–398; Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 260.

<sup>234</sup> Westbrook, *Cuneiform Law*, 23, 28n100.

<sup>235</sup> This is a literal translation of בערך. For helpful discussions for the phrase, see Levine, *In the Presence*, 95–100; Nihan, *Priestly Torah*, 246–247.

This set of laws seems, at first, to be concerned with interpersonal, moral matters. This is striking because these laws appear in the midst of the cultic instructions and because this may be one of the few cases, if not the only one, that explicitly deals with moral topics in P. Yet Knohl resolutely argues that the opposite is the case. According to Knohl, there are two kinds of sins that correspond to two kinds of treatments, respectively, in this law. First, moral wrongs that cause monetary damages can be redressed only by monetary restitution with an additional one-fifth. Second, a false oath, which is a cultic sin, cannot be compensated without a sacrificial offering. The reason that this law appears in P is only because of the false oath. Without the listed moral crimes would P still legislate the offering for the false oath, but not the other way around. Then, why did P bother to list such moral crimes? Ironically, Knohl boldly claims, P wanted to enunciate the separation between morality and cult and to stress its sole concern for cult.<sup>236</sup>

However, it is hard to believe that the interpersonal offences specifically and carefully listed with technical terms in Lev 5:21–22, even though each was supposed to be combined with the false oath, are of no importance to the meaning of the text. These offences—lying to one’s neighbor about a deposit, security, or robber; oppressing one’s neighbor; or finding and lying about a lost item—share economic nature. In addition, Raymond Westbrook plausibly suggests that these economic offences are not merely interpersonal but assume the abuse of power.<sup>237</sup> Besides the physical threat such as force and murder, I can hardly come up with any other violence that is more noxious to human peace and well-being and more common in human life than economic conflicts and the abuse of power. It rather seems to me that P carefully chose and presented these universal offences that humankind (האדם) commits as *representative* of moral

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<sup>236</sup> Knohl, *Sanctuary*, 139–140 (see also pp.175–179, 229).

<sup>237</sup> Westbrook, *Cuneiform Law*, 15–38 (esp. 23–38).

sins to give a moral teaching. I argue in this section that P teaches the means to preserve the value of human peace and well-being (שלום) with the *combined* remedy of the compensation and the sacrifice for these moral offences *combined* with the religious offence: i.e., responsibility and restoration.

The syntax of this text is somewhat complex, not least because of the intermingled instances of “or (או)” and “and (ו).” Two interpretations were proposed for syntactic relations in Lev 5:21–22. Bernard S. Jackson argued that the false oath (ונשבע על שקר) was attached to the lost item case only in Lev 5:22, not to the previous offences in Lev 5:21.<sup>238</sup> If so, finding a lost item, lying about it, and the false oath constitute a single sin (מצא אבדה וכחש בה ונשבע על שקר), linked by the alternative conjunction “or (או)” with the other crimes that do not involve a false oath. In his reading, the sins listed are basically moral and the religious oath was secondary and of no great importance. The problem with this understanding is that it leaves the phrase “regarding one of all (matters) by which a person does to sin (על אחת מכל אשר יעשה האדם לחטא (בהנהגה))” hanging alone. Otherwise, this על prepositional phrase should be connected to “when a person sins and commits a sacrilege against YHWH (נפש כי תחטא ומעלה מעל ביהוה)” in Lev 5:21a, which is too far and interrupted by so many clauses. Either way, it is grammatically somewhat strained and leads Jackson to posit that the text went through a literary development along with a historical development of the practice of the oath.

Yet there is an alternative reading. Milgrom and Wells, among others, point to the “and (wāw)” that links the false oath and all the previous crimes and the “or (או)” that connects each crime. This means that the false oath applies to each crime. In other words, a person may do one

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<sup>238</sup> Bernard S. Jackson, *Theft in Early Jewish Law* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1972), 244–246.

of the listed crimes along with a false oath.<sup>239</sup> This reading does not cause any syntactical problem and unnecessary doubt for the coherence of the text.

While this reading corresponds to Knohl's, Milgrom does not necessarily support Knohl's interpretation that this law reveals the indifference to morality and the sharp separation between cult and morality in P's law. He stresses that it is P that legislated the additional one-fifth fine. "Even if the cases were not compounded by a false oath, P would have maintained the 20 percent fine" for interpersonal crimes.<sup>240</sup> And he also points to Lev 5:24b–25: "He shall restore it in its full price, with adding one-fifth to it, to him (the wronged) . . . on the day when he fears his guilt. Then, his reparation offering shall he bring to YHWH, an unblemished ram from the flock in your valuation as a reparation offering to the priest." The criminal should make restitution to the victim *before* he brings the reparation offering to the deity; "in matters of justice man takes priority over God."<sup>241</sup>

At first sight, it may seem to corroborate Knohl's separation by dividing the human restitution and the cultic compensation. Yet distinction is not separation. And P, on the contrary, strives hard to connect these two distinctive elements. It is worth noting that the conditions to bring the reparation offering is said "*one of all* (matters) *מכל אהת* by which a person does to sin." The sin is not merely a false oath apart from the interpersonal offence. The sin is one of the acts listed. The listed sins are combinations of an interpersonal offence and a false oath. The interpersonal offence and the false oath do not stand as two separate sins, one as a social crime and the other as sacrilege. Rather, they are two components of a single sin.

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<sup>239</sup> Milgrom, *Cult and Conscience*, 84–89, esp. 85nn299–300; Wells, *Law of Testimony*, 139; Noth, *Leviticus*, 49 (but he differentiates the false oath in Lev 5:24 from another in Lev 5:22); Levine, *Leviticus*, 32–33; Knohl, *Sanctuary*, 139–140; Nihan, *Priestly Torah*, 249–250; Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, 373; Hieke, *Leviticus 1–10*, 285–286 (also, 287–288).

<sup>240</sup> Milgrom, *Leviticus 23–27*, 2442.

<sup>241</sup> Milgrom, *Cult and Conscience*, 110–111; Milgrom, *Leviticus 23–27*, 2442.



