HERMENEUTICAL SYMBIOSIS:
RECLAIMING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE OLD AND NEW CULTUSES IN THE BOOK OF HEBREWS

by

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ABSTRACT

"Hermeneutical Symbiosis: Reclaiming the Relationship between the Old and New Cultuses in the Book of Hebrews"

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This research aims to investigate the relationship between the Levitical sacrificial system and the new sacrificial system, as described in the book of Hebrews. Hebrews, renowned for its abundance of cultic terminology that appears to elucidate and assess both the old and new cultic systems, has long been interpreted as presenting and emphasizing Jesus' new cultus over the inferior Levitical cultus, leading many to view the author as disparaging the old cultus. Contrary to such views, this study contends that Hebrews establishes an interdependent, typological relationship between the old and new cultic systems, with the former serving as a foundation for Jesus' once-for-all sacrifice. This dissertation argues that Hebrews establishes a symbiotic relationship between the old and new cultuses.

Drawing upon a social scientific criticism focused on a cultural-anthropological perspective with purity concerns, this study investigates the relationship between old and new cultuses by looking at four of the five ritual elements from ritual theory—sacrificer, sacrifice, time, and space. By investigating each ritual element using specific criteria, such as its origin and identity, description, and degree of purity gained, similarities and differences are identified, demonstrating their typological relationships. The analysis

begins with spatial theory to show how ritual spaces, the earthly and heavenly tabernacles, are typologically connected, with the earthly tabernacle foreshadowing the heavenly one. This spatial dynamic emphasizes Hebrews's nuanced argument that the old cultus is essential to understanding the significance of Jesus' sacrifice.

This dissertation further explores sacrificers, sacrifice, and ritual time, demonstrating how the author establishes the typological relationship between the two cultuses by highlighting both their similarities and differences. The author's presentation of the old cultic elements alludes to their preparatory nature as originally intended, anticipating the fulfillment of the new cultic elements. In addition to their similarities that contribute to continuity, the differences that arise from the seemingly limited efficacy of the old cultus eventually serve as the foundation for the ultimate perfection that can be obtained through Jesus' new cultus. Following the faithful performance of its duties, the old cultic system was fulfilled by the new cultic system, which brought about perfection, symbolizing the highest level of purity in God's redemptive plan. In this sense, the author values the old cultus as the foundation for the new, rather than viewing it negatively. Finally, this study proposes a typological *symbiotic* relationship between old and new cultuses in Hebrews, with the old serving as the type that anticipates the fulfillment of the new, the antitype.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AAAG	*Annals of the Association of American Geographers*
AAR	American Academy of Religion
AB	Anchor Bible
ACCSNT	Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture: New Testament
AJEC	Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity
ALGHJ	Arbeiten zur Literatur und Geschichte des hellenistischen Judentums
AUSDDS	Andrews University Seminary Doctoral Dissertation Series
AS	Approaches to Semiotics
ASV	American Standard Version
AYB	Anchor Yale Bible
AYBD	Freedman, David Noel, et al., eds. *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary*. 6 vols. New York: Doubleday, 1992.
AYBRL	Anchor Yale Bible Reference Library
BBR	*Bulletin for Biblical Research*
BBRSup	Bulletin for Biblical Research Supplements
BDAG	Bauer, Walter, et al., eds. *A Greek–English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.
BDF	Blass, Friedrich, et al., eds. *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961.
BI	Biblical Intersections
BIS	Biblical Interpretation Series

BR	*Biblical Research*
BRLAJ	Brill Reference Library of Ancient Judaism
BS	*Bibliotheca Sacra*
BTB	*Biblical Theology Bulletin*
BZNW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche
CBC	Cornerstone Biblical Commentary
CBNTS	Coniectanea Biblica New Testament Series
CBR	*Currents in Biblical Research*
CBQ	*Catholic Biblical Quarterly*
CBQMS	Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series
CCTESS	Concordia Commentary: A Theological Exposition of Sacred Scripture
CEB	Common English Bible
CRRPC	Continuum Resources in Religion and Political Culture
CSHJ	Chicago Studies in the History of Judaism
DRLAR	Divinations: Rereading Late Ancient Religion
EBTC	Evangelical Biblical Theology Commentary
EKNT	Evangelisch–katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
EGGNT	Exegetical Guide to the Greek New Testament
ESV	English Standard Version
EQ	*Evangelical Quarterly*
ExpT	*Expository Times*
FCNT	The Fathers of the Church: A New Translation

FGNKAL	Forschungen zur Geschichte des neutestamentlichen Kanons und der altkirchlichen Literatur
FRMC	Figurae: Reading Medieval Culture
GE	Montanari, Franco, et al., eds. *Greek English: The Brill Dictionary of Ancient Greek*. Leiden: Brill, 2015.
HCS	Hellenistic Culture and Society
HR	*History of Religions*
HTR	*Harvard Theological Review*
HTS	Harvard Theological Studies
IBS	*Irish Biblical Studies*
ICC	International Critical Commentary on the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments
IDBSup	Crim, Keith, ed. *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible: Supplementary Volume*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1976.
JAAR	*Journal of the American Academy of Religion*
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
JETS	*Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*
JHSUA	Johns Hopkins Studies in Urban Affairs
JSNT	*Journal for the Study of the New Testament*
JSNTSup	Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series
JSP	*Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha*
JTI	*Journal of Theological Interpretation*
JTS	*Journal of Theological Studies*

KNT	Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LHBOTS	Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies
LMS	Lexham Methods Series
LN	Louw, J. P., and Eugene A. Nida, eds. *Greek–English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains*. 2nd ed. 2 vols. New York: United Bible Societies, 1989.
LNTS	Library of New Testament Studies
MCNT	Meyer's Commentaries on the New Testament
Melilah	*Melilah: Manchester Journal of Jewish Studies*
NAC	New American Commentary
NASB	New American Standard Bible
NEB	New English Bible
NET	New English Translation
NICNT	New International Commentary on the New Testament
NIDNTTE	Silva, Moisés, ed. *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology and Exegesis*. 2nd ed. 5 vols. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2014.
NIGTC	New International Greek Testament Commentary
NIV	New International Version
NIVAC	NIV Application Commentary
NJB	New Jerusalem Bible
NovT	*Novum Testamentum*
NovTSup	Supplements to Novum Testamentum
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version

NSBT	New Studies in Biblical Theology
NTC	New Testament Commentary
NTL	New Testament Library
NTS	*New Testament Studies*
NTT	New Testament Theology
NTTS	New Testament Tools and Studies
OSAR	Oxford Studies in the Abrahamic Religions
PBM	Paternoster Biblical Monographs
PDL	Perseus Digital Library
PRR	Princeton Readings in Religions
PTMS	Princeton Theological Monograph Series
RBS	Resources for Biblical Study
RC	Routledge Classics
REB	Revised English Bible
RNTS	Reading the New Testament Series
RSR	*Religious Studies Review*
RSV	Revised Standard Version
SB	Subsidia Biblica
SBG	Studies in Biblical Greek
SBL	Society of Biblical Literature
SBLAIL	Society of Biblical Literature Ancient Israel and Its Literature
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLMS	Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series