This is further supported by the very end of this pericope in Lev 5:26: “The priest shall effect expiation on his behalf before YHWH and he will be forgiven regarding one of all that he did to incur guilt because of it.” It is the first and only place that the evil connected with the preposition על or מן does not follow the כפִּיר clause (e.g., Lev 4:26b, 35b; 5:6b, 10b, 13a, 18b) but the declaration of forgiveness (נָסְלוּ לָהּ) in P.<sup>242</sup> Here, the object of divine forgiveness is “one of all that he did to incur guilt because of it.” This paraphrases and refers back to the condition that requires the reparation offering. Here, the prepositional phrase could not appear in its usual place in the כפִּיר clause because the sin is a combination of a criminal offence and a false oath. The subject of the כפִּיר is the priest, and the priest cannot expiate the interpersonal sin by cultic means. It is only the deity who can finally forgive this compound sin. I do not mean that the interpersonal component was forgiven by the restoration of the wronged item with an additional one-fifth fine and a false oath forgiven by the offering. There is no way that each component can be forgiven separately. The order of the ritual is crucial. Without the monetary restoration, the offering is ineffective. But the priority of time does not signify that of importance; it may be simply because the economic offence occurred prior to the false oath.<sup>243</sup> Without the offering, he is still sinful before the deity, not just for the untreated false oath but also for the entire sin that he has committed, which includes the false oath, among all the above matters. The monetary restoration and the sacrificial offering are together a single remedy for a single sin.

I think the two components continue and elaborate upon the idea of responsibility and restoration that I suggested above with the purification offering. The forgiveness for the violation

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<sup>242</sup> One other instance appears in Lev 19:22 (H). Milgrom and Gane debated the meanings of the prepositions על and מן in this context, especially whether the latter is causal or privative. Whoever is correct, that issue is to be separately considered to the one above because they treat different verbs (כפִּיר vs. סלִיחָה) and subjects (the priest vs. the deity). See Gane, *Cult and Character*, esp. 106–143; Milgrom, “Preposition מן,” 161–163; Gane, “Privative Preposition מן,” 209–222.

<sup>243</sup> Cf. Milgrom, *Cult and Conscience*, 110–111.

of the divine interdictions came from taking one's responsibility. The only physical damage that the sinner could restore was to decontaminate the sancta. The principle is the same with the reparation offering. If one made the sancta desecrated and thereby unusable in some way, he should restore the sancta in its full price and add to it by paying a one-fifth penalty (Lev 5:15–16). He had to bring the reparation offering either to purge the sanctuary in a way similar to the purification offering (cf. Lev 7:1–7)<sup>244</sup> or to consecrate the replacing item since he did not make the full restitution until the common item becomes worthy of divine possession.<sup>245</sup> If one suspects his guiltiness but could not identify what he has done wrong by any means, then he should simply bring the reparation offering (Lev 5:17–19). It is because it is a more expensive offering than the purification offering, and since he might have committed a sin—like a sacrilege—that requires the reparation offering.<sup>246</sup> Finally, Lev 5:20–26 confirms that a sinner should take every action that may redress all the consequences his sin brought about. If his sin injured a neighbor's property, he should restore it. If the same sin wronged the honor or fame of YHWH, which the deity cherishes,<sup>247</sup> he should restore it with a reparation offering because the sinner libeled YHWH as an accomplice by taking a false oath.<sup>248</sup> Note the verb for restoration,

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<sup>244</sup> Both offerings use different manners of blood manipulation, one daubing (נת"ן) and the other tossing (זר"ק). But the blood of the reparation offering is also applied to the outer altar. The disposal of the flesh by the priests is exactly same; they have only one *tôrâh* about the matter (כחטאת כאשם תורה אחת להם).

<sup>245</sup> The reconsecrating and reintegrating (to the *status quo ante*) functions of the reparation offering are found in the case of the Nazirite (Num 6:12) and of the leper (Lev 14:12–14). The case in Lev 5:15–16 especially accords with the Nazirite case. The restoring object might be conceptually identical with the damaged item that it replaces and it needs the (re)consecration as the failing vower has to reconsecrate him with the reparation offering. In the Nazirite's case, the blood manipulation of the offering on the human body, which is in the leper's case, does not appear. The blood manipulation on the offerer's body is either implied or unnecessary in these two cases. For this function of the reparation offering, see Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 290, 853; Milgrom, *Numbers*, 47–48; Noth, *Numbers*, 56. Cf. Gray, *Numbers*, 66.

<sup>246</sup> The implication might be the reparation offering can cover the effect of the purification offering to some degree. Cf. Milgrom, *Cult and Conscience*, 74–83 (esp. 79–80); Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 331–334 (esp. 333). Yet see Schwartz, *JSB*, 206. Schwartz renounces the possibility to find a persuasive solution.

<sup>247</sup> Cf. Lev 10:3. “Through those who approach me I will be sanctified and *before all the people I will be honored* (בקרבי אקדש ועל פני כל העם אכבד).”

<sup>248</sup> Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 337–338. More or less differently, Marx, “Theology of the Sacrifice,” 118 seems to think that any damages to a neighbor's property can be automatically considered an offence to the deity because he is “the ultimate owner of everything.”

שָׁלוֹם, shares the root with the noun for peace and well-being, שָׁלוֹם. It is too appealing to resist relating these two words conceptually; P's highest moral value of peace and well-being שָׁלוֹם is to be redressed and maintained continuously by restoration שְׁלִיִּים, another relevant moral value in P. Therefore, the two components of the interpersonal offence and the false oath in Lev 5:21–22 are not to express the dramatic separation between cult and morality that Knohl insists, but rather to teach the Priestly morality of responsibility and restoration and ultimately express P's ethical aim at שָׁלוֹם. The two components eloquently proclaim P's concern for morality, which is otherwise implicit throughout its cultic regulations.

Yet it is neither something like remorse nor the offering per se that effects forgiveness. On the one hand, it is unthinkable in the Priestly history that divine forgiveness is dependent on divine perception of the human mind. If remorse ever matters, it is assumed in the action. On the other hand, the offering is not an indulgence that impersonally, automatically, or magically brings the divine pardon. The deity *predetermined* forgiveness when the responsible restoration was completed. Whether the offering holds all or only a part of the responsibility for restoration depends on the nature of the sin committed. P is not to be accused of the charges of some preexilic prophets such as Amos, Isaiah, and Micah that the deity is not pleased in the sacrificial offerings of the wrongdoers.<sup>249</sup> Rather, P stands side by side with such prophets.<sup>250</sup>

Watts also connects the offering and the forgiveness of sin against Milgrom. As noted above, remorse is enough to be forgiven for a sinful act, while the offering was needed to cleanse the sancta, which has nothing to do with the sinful act for Milgrom.<sup>251</sup> Yet Watts observes correctly that there is no forgiveness without the expiatory offering.<sup>252</sup> Also, Watts emphasizes

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<sup>249</sup> E.g., Amos 5:21–25; Isa 1:11–13; Mich 6:6–8.

<sup>250</sup> This point is defended in detail in Klawans, *Purity, Sacrifice*, 75–100 from a slightly different perspective.

<sup>251</sup> Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 256.

<sup>252</sup> Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, 346.

the personal aspect of the offering against Feder's depersonalized view. Feder argues that the passive form of סל"ח in the Priestly expiation "circumvents reference to divine or human agents, thereby implying that the cultic process itself effects expiation."<sup>253</sup> Watts criticizes this mechanistic understanding and stresses the priest's personal involvement in the offering procedure.<sup>254</sup> While he is on the right path, his view that P (and even the entire Pentateuch) is rhetorically concerned with elevating the Aaronide priesthood makes him emphasize the priestly mediation as overly agentive.<sup>255</sup> The priest's role and performance in Lev 4–5 is only procedural, and he works as a part of the expiatory system. In this sense, his role and performance may be called "mechanistic," as Feder termed. As Knohl and Feder argue, the result of the offering in forgiveness is somewhat automatic. If the offering is important for forgiveness, which both Watts and I believe, what should be emphasized as the personal aspect in the offering are the *divine* predetermination of the effectiveness of the ritual *in certain conditions* of the *offerer's* obedience. In other words, forgiveness is affected in P only when the sinner has taken the responsibility and done every action, including the offering, that he could do for restoration. Under this condition, the deity forgives as he predetermined.

### 5.3 Conclusion

The selection of the listed sins in Lev 5:21–22—lying to one's neighbor about a deposit, security, or robber; oppressing one's neighbor; or finding and lying about a lost item—should not be overlooked since a false oath could occur in various circumstances, either private, legal, or religious. Westbrook's insightful study proposes, based on his analysis of the technical criminal

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<sup>253</sup> Feder, "Mechanics of Retribution," 155–156.

<sup>254</sup> Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, 346.

<sup>255</sup> For his understanding of P's rhetorical aim, see Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, esp. 91–100 and 107–111. For P's alleged emphasis on the priestly mediation, see Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, 346–347.

terms such as גזל and עשׂ"ק among others, that the sins listed in Lev 5:21–22 are not merely interpersonal offences but also those out of the abuse of power.<sup>256</sup> This law supposes the situation that the offended cannot expect any legal and administrative redress since the offender is presumably a person of power and authority. The offended may expect two remedies. The second remedy is to appeal to the king or to the divine king when the human king is not reliable.<sup>257</sup> But this is not a remedy that P offers, at least not explicitly. Rather, Westbrook's first remedy well accords with the reparation offering, as he says. It is presupposed that the deity somehow intervenes to make the offender fear his guilt consequence and pursue a remedy.<sup>258</sup>

If this makes sense, it is all the more because this law was legislated in the Mosaic period in the narrative. Humans failed to keep peace and enhance their own well-being as well as that of the world with which the deity entrusted them. The violence that they multiplied disturbed the deity's repose even from a distance because the human obligation to moral life was closely interrelated with divine senses. The deity's preference and favor for the humans he created in his image and for the world he created according to his nature spared them from permanent destruction by the flood. The deity is now physically present in close proximity to the Israelite community. The divine presence is a sort of guarantee for human well-being, i.e., the productivity of agriculture and population from the perspective of the Israelites, while at the same time for the deity's own well-being from his viewpoint.<sup>259</sup> Obedience to the law is the means for continuing this benevolent presence. Yet the violent abuse of power, the yelling of the rich and the cry of the poor, now troubles the proximate deity at his earthly home that was made to serve his sensory nature and preference. There is a higher risk that the deity is more easily

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<sup>256</sup> Westbrook, *Cuneiform Law*, 15–38 (esp. 23–38).

<sup>257</sup> Westbrook, *Cuneiform Law*, 29–30.

<sup>258</sup> Westbrook, *Cuneiform Law*, 27–29.

<sup>259</sup> Cf. Stackert, "Political Allegory," 217.

disturbed, that he is more frequently disturbed, and consequently that the Israelites become more vulnerable to divine punishment. Because the deity promised (literally, established a ברית)<sup>260</sup> to not bring permanent destruction on the world in Gen 9:8–17, he found a solution to control violence in legislation. The law is, at the same time, the divine teaching, *tôrāh* (תורה). The Israelites would learn his teachings and follow his rules in the perspective of P's and its deity's positive anthropology. The legislation made the violence the violation that most of the people would not be willing to commit. Even if it happens, the violation now has a divinely endorsed remedy.

The maximum form of bodily offence was already dealt in the flood narrative. The Priestly deity cherishes שלום, inclusive of peace and well-being. And the human peace is inseparable from the divine peace, and vice versa. Human violence disrupts the deity's repose and this, in turn, brings divine punishment on the humans. Against this background, Lev 5:20–26 chose the economic offences in relation to the abuse of power and elaborates on the theme of the peace and well-being. The emphasis on human life as physical existence in the flood narrative is extended to the human well-being in the economic matter in this particular set of laws, which is no less significant for the valuable human life from the perspective of P and its deity. The peace that P envisions is not merely the absence of violence and thereby the preservation of life. P keenly presents economic violence as a *representative* sin that humankind (האדם) commits to destroy the well-being of others. This has happened all around the world in all times: from ancient Near East to modern North America to East Asia. The expiatory ritual law does not merely teach that human well-being, of which the economic aspect is a crucial factor, is important. It teaches how this well-being can be promoted and maintained. They should maintain

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<sup>260</sup> For this translation of ברית, see Stackert, "Distinguishing," 382.

the best condition for the divine house and have the deity continue to desire to be present. If something cracks by a fault of their own, they should repair it. Human beings are responsible beings. The specific content that these responsible beings in P ought to do is restoration; they should restore (שׁלׁוֹם Lev 5:16, 24) the repercussions of their sins. Only by this can sinners restore the cracks that they made in the peace (שׁלׁוֹם) between them and the deity, between them and their neighbors, and even between the deity and the entire community. Responsibility and restoration aim at securing the well-being (שׁלׁוֹם) of the community that consists of both the deity and the Israelites. Human peace is even more relevant to divine peace in his close proximity, especially because the Priestly anthropomorphic deity is now a resident of the community and is vulnerable to human actions that make sounds, smells, views, among others. Even the consequences of their sins remain at his very home. The broken peace and well-being (שׁלׁוֹם) of every level of the nation of Priestly Israel should be diligently repaired by humans taking responsibility to restore the consequences of their wrongs. In this way, responsibility and restoration are particular aspects of, or better, sub-values that point to P's ultimate moral aim, שׁלׁוֹם. All this moral teaching is dressed in the form of the cult and ritual in the law.