SBT	Studies in Biblical Theology
SCDS	Studies in Christian Doctrine and Scripture
SCJ	Studies in Christianity and Judaism
SJCL	Studies in Jewish and Christian Literature
SJLA	Studies in Judaism in Late Antiquity
SMRT	Studies in Medieval and Reformation Thought
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
SPS	Sacra Pagina Series
SPSHS	Scholars Press Studies in the Humanities Series
STDJ	Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah
StBL	Studies in Biblical Literature
TBNJCT	Themes in Biblical Narrative Jewish and Christian Traditions
TBS	Twin Brooks Series
TCH	Transformation of the Classical Heritage
TDNT	Kittel, Gerhard, and Gerhard Friedrich, eds. *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. Translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. 10 vols. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964–1976.
TNTC	Tyndale New Testament Commentaries
TSAJ	Texte und Studien zum Antiken Judentum
TynBul	*Tyndale Bulletin*
UBS	United Bible Societies
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WLQ	*Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*
WTJ	*Westminster Theological Journal*

WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
ZNW	*Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche*

CHAPTER 1: TWO SACRIFICES IN HEBREWS: THEIR RELATIONSHIP

Approach of This Study

While scholars vary on the extent to which Hebrews acknowledges or denies the old cultus and its efficacy, most of them—if not all—overlook its significance, treating the old sacrificial system as if it were merely being replaced by the new. Although some literary and rhetorical approaches illuminate Hebrews's positive attitude toward the Levitical sacrifice in relation with Jesus' sacrifice, they do not cover the entirety of the book or even the core section (i.e., Heb 7–10) of Hebrews.[1] Aside from the author's language and rhetorical style and skill, it is necessary to investigate the ideological foundation of the author, recipients, and contemporaries behind the main argument throughout the book. Although there have been a few attempts to approach the book of Hebrews through social-scientific analysis,[2] most focus on the community and its existential legitimacy based on "sectarian rhetoric" that inevitably results in sectarianism against the dominant Jewish culture.[3] As a result, we require a holistic approach to understand the author's attitude toward the Levitical sacrificial system and how it relates to Judaism. In other words, we need to investigate the social aspects underlying

[1] E.g., Barnard, "Anti-Jewish Interpretations of Hebrews"; Grässer, *An die Hebräer*; Isaacs, *Sacred Space*; Joslin, *Hebrews, Christ, and the Law*, esp. 1–5, 132–72; Käsemann, *Wandering People of God*; Smillie, "Contrast or Continuity in Hebrews 1.1–2?"; Thiessen, "Hebrews and the End of Exodus"; Westfall, "Moses and Hebrews 3.1–6."

[2] E.g., deSilva, *Hebrews*; and Kim, *Polemic in the Book of Hebrews*.

[3] Sean Freyne thinks "heuristic devices" such as social psychology, sociology, and cultural anthropology are incapable of interpreting biblical texts (Freyne, "Vilifying the Other," 140–41).

contemporary Jewish thought about cult and sacrifice.[4] Most of all, there has not yet been a full-length theoretical approach to the book of Hebrews to date that focuses exclusively on the cultus and especially its purity issues.

Drawing on a cultural-anthropological approach that follows Mary Douglas's line of inquiry regarding purification in her seminal monograph *Purity and Danger*,[5] this study will develop analytical frameworks for discovering the boundaries drawn by the Hebrews author's descriptions of the old and new cultuses. Particularly because Hebrews is full of cultic language,[6] a cultural-anthropological approach based on the concept of purity sheds light on how the author deals with the Levitical sacrificial system. Besides, Edward W. Soja's critical spatial theory will also be employed to identify the Mosaic and heavenly tabernacles, which were the physical cores of the old and new cultuses, respectively, in Hebrews.[7] Since the author specifically stated that the earthly tabernacle was a copy of the tabernacle and based his argument about the sacrificial system on it, critical spatial theory is helpful in determining the relationship between the two places and, eventually, the two sacrifices.

In conclusion, this study will contend that Jesus' once-for-all sacrifice is hermeneutically dependent on the Levitical sacrificial system in the book of Hebrews. According to the author, the Levitical sacrificial system is more than just an outmoded practice that must be abandoned. Despite the lack of information about the historical background of the author and readers, they were distinctly confronted with hardships that

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[4] The consensus of scholarship is agreed that the author is a Hellenist Jew. See Lane, *Hebrews*, 1:xlvii–li.

[5] Douglas, *Purity and Danger*.

[6] See Stegemann and Stegemann, "Does the Cultic Language in Hebrews."

[7] See Soja, *Thirdspace*. Cynthia Long Westfall applies Soja's theory to Hebrews. See Westfall, "Space and Atonement."

threatened to distort their faith or cause them to abandon it (e.g., Heb 10:32–34; 12:4; 13:9). Thus, Hebrews identifies Jesus as the only one to trust through the instructive and exhortative rhetoric mainly focused on his purifying ministry, the once-for-all sacrifice. The Levitical sacrificial system is mentioned multiple times to explain, support, and emphasize the significance of Jesus' sacrifice. Employing an analytical framework drawn from a cultural-anthropological approach and critical spatial theory targeting purity concerns, this study will demonstrate that Hebrews establishes a *symbiotic* relationship between the Levitical sacrificial system and the sacrifice of Jesus. The author's presentation of and emphasis on Jesus' once-for-all sacrifice is hermeneutically dependent on the old cultus. Because the author of Hebrews views and presents both cultuses in a typological relationship, their similarities and differences serve to illustrate the continuity of their type and antitype relationship.

In the following sections of this chapter, I will provide a brief overview of the two primary reasons why Hebrews scholarship has come to identify a pejorative view of the Levitical sacrificial system in the book. First, Hebrews scholars have not fully appreciated and focused on the author's descriptions and comparisons of the old and new cultuses. Despite a few recent attempts to focus on the cultuses in Hebrews, the majority of scholars still believe that Hebrews portrays the old cultus negatively, albeit to varying degrees. Second, Hebrews has often been interpreted as a warning against Judaism and its religious practices.[8] Although more recent scholars point out that the first readers were

[8] It is also related to the question of whether the readers of Hebrews were Jewish Christians. The majority of recent scholars hold that the first readers included not only Jewish Christians but also Gentile Christians. Following that, the author's concern is more commonly interpreted as an emphasis on the new cultus as opposed to the old, rather than a warning against returning to Judaism. Nevertheless, the negative view of the old cultus persists.

not exclusively Jewish Christians and that the purpose was not necessarily to warn against *returning to* Judaism, even those who argue for Gentile or mixed first readers maintain that Hebrews warns *against* Judaism. Thus, the author's description of the relationship between the two sacrifices remains unclear.