## Chapter Six

### Summary and Implications

#### 6.1 Summary of the Study

Readers may be easily overwhelmed by the cultic matters when they read P as previous scholarship witnesses. Various studies on P have likewise concentrated on the cult. And more often than not, this cult has been treated as if it had nothing to do with the ethical life. Contrary to this trend, this study aims at revealing the moral aim of the Priestly history. It assumes the moral concern is hidden within the story only to be read out by the reader. The Priestly history willed to convey its moral vision and values rather *reticently* through the story, using its narrative techniques skillfully and carefully. Paraphrasing Stephen A. Gellers words, “a theology of indirection,” the Priestly ethics may be labelled as ethics of indirection.<sup>1</sup> Morality, I mean, is values and norms that guide human conduct, especially in relationship with others. Ethics is the intellectual reflection of existing morality. I slightly reconceptualized the definition of ethics, resorting to Ricoeur.<sup>2</sup> Ethics is a moral aim at the good life, which means to me that moral values and reality are critically reflected and hierarchically unified; other values and norms purpose realizing the supreme moral value. I argued a literary (structuralist) approach is important to analyze the Priestly history since it is a coherent narrative work. I aimed at finding the Priestly ethics descriptively and exegetically with respect to the plain sense of the text, while not attempting to read behind the text and reconstruct the historical context or to discover an

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<sup>1</sup> Geller, “Blood Cult,” 66.

<sup>2</sup> Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, 170 and 180.



applicable significance for today. Having set up this foundation, I began to read the Priestly texts.

Chapter Two argued that the deity demands that humanity maintains a nonviolent, peaceful state of the world according to the creation order when he made human beings at the end of his creative actions in Gen 1:26–28. This command is expressed with the idea of *imago Dei* (צלם אלהים) in Gen 1:26–28, in addition to Gen 5:1–3 and 9:1–7. Questioning other views that hesitate to seriously consider the divine corporeality, I argued that this phrase first and foremost implies bodily resemblance between the deity and humans in P as well as in the broader biblical and ancient Near Eastern context. I argued bodily resemblance is not restricted to external similarity but rather it is a basis for further similarities such as qualities, capacities, and functions. Bodily resemblance is grounds for the divine expectation that humans are inclined and supposed to resemble his action and even character, which extends *imago Dei* to *imitatio Dei*.

This *imago/imitatio Dei* language was adopted from royal ideology and meant for all humans to manage the created world as nicely as Near Eastern kings said they do. The genealogy in Gen 5, in light of the Sumerian King List, implicitly supports that human beings commissioned to manage the order of the world are comparable to royal figures, while the text also reveals that the divine blessing of the productivity and prosperity in Gen 1:26–28 was operating well at least in the beginning. Gen 9:1–7 reveals that the Priestly moral value is incompatible with violence, which is discussed in detail later in the first part of Chapter Five. The lack of violence is an important, though not exhaustive, element of the Priestly שלום. The restatement of *imago Dei* in Gen 9:6 confirms and reinstates the deity's value of human life and human ruling over the animals even after the flood in spite of some necessary modifications. In this vein, it may be said that P fills the idea of *imago/imitatio Dei* as a mode of its morality with

שְׁלוֹם as the content of it. In other words, to resemble the deity entails maintaining the peace of the world as the deity would. In this perspective, שְׁלוֹם has an implication of the proper operation of the divine order (including social hierarchy) in P. At the same time, however, one should remember that the deity first blessed them (and animals beforehand) for fertility and prosperity, that is, well-being שְׁלוֹם. The moral life of maintaining peace would, in turn, preserve their well-being as it was blessed in Gen 1:26–28. P’s idea of שְׁלוֹם may comprehensively entail the different usages of שְׁלוֹם in the Hebrew Bible that I discussed in Chapter One.

That humans as moral agents should resemble the deity makes the deity the moral exemplar. This requires a character analysis of the deity in order to find the Priestly morality more precisely and comprehensively. Before moving on, however, I needed to justify the character analysis of the deity. Bodily resemblance of humans to the deity in Chapter Two implies that the deity in P is not spiritual but corporeal and possesses a human-shaped body. Yet there have been opinions that the divine nature and presence in Gen 1:2 (רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים) and in P’s cult (כְּבוֹד יְהוָה) are transcendent. If this line of thought is correct, neither would it allow for usual criteria to analyze human characters in literary works, nor would it approve comparison between the deity and humans with respect to the *imago/imitatio Dei* morality. To argue that the moral value of שְׁלוֹם in Chapter Two continues throughout the Priestly narrative and law, justification was necessary that the anthropomorphic presentation of the deity continues from the beginning of the creation to the later Mosaic period in P, contrary to some scholarly opinions. Chapter Three picked up this problem and contended that divine anthropomorphism is not suppressed in the Mosaic period of P. I problematized the spirit-versus-matter dichotomic understanding of רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים in Gen 1:2. Since the phrase is infrequent in P, we may not reach a definitive understanding. Yet, in light of its syntactic relationship with the other two clauses in Gen 1:2a,

the phrase vividly pictures an unorderedly state of the material mixture before creation, whatever it exactly was. By avoiding directly defining the divine character, P deftly betrays how the deity loathes disorder. He likes a certain harmoniously ordered and managed state according to his aesthetic nature and preferences, as shown in his own evaluation of the subsequent creation work in Gen 1 (good, טוב).<sup>3</sup> Everything not only looked beautiful in his eyes but also he made right things in the proper place so that all things work together harmoniously.

Likewise, *kəḇôḏ YHWH* (כבוד יהוה) does not imply unformed, incorporeal, and/or abstract manifestation of the deity that proposes mystery and enigma. At least partly, the typical translation of this phrase as the “Glory of YHWH” with the abstract noun confused interpretations of the Priestly God. It has sometimes been argued that P emphasizes a transcendent deity and numinous religion. This may lead to the conclusion that the cultic activity is radically independent of everyday life including moral actions. I tried to show in the rest of Chapter Three that this presupposition cannot be supported by the text. I compared *kəḇôḏ YHWH* with Mesopotamian *melammu* and argued that *kəḇôḏ YHWH* expresses the imagery of royal clothing. I also argued that *kəḇôḏ YHWH* appears only in public. It is to impress his majestic appearance, frequently to punish rebels though not limited to such situations. All these highlight the royal character of the deity in his earthly dwelling among the Israelites rather than his transcendence. The image of clothing already implies the continuation of the anthropomorphic characteristic of the deity. As a royal figure, he is a full member of P’s social system and has nothing to do with total otherness in the philosophical and theological sense.

Since the cultic laws and, especially, the sacrificial laws are considered to have the least ethical implications, my study went toward the argument that the same moral concern I argued in

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<sup>3</sup> Schipper and Stackert, “Blemishes,” 468–469.

Chapter Two continues to underlie the cultic laws. One of the implications of Chapter Two and Chapter Three that prepares the two subsequent chapters is that P's deity is an anthropomorphic, bodily, and by no means spiritual deity who is greatly affected by the physical world and, especially, by human conduct from the beginning to the end of the story. The ritual laws were given in the Sinai pericope to establish the social system of P's imagined Israel that aims to serve the royal presence of the deity as best as possible. I attempted to argue how this system is not ritualistic or legalistic but moral and ethical. In the first part of Chapter Four, I further laid out some theoretical discussions in greater detail, which I briefly mentioned in the introductory chapter: among others, how I can use modern categories such as cultic/ritual/religious and moral/ethical for interpreting the ancient text; why so many ritual laws are there if P is not cultic but ethical; how the ritual laws and the narrative, which are different genres, can constitute a coherent literary work; and how ritual texts should be understood and approached in relation to the surrounding narrative frame. I argued, among others, that P is fundamentally a historical narrative, and it needed a certain legal system to "moralize reality, that is, to identify it (reality) with the social system that is the source of any morality that we can imagine."<sup>4</sup> And this narrative could freely adopt and adapt other genres according to its purpose. Thus read, the ritual system in P is neither independent nor practical but configured according to the implied author's ethical vision. It is a necessary part of the Priestly history that attempts to moralize reality, not least cultic reality.

This being laid out, I characterized the deity from the texts in which the deity conveys various cultic commands, especially focusing on his appearance, speech, environment, and action. The divine character with respect to the ritual system showed that he likes repose and

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<sup>4</sup> White, "Value of Narrativity," 18 (my parentheses).

tranquility.<sup>5</sup> He has anthropomorphic, yet superhuman, bodily senses. His environment carefully designed and maintained indicates that he has some sensory, aesthetic preferences. Humans are supposed to act in such a way as to not disrupt his sensitive senses, in which the ritual system becomes relevant to the Priestly morality of how to live. P claimed from the outset that the deity created the world according to his aesthetic nature and preferences, on the one hand, and humans according to his image, on the other hand. What disrupts his nature is something that deviates from the values and norms of the Priestly world.

I tried to relate the divine character and moral value that I found in Chapter Four, which had not been absent in the earlier chapters, to the interpretation of Chapter Five. The deity cares about his own repose and peace. He has certain aesthetic preferences, which everything and every person around him should satisfy. What deviates from his preferences would irritate his sensitive senses and disrupt his repose. I chose texts, one from the primeval story and the others from the ritual sections. This choice was intentional to demonstrate that the continuation of the divine character has bearing on the continuation of the Priestly moral values and ethical aim. The first section dealt with P's flood narrative. The cause of the flood narrative is violence (חמס). Violence ruined and corrupted (שחח) the earth. The earth was reformulated and organized according to the deity's aesthetic, sensory nature and preferences in creation. He not only manufactured the physical world but established a hierarchical order, however simple this order was at this time. Under human rule, all animals and humans should have maintained peace and well-being (שלום) among one another. The violence was not just physical harming but uprising against this order and ultimately against the deity who set up the order. From this perspective, I

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<sup>5</sup> This divine character is anticipated by Stackert, "Priestly Sabbaths," esp. 82–83; Schipper and Stackert, "Blemishes," esp. 460.

argue that the destruction of the world with the flood does not contradict the deity's and the implied author's value of human life and well-being.

Then, I moved to the ritual system, especially with P's purificatory and expiatory system. This is the part where P's moral concern is discussed most implicitly if not vaguely in the guise of more religious jargon such as sin and atonement in scholarship.<sup>6</sup> This system does not offer ritual solutions to moral failures. This does not mean, however, that some sacrificial offerings are not at all related to forgiveness. I followed Milgrom's famous miasma theory that at least the sin of omission defiles the sancta. Yet defiling the sancta itself is not a sin if it is properly treated. Only, the proper treatment of the defilement is required as the person's *responsibility*. If he does not fulfil his responsibility, it may make the sensitive deity uncomfortable and leave, though P had no worries about this happening.<sup>7</sup> I argued it is not that sacrifice brings forgiveness automatically. Rather, forgiveness is given only after a wrongdoer takes all the responsibility to restore damages that his sin brought about, including the contamination of the sancta. By this system, violence became violation; the violator was supposed to know, according to this system, what to do for restoring any damages from his wrongdoings, unlike the situation before the flood. The moral concern of this system is explicit in a rare case in Lev 5:21–26. This set of laws that involves both interpersonal matters (economic offences) and religious matters (false oath) offers the most explicit and the clearest case of the Priestly value of the responsibility. The point is not so much whether the sin is cultic or ethical as the teaching of the moral values. In this sense, this system is not legalistic or ritualistic, but rather moral. That said, these moral values, responsibility and restoration, are not themselves the end/purpose of actions. Taking

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<sup>6</sup> Cf. Klawans, *Purity, Sacrifice*, 17–48. More generally, Klawans points out that sacrifice has been unduly treated as a primitive trace not only by biblical scholars but also by many theorists of religion.