Historical Context of Hebrews Scholarship

The book of Hebrews was once called "Cinderella" due to scholars' relative indifference compared to other New Testament corpora.[9] Although attention given to the book of Hebrews has been increasing amid New Testament scholarship since *circa* 1980,[10] it still does not receive as much attention as the Synoptic Gospels, Pauline epistles, and Johannine literature.[11] One of the main reasons for this relative disinterest in Hebrews is the lack of background information on its historical contexts, such as the author, readers, dates, and locations.[12]

However, when it comes to its relationship with the Old Testament, Hebrews deserves to be referred to as "Queen" rather than "Cinderella."[13] The author's frequent use of the Old Testament in Hebrews demonstrates his deep concern for and relationship

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[9] McCullough, "Hebrews in Recent Scholarship," 66. J. Ramsey Michaels calls Hebrews "something of a sleeping giant, a neglected tour de force within the New Testament canon," which has been "too often neglected in contemporary Christian preaching and Bible study" (Michaels, "Hebrews," 305).

[10] McCullough says in around 1980, there was a "mini revival in interest in Hebrews" (McCullough, "Hebrews in Recent Scholarship," 66). George H. Guthrie says, "at the dawn of the twenty-first century, we may be turning a page to another development in the story—this Cinderella [Hebrews] seems to have come out of obscurity and to be on her way to the ball. The past fifteen years have witnessed a steady stream of commentaries, monographs, and articles on Hebrews, and dissertation research focused on the book seems to be on the rise" (Guthrie, "Hebrews in Its First-Century Contexts," 414). Donald A. Hagner also remarks, "it is a sad fact that Hebrews has long been underappreciated and underused in the church of the modern period." (Hagner, "Hebrews: A Book for Today," 213).

[11] Laansma, "Hebrews," 14.

[12] Nathan MacDonald refers to this lack as "puzzles," of which suggestions "can make a significant difference to how the epistle is read" (MacDonald, "Introduction," 1).

[13] Guthrie, "Hebrews," 919. More precisely, George H. Guthrie proposed this, pointing to the *use* of the Old Testament in the New Testament. Cf. McCullough, "Hebrews in Recent Scholarship."

with Judaism and its scripture.[14] As such, Hebrews's interrelationship with Judaism is apparent.[15] Susan E. Docherty observes that Hebrews is a "Jewish text, which belongs just as much to Jewish as to Christian history" and is "an important exemplar of early post-biblical Jewish exegesis."[16] Daniel Boyarin further specifies Hebrews as midrash, a form of Jewish biblical interpretation, saying, "Hebrews is midrash, not *pesher*, not allegory, certainly not paraphrase or rewritten Bible."[17] Whether or not one agrees with the attribution of Hebrews as a Jewish text, it is undeniable that Hebrews has a significant relationship with Judaism.

Among the many Jewish characteristics of the book, cultic elements are prominent. As John Dunnill points out, "Hebrews claims for itself the image of a *liturgy*, a symbolic action in the sacred sphere," regardless of other controversial or disputable issues in the book, such as its genre and historical background.[18] However, the cultic language prevalent throughout Hebrews gives the book a complicated relationship with

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[14] Some scholars suggest that the Hebrews author was female (e.g., Harnack, "Probabilia über die Adresse"; Hoppin, *Pricilla*, 13–116). However, although the identity of the author is irrelevant to this study, I shall employ the masculine pronoun because the author describes himself with a masculine participle (διηγούμενον) in Heb 11:32.

[15] Indeed, the issue of how Hebrews and contemporary Judaism relate to one another, which the author is likely to have in mind, has contributed to difficulties surrounding the book of Hebrews. Craig R. Koester says, "Many have tried to locate Hebrews within either the Pauline or a Jewish Christian tradition, but Hebrews resists easy placement, calling the adequacy of existing categories into question" (Koester, *Hebrews*, 54). For a discussion about the relationship of Hebrews with Judaism in general, see Koester, *Hebrews*, 59–63.

[16] Docherty, *Use of the Old Testament*, 1–2. Docherty's contention is based on the premise that Christianity was not yet separated from Judaism: "The so-called 'parting the way' had not yet occurred" (1). For a more comprehensive discussion on the topic of the "parting of the ways" between Christianity and Judaism, see Boyarin, *Dying for God*; Boyarin, *Border Lines*; Dunn, ed., *Jews and Christians*; Dunn, *Partings of the Ways*.

[17] Boyarin, "Midrash in Hebrews," 15. He remarks, "For the homily of Hebrews as well, I wouldn't dream of thinking of a rabbinic 'background' or even of so-called Jewish influence. I would rather see the epistle *as* a Jewish text, a homily presumably closely related to other Jewish homilies of the time in style and to a great extent, in content as well—with a twist, of course, a fateful twist" (29, emphasis original).

[18] His emphatic point is a "*covenant-renewal rite*, of which the book's words comprise a long prophetic exhortation" (Dunnill, *Covenant and Sacrifice*, 261, emphasis original).

Judaism, which fosters confusion.[19] That is because the Levitical sacrificial system is not only assumed to be shared information by the author and his readers, but it is also contrasted and compared to the superior once-for-all sacrifice of Jesus. As a result, the book of Hebrews has often been interpreted as presenting a negative perspective of the Old Testament cultus.

Interpretation Challenges of Hebrews

Central to the argument of Hebrews is its engagement with the Old Testament, but rather than simply citing passages or addressing its concepts, the author weaves deeper cultic elements together.[20] However, failing to focus on the cultic aspect resulted in a misunderstanding, indicating that the author's assessment of the old cultus is negative. At the same time, Hebrews has frequently been interpreted as a warning against Judaism, obscuring the text's nuanced discussions about the role of these rituals in early Christian thought. Moreover, we should reconsider using the terms *superior* and *inferior*, as they may introduce unnecessary positive or negative nuances that were not part of the author's original perspective. This section will briefly explore the historical context and interpretation challenges that arose from overlooking Hebrews's cultic concept, a misunderstanding of the author's purpose, and inadequate use of superior and inferior

[19] James Moffatt confesses, "Above all, the sacrificial analogies are a stumbling-block, for we have nothing to correspond to what an ancient understood by a 'priest' and sacrifice" (Moffatt, *Hebrews*, xlvi). He presents one of its reasons, saying, "What puzzles a modern was an axiom to the ancient" (xlii). See also Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 10; Gager, *Origins of Anti-Semitism*, 181; Johnsson, *Defilement and Purgation*, 1–6; Stegemann and Stegemann, "Does the Cultic Language in Hebrews."