<sup>7</sup> See Stackert, "Political Allegory," 216–219 against, among others, Milgrom, "Israel's Sanctuary," 396–398.

responsibility for restoration is a means to the peace and well-being of the deity, the wronged, and/or the entire community. The שלום of others is the ultimate goal of taking responsibility and restoring in the Priestly ethics.

## **6.2 Nature, Meaning, and Significance of the Priestly Morality and Ethics**

The fact that P's morality is introduced with the deity's sensory characteristics might have some bearings on the kind of morality that P reflects and presents. First of all, the Priestly morality is the morality of the actions as the morality is defined as a guide to *conduct*. Yet it does not fall under the charge of legalism and ritualism—the opposition to spontaneity, voluntariness, freedom, vitality, and enjoyment—as was common in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The Priestly narrator and the deity are not interested in describing the internal state of human minds. P's deity does not require the sincerity of heart, let say, as D's deity does in the famous Shema. P's deity does not bother to inquire and search the heart of the Israelites as D's deity does. It does not require a feeling of remorse and repentance. The sincerity of the heart is supposed to be just assumed by actions. In other words, legalism and ritualism are not the values or norms of this narrative. They are styles that the text chose to convey moral values and norms. The text rather teaches the moral values of responsibility and restoration that lead to the ultimate value of human peace and well-being. It is not as much articulated with some typical moral terms of D and E like “justice” and “evil” as it is implied in the mixture of the royal, hierarchical, and religious images that is reflected in the Priestly cultic system.

Second, the Priestly morality is to be found in the narrative level<sup>8</sup> and thus explained with respect to its plot and narrative claims. The cosmos was set up according to the divine aesthetic nature, or at least supposed by the deity to be so. It was basically attractive as it was repeated several times in Genesis 1 that he saw his creation as good. It was not sensorily stimulative to the deity in a negative way as long as he is distant and, at the same time, as long as it works properly under the ruling of humanity to whom the deity entrusted the created world. He did not have to be always mindful of his creation when he was afar in heaven and could entertain his repose in his heavenly abode. When the world was not maintained as the deity intended to a great extent, it irritated his senses even from afar. Violence disrupted his repose in Genesis 6. He found out his creation may generate what is disruptive to him and potentially threatening to his repose if unchecked. What retains the deity's repose is what one should do and how things should be—i.e., moral good—because his senses are closely related to the proper operation of the cosmos and vice versa. In other words, P's morality is assimilated to its theological worldview. P's hierarchy in the cosmological and the religious spheres entails moral hierarchy. It turned out to be necessary to teach the universal morality that was supposed to be known to all humanity in order for it to be maintained. The deity had to teach this universal morality, ironically, particularly to the Israelites even for his own well-being when he decided to dwell on earth. This is why the deity had to (as well as wanted to) come as a kingly figure and gave the law after the flood. As much as the plot required the law giving, the narrative required the teaching of morality with the law in order to become a proper historical narrative.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Cf. Alter, *Art of Biblical Narrative*, 20: "I would prefer to insist on a complete interfusion of literary art with theological, moral, or historiosophical vision, the fullest perception of the latter dependent on the fullest grasp of the former." Yet I part with Alter by using this approach only after separating a coherent narrative from a composite text. Pace Alter, *Art of Biblical Narrative*, 21; Sternberg, *Poetics of Biblical Narrative*, esp. 15–23. Also, a source analysis does not necessarily aim at reconstructing "hard facts," not as Sternberg charges it to be so. See Stackert, *Prophet Like Moses*, 20–21.

<sup>9</sup> Pace Knohl, *Sanctuary*, esp. 137–148, 226.



The peace and prosperity of the people comes from divine presence. If the deity pleases to dwell among them, he will want to make an environment of higher quality for his own sake. He will bless them with fertility, affluence, and protection to make them better serve him.<sup>10</sup> If he leaves, at least every benefit of his presence will collapse, even though it is not an option that P entertains given that Yahweh's expectation is that Israel will observe his commands and thereby create a hospitable environment for the deity.<sup>11</sup> The deity wants to bless them and the Israelites serve him well when everything goes well. They are members of the same society and one's well-being cannot be separated from the other's. P is a value-driven narrative. It is about how to live and what to live for. The idea of well-being and peace, however implicit, is the underlying moral aim in P's law as well as its narrative.

One may note that *imago/imitatio Dei* which was a means to edify שלום in the primeval story (Chapter Two) is no longer foregrounded in the ritual text (Chapters Three to Five) as if it disappeared, except for H's few remarks. A few scholars still attempted to find this concept by the symbolic interpretation of the sacrificial and purificatory laws.<sup>12</sup> Yet this is not the approach that I take. I try to find moral values laden in the narrative level. For this too, the narrative can give an explanation, no matter how seemingly *imago/imitatio Dei* becomes a blind motif later in the ritual sections. The deity knew his optimism for autonomy of human dominion failed. He decided to come down and stay among humans himself. This plot development required the deity to be a royal figure and necessitated the ritual system given to be in the form of the law. Therefore, the human position somewhat changed. Humans (the Israelites) no longer take the place of the royal figure, but the deity does. Humans no longer represent the deity, but they serve

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<sup>10</sup> Stackert, "Political Allegory," 214, 217.

<sup>11</sup> Stackert, "Political Allegory," 217; Stackert, "Darkness," 657–676.

<sup>12</sup> Among others, Klawans, *Purity, Sacrifice*, 49–73; Klawans, "Pure Violence," 135–157. Cf. Douglas, *Leviticus as Literature*; Trevaskis, *Holiness, Ethics*, esp. 11–21.

the deity. And the deity does not expect *imitatio Dei* from humans even as they preserve *imago Dei*. Now, the mode of the Priestly morality depends on the obedience to the law, not on *imitatio Dei*. In this sense, one may call P ritualistic and legalistic. But what is the cultic system for? Even the cult has been reformulated to present its moral values for P's moral aim. So, the cultic concern is at the same time the ethical concern in P. Having said that, *imitatio Dei* has not completely been displaced in the Priestly cult. The Priestly cultic system that carefully serves the deity's repose and peace requires the peace of human beings to be maintained by such actions as guided by lack of violence, responsibility, and restoration. Though *imitatio Dei* is no longer a specific guide to every single action in human life, it still remains latently as a moral lifestyle and or a moral end along with its content of שלום.

While I do not need explicit references to the suffused Priestly שלום in the text as I have argued throughout the previous chapters, it is good to have one. There may be one place we can confirm the presence of P's value of שלום in P's cult. In the priestly blessing in Num 6:24–26, the last remark is, “May YHWH place שלום upon you.” This text was assigned to H by Knohl due to the use of the divine first person.<sup>13</sup> Yet this criterion for H is not strong.<sup>14</sup> Then, there is no reason to assign this blessing to something other than P. Many scholars have opined that P might have adopted the priestly blessing from an old tradition.<sup>15</sup> Its antiquity is supported by the shared formal elements with Mesopotamian, Ugaritic, and Judean texts, some of which came at least

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<sup>13</sup> Knohl, *Sanctuary*, 89.

<sup>14</sup> Feldman, *Story of Sacrifice*, 149.

<sup>15</sup> Gray, *Numbers*, 71–72; Noth, *Numbers*, 58; Yardeni, “Remarks on the Priestly Blessing On Two Ancient Amulets From Jerusalem,” *VT* 41.2 (1991): 176–185, esp. 181–182; Durham, “Presence of God,” 287; Milgrom, *Leviticus* 17–22, 1428–1429.

from the second Millennium onward.<sup>16</sup> Further corroborative evidence is the two preexilic amulets discovered from Ketef Hinnom, which contain texts very similar to Num 6:24–26.<sup>17</sup>

Supposing Aaron’s blessing to belong to P, Chavel’s understanding of this blessing may epitomize the Priestly *שְׁלוֹם* that I propose.<sup>18</sup> The thrive is expected to come from the deity. And the Israelites would naturally desire the benevolent presence of God and even attempt to go near as much as it is allowed. This is the underlying motivation of the pilgrims. Some of the Israelites would bother to visit the (central) sanctuary from afar once they are spread in Canaan. They may want to see *kāḇôḏ YHWH*, Yahweh’s public appearance, perhaps in a national feast.<sup>19</sup> Yet there is an important condition. They should carefully follow the set procedure, as the tripartite structure of the blessing indicates, which might assume the previously given ritual instructions. The Israelites should not be rash and overexcited to the extent of encroaching on the line between them and the deity (e.g., Nadav and Avihu). The divine senses and repose ought to be protected. Then, they may expect the divine blessing of well-being *שְׁלוֹם* (Num 6:26) to increase.<sup>20</sup>

The explicit *שְׁלוֹם* of the priestly blessing, along with my reading of latent *שְׁלוֹם* suffused throughout the Priestly history including its law, may direct one’s attention to the famous

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<sup>16</sup> Fishbane, “Form and Reformulation of the Biblical Priestly Blessing,” *JAOS* 103.1 (1983): 115–121; Michael Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1985), 329–334; Yardeni, “Remarks,” 176–185.

<sup>17</sup> Yardeni, “Remarks,” 181–182; Barkay et al., “The Amulets from Ketef Hinnom: A New Edition and Evaluation,” *BASOR* 334 (2004): 41–71; Barkay et al., “The Challenges of Ketef Hinnom,” *NEA* 66.4 (2003): 162–171. There are some scholars who date the two amulets to the early post-exilic period: e.g., Angelika Berlejung, “Ein Programm fürs Leben: Theologisches Wort und anthropologischer Ort der Silberamulette von Ketef Hinnom,” *ZAW* 120 (2008): 204–230; Nadav Na’aman, “A New Appraisal of the Silver Amulets from Ketef Hinnom,” *IEJ* 61 (2011): 184–195. Against these scholars, see Shmuel Ahituv, “A Rejoinder to Nadav Na’aman’s ‘A New Appraisal of the Silver Amulets from Ketef Hinnom,’” *IEJ* 62 (2012): 223–232.

<sup>18</sup> Chavel, “Face of God,” 18–19.

<sup>19</sup> In P’s narrative world, an individual lay person may not have the chance to see Yahweh personally, unlike the expectation of the pilgrims of the real world, which might have been the motif of P’s blessing in Num 6:24–26.

<sup>20</sup> Increasing line-length in Num 6:24–26 is noted by Chavel, “Face of God,” 19. It may reveal the expectation of increasing well-being.

prophet-versus-priest dichotomy.<sup>21</sup> There has been a scholarly trend that prefers prophetic religion as personal, interior, and ethical over priestly religion as institutional and impersonal, external (implying sometimes hypocrisy), and cultic, often implying non-ethical. In this understanding, even the שלום in this priestly blessing may be regarded as magical prosperity pursued by the impersonal, mechanical (cultic) means of the legalistic priestly religion. This study may make two contributions to the debate.

First of all, there is a methodological vantage point of the Neo-Documentarian Hypothesis that renders a modern literary approach more relevant after a proper source analysis than applying it directly to the composite text. It should be noted that the blessing in Num 6:24–26 is first and foremost to be understood as a Priestly one from the Priestly religion, i.e., one that is in the text of P. If one treats P as an independent literary work that is driven by coherent values and norms, it cannot be *a priori* assumed that this work was composed by some priest(s) and reflects the real cultic practices. It seems that the proponents of the priests-versus-prophets dichotomy tend to first picture the images of the *priests* and their religion from the accusation of the *prophets*, then, assume their images of the priests' religion to be identical with that of the text, and superimpose these images upon their interpretation of the Priestly text. Whatever the prophets condemned, however, it cannot be equated with the cult of P.