[20] The topic of cultus in Hebrews is described by William G. Johnsson as the author's "selected categories of argumentation that are singularly unhelpful to us." Nevertheless, he claims that it causes the book of Hebrews "to attract [us]: there is the puzzle" (Johnsson, *Defilement and Purgation*, 1). According to Barnabas Lindars, the "efficacy of Jesus' death as an *atoning sacrifice*" is arguably one of the major assertions of Hebrews (Lindars, *Theology of the Letter to the Hebrews*, 10, emphasis added).

language in relation to the concept of continuity or discontinuity between the two cultuses.

Reevaluating the Cultic Dimension of Hebrews

Traditionally, the cultic aspect of Hebrews has been overlooked, resulting in a misunderstanding of the author's perspective on the Levitical cultic system.[21] According to Johnsson, "[R]emarkably little attention has been given to the cultus *in its own right*,"[22] and "there has been no Protestant work devoted to the cultus during the past fifty years" as of 1973 when he wrote his doctoral dissertation,[23] *Defilement and Purgation in the Book of Hebrews*.[24] At the outset of his study, he quotes James Moffatt to express the reality of Hebrews scholarship's indifference to the cultus, saying, "Moffatt was correct: we today have no true concept of the ancient office of priesthood, which was similar to that of consecrated butcher."[25] He notes that one of the primary reasons the cultus has been overlooked in the study of Hebrews is because the book has been approached without proper consideration of its genre based on the methodology.

Recognizing that Hebrews belongs to the "religious genre" and is thus naturally cultic, Johnsson contends that the traditional diachronic approach represented by historical-critical methodology has led scholars to misinterpret the book's core concept,

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[21] See, for example, Johnsson, *Defilement and Purgation*, 13–28.

[22] Johnsson, *Defilement and Purgation*, 2 (emphasis original). He adds that past studies of the cultus in Hebrews have focused on the Christological implications of cultus, limiting them to the concept of priesthood. He claims that the "anthropological concentration" enables studies to focus on the cultus in and of itself. In this regard, he evaluates his own work by stating, "[M]y study will break new ground" (6).

[23] The dissertation was published by Fontes Press in 2020.

[24] Johnsson, *Defilement and Purgation*, 13–14. Whereas, he claims, there have been several books, commentaries, and articles on the cultus in Hebrews by Catholic scholars.

[25] Johnsson, *Defilement and Purgation*, 1. Moffatt says in his commentary on Hebrews, "The business of a priest was often that of a butcher; blood flowed, blood was splashed about." See Moffatt, *Hebrews*, xlvi.

old and new cultuses, as something exotic and far from the present reality.[26] This approach frequently focuses on dissecting the historical development of texts and theological concepts over time, emphasizing discontinuity or foreignness between the ideas presented in biblical texts and their contexts. For the book of Hebrews, this methodology tended to treat cultic imagery as archaic or exotic, dismissing it as unrelated to contemporary readers' theological or existential interests. Johnsson critiques this viewpoint, claiming that it ignores the inherent religious and cultic genre of Hebrews, which is central to its argument that the old and new cultuses are vital realities rather than abstract or outdated notions.[27]

Johnsson, on the other hand, advocated for the synchronic approach, emphasizing the necessity of interpreting the Hebrews text as a unified and cohesive whole, highlighting its internal logic, structure, and rhetorical features as they exist in the final form of the text. This approach seeks to comprehend the function and meaning of the cultic language and concepts within the context of Hebrews as a whole, rather than fragmenting the text through diachronic reconstruction or obsessing over the historical development of its individual elements. He avers that the synchronic method is particularly well-suited to the study of Hebrews because it preserves the literary and theological coherence of the book.[28]

Realizing that the cultic concept is central to the Hebrews author's argument is significant for Johnsson, especially given the book's religious genre and cultic terms such

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[26] Johnsson, *Defilement and Purgation*, 194. Prior to reaching this conclusion, he devotes an entire chapter to exploring the limitations of the diachronic approach and the importance of the synchronic approach to the study of the cultic concept (45–95).

[27] Johnsson, *Defilement and Purgation*, 45–95.

[28] Johnsson, *Defilement and Purgation*, 198–99.

as “defilement,” “purgation,” and “blood.” He says as follows:

> [I]t is manifest that the view that the cultic language of the author is not significant for his purpose and so may quickly be passed over is found to be in error. Again, the suggestion that this language in fact is employed in the service of a denigration of cultus per se—that is, that the letter to the Hebrews in effect is an anti-cultic polemic—has completely missed the mark: it turns the author’s argument on its head. . . . [A]s we have seen throughout this study, terms such as “defilement,” “purgation,” and “blood” are to be understood only by reference to the deep primordial springs of religious experience which they tap.[29]

Since another reason for the lack of the studies on the cultus in Hebrews is the assumption that “the author’s purpose is to denigrate the cultus,” recognizing and focusing on the cultic section as the core of Hebrews will inevitably lead interpreters to re-evaluate the continuity between the old and new cultuses.[30] His conclusion is that “the balancing of continuity/discontinuity is at the level of cultic axioms: these axioms, especially the ‘blood rule,’ provide the underlying base for comparison, while the new thing comes in Christ (his blood) furnishes the factor of discontinuity within the underlying continuity.”[31]

Despite a few differences in detail, especially regarding the methodology and method, this study shares Johnsson’s presuppositions about the importance of a synchronic methodology in terms of the study of the cultic topic in Hebrews and the “defilement” as the original state of humanity. Starting with the method of phenomenology of religion, he seeks to understand religious experience as it is,[32] thereby

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[29] Johnsson, *Defilement and Purgation*, 195.

[30] Johnsson, *Defilement and Purgation*, 31. Those “who saw the argumentation of Hebrews founded on the continuity of cultic presuppositions tended to be concerned to probe the inner religious meaning of the cult” (41).

[31] Johnsson, *Defilement and Purgation*, 171.

[32] Johnsson, “Cultus of Hebrews.” Johnsson notes that the findings of *Religionsgeschichte* can only establish historical connections, which inevitably limits the study of cultic languages in Hebrews. As such, he claims that his phenomenological approach can supplement it by gathering comparative cross-cultural data in order to delve into the “internal logic of cultic argument” (106), particularly “the cultic language as having its own force, direct and irreducible force, not to be simply equated with theological

recognizing that defilement is always the fundamental problem in all religions.[33]

Notably, both before and after Johnsson, despite a period of inactivity in Protestant scholars' discussions of Hebrews's cultus, most studies on the Hebrews's cultus have tended to focus on maintaining the superiority of the new sacrificial system over the old one. Even those who appeal to the positive elements of the old cultus come to the conclusion that the old and new cultic systems in Hebrews are incompatible.

A Warning Against (Returning to) Judaism

Hebrews has often been understood as a text written to a community of Jewish Christians who were struggling with the temptation to return to their former religious practices. This interpretation, while not without controversy, is widely accepted or at least has a dominant influence.[34] Even those who hold differing opinions on the addressees are still susceptible to maintaining a negative standpoint towards Judaism as the core stance of Hebrews. The letter's anonymity, combined with its complex theological arguments, particularly regarding its addresses and anti-Semitism in the Western world, has given rise to extensive scholarly discussion.

Perhaps the majority of scholars would not disagree with Andrei Orlov's observation: "Hebrews engages in a consistent polemic against the figure of Moses and the Mosaic regulations about the sanctuary and the sacerdotal prescriptions depicting animal sacrifices as inferior, temporary offerings as compared with the eternal sacrifice of

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expression" (107).

[33] Johnsson, *Defilement and Purgation*, 45–95, esp. 94. He argues that the method of phenomenology of religion "provides the exegete with the attitude necessary to approach the cultus in its own right—that of 'epoch'" and that the concepts of defilement, blood, and purgation and their interrelationships are general "religious evidence apart from Hebrews" (94). See also Johnsson, "Cultus of Hebrews," 106–8.

[34] See, for example, Bruce, *Hebrews*, 3–9; Klassen, "To the Hebrews or Against the Hebrews?"

Jesus."[35] As such, the differences and discontinuity between the old and new cultuses tend to be overemphasized, despite explicit connections and indicators of continuity. Rosemary R. Ruether says, for example, "Judaism [in Hebrews] is not merely superseded historically, but absolutely. It is the mere finite, mutable and carnal, in contrast to the eternal, immutable and spiritual."[36] Ruether's interpretation is based on the idea that the text of Hebrews has elements that could, and historically did, contribute to anti-Jewish sentiments. She argues that Hebrews devalues the Aaronic priesthood in Heb 7:11 and the Jewish identity in Heb 10:1 on the basis of John Chrysostom's argument.[37]

As Ruether has observed, the argument that the author of Hebrews held a negative view of the Levitical sacrificial system dates back to Chrysostom's early works in the fourth century CE.[38] According to Chrysostom, the letter was a warning against "Gentile Judaizing Christians," urging Jewish Christians living in Jerusalem to abandon Jewish practices that were contrary to God's will.[39] Chrysostom's influence on the interpretation of Hebrews cannot be overstated. His commentary on the epistle, *Homiliae in epistulam ad Hebraeos*, and his other work, *Adversus Judaeos* (*Discourses against Judaizing Christians*), became a cornerstone for subsequent exegetes, shaping the Western tradition's understanding of Hebrews as a text that denigrates the Levitical sacrificial

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[35] Orlov, "The Heir of Righteousness," 45. Although his point is "beyond Mosaic sacrificial precepts and the priestly practices of the descendants of Levi" and he includes "other priestly traditions in the Jewish milieu of the late Second Temple period," he essentially acknowledges "the importance of the figure of Moses in the cultic debates" in Hebrews (46).

[36] Ruether, *Faith and Fratricide*, 107.

[37] Compare Ruether, *Faith and Fratricide*, 158–59 with Chrysostom, *Adv. Jud*. 7:5; and also Ruether, *Faith and Fratricide*, 164 with Chrysostom, *Adv. Jud*. 7:3.

[38] See Ruether, *Faith and Fratricide*, 117–23.

[39] Chrysostom, *Hom. Heb.* 12:1–7; 11:1–10; 13:1–11. See esp. Chrysostom, *Hom. Heb.* 12–15. According to his interpretation of Hebrews, the author emphasizes Jesus' absolute superiority over Judaism in every way. See also Wilken, *John Chrysostom and the Jews*, 66–94.

system.[40] As a result of subsequent debates over Hebrews's first readers with the purpose and its anti-Jewish feature, among other contentious issues in the book, scholars have tended to interpret Hebrews as critical of the old cultic system.

Scholars have long debated whether the original audience of Hebrews was Jewish Christians. The title of the book, Πρὸς Ἑβραίους ("To the Hebrews"), which Tertullian first mentioned and the earliest manuscript also used,[41] led some interpreters to believe the first readers were Jewish Christians.[42] Besides, the author's strong interest in Jewish traditions, rituals, and the Levitical priesthood, as well as his extensive use of Old Testament quotations, are used to demonstrate the book's Jewish-Christian readership by a number of traditional and modern scholars.[43] Until recently, those who advocated for Jewish Christian readers argued that Hebrews was written to warn Jewish Christians against returning to their old ways of worshiping under the Mosaic Law. Some scholars

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[40] Hagen, *Theology of Testament in the Young Luther*, 15. Kenneth Hagen quotes Eduard Riggenbach, saying, "Es ist die Grundlage der gesamten abendlandischen Auslegungsliteratur zum Hebraerbrief geworden" [It has become the basis of the entire Western literature on the interpretation of the Epistle to the Hebrews] (15n68, my translation; see Riggenbach, *Historische Studien zum Hebräerbrief*, 11). Erik M. Heen and Phillip D. W. Krey also point out that Chrysostom's perspective served as a model for many subsequent interpretations of Hebrews since "the Reformation, in the East and the West" (Heen and Krey, eds., *Hebrews*, xliii). Thus, Chrysostom's influence has persisted into modern scholarship, reinforcing a negative view of the old cultus.

[41] See Tertullian, *Pud*. 20 written in the third century CE and P^{46} of the Chester Beatty papyri dated approximately 200 CE.

[42] Cf. Thomas R. Schreiner says, "Certainly the title doesn't resolve the question of addressees, but it is an ancient witness for the letter being addressed to Jewish Christians, and it at least shows that the predominant view of the addressees reaches back to the earliest interpreters of the letter. . . . Still the title of the letter and its contents (with the focus on the Mosaic law and the Levitical priesthood) render it more likely that the book was addressed to Jewish readers who wanted to revert to Judaism" (Schreiner, *Hebrews*, 7).

[43] Jon M. Isaak notes that John Chrysostom, Martin Luther, and John Calvin all argued for the Jewish-Christian destination of Hebrews (Isaak, *Situating the Letter to the Hebrews*, 26–29). Among modern Hebrews scholars, see, for example, Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 20–22; Filson, *Yesterday*, 63–65; Haber, "From Priestly Torah to Christ Cultus"; Hagner, *A Book for Today*, 1–2; Johnson, *Going Outside the Camp*, 129; Kistemaker, *Hebrews*, 17; Kleinig, *Hebrews*, 7; Lane, *Hebrews*, 1:liv–lv; Lindars, *Theology of the Letter to the Hebrews*, 4–6; Lünemann, *Hebrews*, 40; Salevao, *Legitimation in the Letter to the Hebrews*, 108–18; Schreiner, *Hebrews*, 6–7; Westcott, *Hebrews*, xxxvi; Witherington, *Letters and Homilies for Jewish Christians*, 24–25.

associate this with the so-called "relapse theory," which holds that Jewish Christians were pressured to return to Judaism, whether through persecution or social alienation.[44] The book is thus interpreted as an exhortation to remain faithful to Christ and resist the temptation to return to the old cultic ritual, which is portrayed as inferior to the new one established by Jesus.