Second, this study adds the Priestly point of view to other attempts to overcome the dichotomy. Many previous attempts to tone down and nuance the dichotomy concentrated more on what the exact object was that the prophets accused and why exactly they did so. Many scholars no longer maintain the sharp dichotomy and do not think prophets opposed the cult in its

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<sup>21</sup> For instance, Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament*, 1:364–369; Wellhausen, *Prolegomena to the History*, esp. 361, 395–399, 402–403, 491, 508–510; McKane, “Prophet and Institution,” 251–266; Ronald S. Hendel, “Prophets, Priests,” 185–198; Williams, “Social Location,” 153–165.

entirety per se. They argue that the prophets condemned, for example, the sacrifice of those who live an unethical life, sacrificing an animal of improper ownership, or the festival sacrifice during the national crisis.<sup>22</sup> Jonathan Klawans blurs the alleged boundary between the priests and the prophets by adding the priests' perspective that is shared by the prophets who indict sacrifice: namely that sacrifice of an illegitimately owned animal is unacceptable to the deity.<sup>23</sup> While not disagreeing with him, I would like to extend and reformulate his argument slightly differently. He thinks the Priestly expiatory sacrifices are sacrificial remedies for moral transgression, which is potentially vulnerable to the charge of legalism and ritualism. In other words, the atonement rituals have efficacy for moral sins.<sup>24</sup> Yet the Priestly expiation is not atonement in its traditional sense in my reading. The Priestly expiatory sacrifices are a part of the responsibility to restore the damages that one's sin caused. If the sancta is damaged, the wrongdoer should restore it, as he would do with other damages of the secular realm (I mean, secular from the modern perspective).

As I said, P does not sharply distinguish the cultic and the moral. Ritual system is the social system in P's world. In this system, the anthropomorphic deity is a fully integrated member of the imagined Israelite society, except that he is hierarchically far superior. A distinction does not exist between a ritual solution and a moral solution. It is a matter of who was wronged. If a wrong was done to the deity, his damage should be restored. If to a neighbor, her damage is to be restored. Furthermore, I suggested the cult within the Priestly history has a

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<sup>22</sup> H. H. Rowley, "Ritual and the Hebrew Prophets," in *From Moses to Qumran: Studies in the Old Testament* (New York: Association Press, 1963), 111–138; Joseph Blenkinsopp, *A History of Prophecy in Israel*, rev. and enl. ed. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1996), 17; Klawans, *Purity, Sacrifice*, 75–100 (esp. 84–89); Klawans, "Methodology and Ideology," 90–92; Barton, "Prophets," 111–222 (esp. 119–120), though he admits the case in which the sacrifice per se is rejected (esp. 116–118, 120–121); Robert P. Carroll, "Prophecy and Society," in *The World of Ancient Israel: Sociological Anthropological and Political Perspectives*, ed. R. E. Clements (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 203–225, esp. 209–215 (at 212).

<sup>23</sup> Klawans, *Purity, Sacrifice*, 75–100 (esp. 84–89).

<sup>24</sup> Klawans, *Purity, Sacrifice*, esp. 85, 88.

general moral concern beyond theft. As the prophets emphasize social justice,<sup>25</sup> so does P, however implicitly so. In this sense, the Priestly cult is immune from the prophetic accusations of an immoral cult. The Priestly שלום, including its explicit mention in Num 6:26, is not a magical prosperity that cultic practices could bring about mechanically and impersonally. It rather assumes the societal relationship of the individuals and of the entire community with the very *personal* deity.

Knohl argues that H's (his HS's) moral concern is a reaction to the prophetic critique of the cult.<sup>26</sup> I have refrained from and still have no intention toward dating P definitively. Yet I previously expressed my inclination toward dating P to the Neo-Assyrian period, while assigning H to the Neo-Babylonian time.<sup>27</sup> My reading suggests that the reaction already began with P before H, if it is really a reaction. Yet we have no solid evidence to settle the matter positively. And one may not have to have a certain date in mind for the opposition between ritual and morality. Ronald S. Hendel aptly states:

This perspective on the social and conceptual dimensions of the differing evaluations of ritual in the Hebrew Bible is, of course, not confined solely to ritual or to the classical prophets and priests. The prophetic evaluation of the efficacy of ritual, with its implicit critique of "the difference between symbol and object," has been held as a crucial moment in the development of radical monotheism in Israelite religion. Moreover, similar conflicts of interpretation, representing differing religious and social claims, have occurred throughout human history, including the many schisms in Judaism and Christianity. In order better to understand the nature of these religious arguments, it is important to consider the cosmologies and social claims implicit in each.<sup>28</sup>

The opposition of cult and morality, along with other similar debates, is not restricted to one point in history. The meaning of the cult has been questioned and debated in the Pauline letters of the New Testament, famously in Romans and Galatians. Modern Pauline studies around the

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<sup>25</sup> For example, Amos 5:21–24; Hos 6:6; Isa 1:10–17; and Isa 58:3–6.

<sup>26</sup> Knohl, *Sanctuary*, 214–216.

<sup>27</sup> Following Stackert, "Political Allegory," esp. 219–223.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Hendel, "Prophets, Priests," 198.

“New Perspective on Paul” debate similar issues such as how Paul viewed the Jewish cultic laws and practices.<sup>29</sup> I can see the hostility around the issue of Christian ritualism and moralism/spiritualism between traditionalists/conservatives and non-traditionalists/liberals, if I may use such labels conveniently, for my Korean church context. The former extreme acts as if religious practices will solve all matters of life including social problems, while the latter extreme ignores most religious practices—such as attending church, prayer, or fasting—as trivial and superseded by Christian spiritualism of the “new covenant or as a trace of primitive religion.”<sup>30</sup> The latter does not look like religion, while the former looks like a sect. Also, many inter- and inner-religious feuds exhibit the same problem, which sometimes leads to horribly tragic outcomes, such as religious war or terrorism. If P’s morality, descriptively read out from an ancient text, may not have direct bearing on our situation, P may offer a model of solutions. One may reconceptualize and reformulate one’s religious practice within one’s own view of reality, guided by some universal moral value(s) such as human life, peace, and well-being.<sup>31</sup> With this one may preserve both religious practices and moral life, rather than either one or the other. While P’s meaning is שלום, this general model is widely applicable to any time period and to any religious tradition. It may be P’s ongoing significance for and contribution to the modern world.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> To list only a few, E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion*, 1st American ed. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977); James D. G. Dunn, “The New Perspective on Paul,” 99–120 and other essays in *The New Perspective on Paul*. Rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008); Barclay, *Paul and the Gift*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015).

<sup>30</sup> More people may find themselves in varying positions between the two extremes. I am adducing the extremes for argument’s sake.

<sup>31</sup> Borrowing the idea from Cover, “*Nomos* and Narrative,” esp. 4–5.

<sup>32</sup> Adopting the distinction between meaning and significance from Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation*, 24–67; Barton, *Nature of Biblical Criticism*, 86–87.

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