On the other hand, a few scholars posit that the first readers may have predominantly consisted of Gentile Christians.[45] Proponents of this viewpoint argue that Hebrews's language does not necessarily indicate a Jewish audience, especially given the widespread use of Jewish imagery and the Old Testament in early Christian writings directed at Gentiles. They argue that Gentile Christians may have become acquainted with the Jewish scriptures through Christian teaching, especially since early Christian communities frequently incorporated Jewish religious traditions into their practice and worship. Furthermore, Hebrews emphasizes the universality of Christ's atonement and high priesthood, which resonate with a Gentile audience struggling to understand their place in God's redemptive plan. Some argue that the references to the sacrificial system in Hebrews, particularly in chapters 9–10, were intended to explain the finality and the sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice to Gentile Christians who may have been perplexed about the role of Jewish law and rituals in their newfound faith. Although it was not a warning against *returning to* Judaism, it could have been a warning against becoming involved in something related to Judaism in order to emphasize the superiority of the new cultus.

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[44] For more thorough information on the relapse theory, see Strickland, "*Pros Hebraious*," 5–18.

[45] E.g., Hughes, *Hebrews and Hermeneutics*, 10–15; Mitchell, *Hebrews*, 12; Moffatt, *Hebrews*, xv–xvii.

Another option is to consider the recipients to be a mixed group of Jewish and Gentile Christians.[46] Its supporters posit that while some members of the community may have been Jewish Christians who were well-versed in the Levitical cultus, others were Gentiles who were still learning about how Jewish traditions and the Christian faith interacted. This theory accounts for Hebrews's emphasis on thoroughly explaining the Old Testament cultic system, which may have been necessary for Gentile believers who were unfamiliar with Jewish practices. It also explains why the author balances his discussion of the old and new sacrificial rituals, presenting the latter as a viable option for all believers, whether Jewish or Gentile. Scholars such as F. F. Bruce have supported this viewpoint, arguing that Hebrews's internal evidence reflects a community of believers living in a cosmopolitan setting like Rome, where Jewish and Gentile Christians may have worshipped together.[47] They argue that for Jewish Christians, the author emphasizes not returning to Jewish practices, whereas for Gentile Christians, he stresses the sufficiency of Christ's atonement without the need to adopt Jewish customs. Hebrews would address both groups' potential confusion or temptation to combine their new faith with old traditions, bringing them together under the new covenant. Regardless of who the first readers were, the prevailing view is that Hebrews contains warnings against Judaism.

It is argued that Chrysostom's understanding of Hebrews, as well as other New Testament books, may have reflected popular anti-Judaism beliefs at the time.[48] This anti-

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[46] E.g.,, Attridge, *Hebrews*, 9–12; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 21–27; Koester, *Hebrews*, 46–48.

[47] Bruce, *Hebrews*, 12–14.

[48] He had a critical attitude toward Judaism and supported his anti-Jewish thoughts with passages from the New Testament, particularly the book of Hebrews. He even condemned the Jews, saying that they were "possessed by demons," "bandits," and other derogatory terms. Chrysostom believed that the author of Hebrews intended to abolish all Jewish customs, such as the Levitical sacrificial system and the laws of the days, and to present Christ as the alternative (Chrysostom, *Adv. Jud*. 7:1–11). According to his

Jewish stance continued throughout the Middle Ages and into the Reformation. During the Reformation, both Martin Luther and John Calvin, although primarily focused on doctrinal disputes within Christianity, were also affected by anti-Jewish sentiment. Luther, for example, esteemed Hebrews for its emphasis on Jesus' priesthood and the superiority of faith in Jesus over compliance with the law.[49] While Luther did not explicitly employ Hebrews as a tool against Jews in his early works, his overarching theological framework—particularly his later, more vehemently anti-Jewish writings—reflected a supersessionist understanding that regarded Judaism as deficient and outdated.[50] Meanwhile, John Calvin took a more cautious approach, avoiding explicitly anti-Jewish readings of Hebrews. He repeatedly stated that the Jewish sacrificial system was part of God's divine plan, serving as a foreshadowing of Christ's ultimate sacrifice.[51] Nonetheless, Calvin's interpretation still inclined towards a supersessionist framework, in which Jesus' coming rendered the old covenant "weak and unprofitable" in terms of offering salvation (Heb 7:18–19).[52] He argued that the ceremonial laws of Judaism were abolished. While Calvin did not display the same level of hostility toward Jews as Luther, both Luther's and Calvin's interpretations of Hebrews tended to view its message as a warning against Judaism.

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interpretation of Hebrews, the author emphasizes Jesus' absolute superiority over Judaism in every way. He says that Hebrews "marks out and shows the difference between each of these purifyings, and how one of them is high and the other low. And says it is [so] with good reason, since that is 'the blood of bulls,' and this 'the Blood of Christ'" (Chrysostom, *Hom. Heb.* 15:5). See McDonald, "Anti-Judaism in the Early Fathers."

[49] Hagen, *Theology of Testament in the Young Luther*, 56.

[50] See Luther, *Jews and Their Lies*. See also Harvey, *Luther and the Jews*, esp. 66–89. As a Messianic Jew, Richard S. Harvey argues that Luther lied about Jews. Aside from Harvey's assessment and criticism of Luther, it is clear that Luther harbored strong antipathy towards Jews.

[51] See Calvin, *Commentary on Hebrews*, esp. xxviii, 47–48, 206.

[52] Calvin, *Commentary on Hebrews*, 171–72. He elsewhere argues that Jesus, as the high priest, "abolishes all the ceremonies of the Law" (xxix).

In modern times, many scholars have continued to grapple with the legacy of anti-Judaic interpretations of Hebrews. While some have attempted to balance the themes of continuity and discontinuity between the old and new covenants, the influence of anti-Judaism has proven difficult to overcome entirely. The idea that the author of Hebrews presents Judaism as a preliminary, incomplete system that is surpassed by Jesus persisted as a dominant interpretive thread at least until the mid-twentieth century CE.[53] Scholars such as Rosemary Ruether and Samuel Sandmel, for example, have identified supersessionist undertones in Hebrews, implying that Jesus' new sacrificial system is the radical reconfiguration of ancient Judaism.[54] Even when scholars strive to mitigate the negative depiction of Judaism, the prevailing theological framework continues to bolster the view that the old sacrificial system is deficient and thus inferior to the new.

More recent scholars continue to debate Hebrews's anti-Jewish character. Some argue that the text was written for a community that had strong Jewish roots but wanted to distinguish itself from mainstream Judaism. They do not entirely deny that the text contains traces of continuity between Judaism and Christianity, but their overall interpretation is consistent with Chrysostom's anti-Jewish framework.[55]

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[53] For an overview of the anti-Jewish readings of Hebrews, see Barnard, "Anti-Jewish Interpretations of Hebrews," 25–34.

[54] Ruether contends that the anti-Jewish stance is deeply ingrained in the New Testament itself, particularly the book of Hebrews. She emphasized that in Heb 7:11, Jesus' priesthood is portrayed as replacing the Aaronic priesthood, and Judaism is described as a mere shadow of the perfection embodied in Jesus' new sacrificial system (Heb 10:1). Despite her criticism of anti-Judaism, Ruether's analysis reinforced the perception that Hebrews views Judaism as inferior (Ruether, *Faith and Fratricide*, 64–182). Sandmel also addresses this issue, suggesting that Hebrews refers to Judaism as "the worthy but imperfect preparation for the perfection which is Christianity." He observes that, while Hebrews does not vilify contemporary Jews, it does portray Judaism as a system that has been superseded by Christianity (Sandmel, *Anti-Semitism in the New Testament?* 120–22).

[55] See, for example, Kim, *Polemic in the Book of Hebrews*, 62–196. Lloyd Kim examines some Hebrews passages about the Levitical priesthood (Heb 7:1–19), the Mosaic covenant (8:1–13), and Levitical sacrifice (10:1–10), concluding that Hebrews presents the new sacrificial system as a replacement of the old. He sees the *new* as an alternative to the *old* throughout the study (197–201). See also Gager, *Origins of Anti-Semitism*, esp. 181–84; Hughes, *Hebrews and Hermeneutics*, 5–31.

Therefore, the interpretation of Hebrews has been deeply influenced by anti-Jewish perspectives since John Chrysostom. Chrysostom's assertion that Judaism is inferior and deficient in comparison to Christianity paved the way for centuries of interpretations that portrayed Hebrews as critical of Judaism. While several recent scholars have attempted to reframe the text in a less anti-Jewish light, Chrysostom's interpretation remains influential.[56] Whether or not one accepts Hebrews's anti-Jewish character, the view that Judaism deserved to be replaced by Jesus due to its flaws remains widespread, and it inevitably leads to a negative view of the old cultus.

Some other recent scholars question the prevalent anti-Jewish interpretations. For example, Susanne Lehne investigates the continuity of the old and new covenants, focusing on the theological framework of covenant in Hebrews.[57] While she recognizes the author's emphasis on the newness of the new covenant, she contends that Hebrews does not completely reject the old covenant, but rather redefines it within the context of Jesus' priesthood.[58] Lehne's interpretation is part of a growing trend among scholars who seek to balance the themes of continuity and discontinuity in Hebrews without using an anti-Jewish framework. Nevertheless, some scholars' efforts to avoid an anti-Jewish concept are frequently undermined due to inadequate use of superior and inferior language.

Like Lehne, David A. deSilva rejects the idea that Hebrews engages in a polemic against Judaism. Using socio-rhetorical analysis, deSilva argues that Hebrews employs

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[56] See Heen and Krey, eds., *Hebrews*, xlii–xlv.

[57] Lehne considers the new covenant as being "intimately bound up with the need to reflect on the function of the Scriptures" and with "the problem of continuity and discontinuity" between the old and new covenants (Lehne, *New Covenant in Hebrews*, 75–78).

[58] Lehne, *New Covenant in Hebrews*, 119.

rhetorical strategies to exalt Jesus while not disparaging Judaism.[59] Rather, the text encourages believers to remain faithful to Jesus in the face of external pressures. He denies that Hebrews has an anti-Jewish character, claiming that the author's use of praise for Jesus does not necessarily imply a denigration of Judaism.

Attempts to Avoid Pejorative Connotations

Although there are a few attempts to refute the Hebrews' author's negative view of Judaism, the use of several terms may lead us to understand that the author still holds a negative view of the old cultus. While deSilva denies Hebrews's anti-Jewish character, for example, he still employs superior language to describe Jesus' once-for-all sacrifice, reminding us of the inferiority of the Levitical sacrificial system.[60] In this sense, the terms *superiority* and *inferiority* have been problematic descriptions of the relationship between the two sacrificial systems, particularly because the term *inferior* is understood by others as pejorative.

If Jesus is simply described as "superior," then the Levitical cultus is "inferior" in the sense of being lower in rank, which is not necessarily negative—rank is inherent in the relationship between type and antitype. However, the term *inferior* can also have negative connotations associated with the old cultus, such as deficiency, faulty, not good, and defective, especially when viewed through an anti-Jewish lens. If we admit the influence of anti-Jewish notions in the interpretation of Hebrews, we must carefully

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[59] deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 181. Regarding the rhetoric Hebrews uses, deSilva points out that Hebrews employs both epideictic and deliberative rhetoric depending on the perspectives of certain readers. According to him, the rhetoric of Hebrews is deliberative for those who were considering leaving the community to make them not do so, while it is epideictic for those who were faithful to reinforce their faithfulness (46–71).

[60] deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 263–64.

discern and define the meaning of superior and inferior, especially when arguing against views that regard the old cultus and its cultic elements negatively.

Therefore, the term *superior* will be used in the sense that it is not only better than something else, but also implies the need for replacement due to a deficiency in the counterpart. In contrast to *superior*, *inferior* will be assumed to encompass deficiency and insufficiency, resulting in a pejorative tone. The language of superior and inferior has been problematic, especially when seeking the continuity or discontinuity in the relationship between the old and new cultuses. Considering that the old and new cultuses are not identical, this study will attempt to describe their relationship using the language of type, antitype, and fulfillment, which adequately describe their continual relationship.

The term *continuity* between the old and new cultuses refers to their temporal and logical continuity with one another. When referring to it, the author's explanation emphasizes their interdependence, resulting in the same assessment. If the new cultus is viewed positively, then the old one is also viewed positively, and vice versa. This is particularly because the old one has a preparatory nature for the typological fulfillment of the new one. On the contrary, the term *discontinuity* between the two cultuses implies that the old one was abolished, most likely due to its flaws, and replaced by the new. While there is temporal continuity, their assessments should be opposite. The new one is necessary as a replacement because the old one is "inferior" if they are in "discontinuity."

Additionally, the term *discontinuity* between the old and new cultuses should not be confused with differences, and should therefore be used with caution. The discontinuity could imply that the old cultus had to be abolished due to its inferiority, imperfection, and insufficiency, and was replaced by the new one, especially when

discussing the relationship between the two cultuses in Hebrews. Simple differences in certain cultic aspects may contribute to the overall continuity between the two cultic systems. In contrast, the term *continuity* denotes that there were positive characteristics, roles, or efficacies of the old cultus that had a significant impact on the appearance and existence of the new cultus of Jesus.

It should be noted that a simple temporal progression between the cultuses does not necessarily imply a pejorative and critical disposition. Each of the earlier and later objects, especially when viewed through a typological framework, plays a unique role in the completion process. In this study, thus, "continuity" is another expression that denotes the typological relationship between the two cultuses, whereas "discontinuity" may denote something that does not form a typological relationship.

Given the various perspectives mentioned, it is clear that the issue of continuity and discontinuity between the old and new cultuses remains a central tension in the interpretation of Hebrews. While many scholars emphasize the discontinuity between the Levitical sacrificial system and Jesus' sacrifice, even those who acknowledge the continuity must consider what has been discussed thus far—a lack of thorough examination of old and new cultuses in Hebrews, as well as an alleged notion of its purpose as a warning against Judaism. While the author of Hebrews appears to criticize the old cultus, he carefully articulates its role as a type of the ultimate fulfillment found in Jesus' antitypical sacrifice. This implies that the old cultus retains theological significance as a typological foundation for the new sacrificial system introduced by Jesus Christ.

Thus, focusing on the cultic elements of Hebrews is essential for a comprehensive

understanding. The text does not merely discard the old but reframes it within the broader narrative of redemption. The Levitical sacrifices point forward to Jesus' definitive act of atonement, establishing a sense of continuity that validates the old cultus as a meaningful expression of divine worship. This dynamic interplay between the old and new cultuses eventually forms a continuity that is fulfilled and culminated in Jesus' once-for-all sacrifice.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined the long-standing interpretive challenges surrounding the cultic elements of Hebrews, highlighting the need for a reconsideration of its relationship with the old cultic system. I argued that traditional diachronic approaches, which emphasize historical development and discontinuity, frequently result in misinterpretations that overshadow the theological and typological continuity inherent in the text. Using a synchronic approach, as Johnsson suggested, this study will underscore the importance of the old cultus as a foundational and preparatory framework for understanding Jesus' fulfillment work of once-for-all sacrifice. The continuity between the old and new cultuses is typological rather than pejorative, revealing a dynamic relationship that reaffirms the theological significance of the old while culminating in the new. This nuanced understanding lays the groundwork for subsequent chapters, which will delve deeper into the interplay between cultic concepts and purity concerns.

CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGY: CULTURAL-ANTHROPOLOGICAL APPROACH FOCUSING ON PURITY CONCERNS

Social-Scientific Approach

Social science, which emerged in the nineteenth century as a branch of science to investigate social phenomena among individuals, encompasses a wide range of academic disciplines including anthropology, archaeology, cultural studies, political science, psychology, and sociology.[1] Building upon "the influence on interpretation theory of the hermeneutics of suspicion represented by such intellectual giants as Nietzsche, Durkheim, Marx and Freud,"[2] a number of biblical scholars have employed social science theories to supplement the inadequacy of the historical-critical approach as a comprehensive tool for interpreting the Bible.[3] Given that the authors and readers of the New Testament lived in a particular social context of the first-century Greco-Roman world, understanding the social dynamics of that world must have been necessary to avoid the "terribly superficial at best and woefully mistaken at the worst" interpretation of the Bible.[4] Thus, "the social sciences offer modern biblical interpreters a set of tools

[1] Chalcraft, "Is Sociology Also." See also Garrett, "Sociology of Early Christianity"; and Gottwald, "Sociology of Ancient Israel." Cf. Barton, "Social-Scientific Criticism," 278.

[2] Barton, "Social-Scientific Criticism," 278.

[3] Elliott, *What Is Social-Scientific Criticism*, 13. Some scholars identify social-scientific approach as a sub-discipline of historical criticism due to its historical interest (23). Stephen C. Barton says, "social-scientific criticism has *revitalized* historical criticism of the New Testament by *enlarging* the agenda of interpretation, allowing a different set of questions to be put to the text, and providing methods and models to help answer these new questions in a controlled and accountable way" (Barton, "Social-Scientific Criticism," 279, emphasis added).

[4] Mulholland, Jr., "Sociological Criticism," 171.

that, when used properly, are capable of yielding insight into the cultural background that informed and affected both the authors of the Bible and their respective audiences."[5] John H. Elliott's description of social-scientific approach deserves to be acknowledged first among many others, particularly in regard to the historical-critical approach:

> Social-scientific criticism of the Bible is that phase of the exegetical task which analyzes the *social and cultural dimensions* of the text and of its environmental context through the utilization of the *perspectives, theory, models, and research of the social sciences*. As a component of the historical-critical method of exegesis, social-scientific criticism investigates biblical texts as meaningful configurations of language intended to communicate between composers and audiences.[6]

In brief, social-scientific analysis can be defined as "a method that merges exegesis and historical research with the resources of the social sciences."[7]

There have been several specific categories of social-scientific approaches to the New Testament, and based on Jonathan Z. Smith's initial categorization,[8] Elliott organized five categories as follows:

(1) Investigations of *social realia* (groups, occupations, institutions, and the like), generally to illustrate some feature or features of ancient society but with no concern for analyzing, synthesizing, and explaining these social facts in social-scientific fashion;
(2) Interest in social issues a step further by integrating social with economic and political phenomena to construct a *social history* of a particular period or movement or group;
(3) The social organization of early Christianity in terms of both the social forces leading to its emergence and its social institutions . . . [that include] *the deliberate use of social theory and models*;
(4) [Concentration] on *the social and cultural scripts* influencing and constraining

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[5] Baker and Balogh, "Social-Scientific Criticism," 196. Bruce J. Malina proposes a question to which social-scientific approach tries to answer: "*Who says what to whom about what*, in *what* setting and for *what* purpose?" (Malina, *Social World of Jesus*, 22–23, emphasis original).

[6] Elliott, *What Is Social-Scientific Criticism*, 7 (emphasis added).

[7] Elliott, *What Is Social-Scientific Criticism*, 7–8. See also Horrell, "Social-Scientific Interpretation," 3.

[8] Smith proposed these as "possible directions" for his AAR study group—in 1975: (1) A *description of the social facts*; (2) A genuine *social history* of early Christianity; (3) The *social organization* of early Christianity in terms of both the *social forces* which led the rise of Christianity and the *social institutions* of early Christianity; (4) Early Christianity as a *social world* (Smith, "Social Description," 19–21, emphasis original).

social interaction;
(5) The *analysis of biblical texts* . . . [that has enlisted] the research, theory, and models of the social sciences.[9]

Elliott claims that not all approaches that examine "social" or "sociological" issues are social- scientific approach. Because the first two above do not attempt to use social theories and models, they are referred to as "social description" and "social-historical" approaches, respectively.[10] Since actual social science theories and methods are used in the third, fourth, and fifth types of analyses, only those that focus on social organization and a social world can be included in social-scientific approach.

Later, Elliott defined the limits of social-scientific approach. First of all, a study must present "a hypothesis concerning a relationship of some social phenomena, a hypothesis that guides a collection of data that are then used to illustrate and explain the relation, meaning and function of the social phenomena."[11] Moreover, social-scientific scholars pursue the explicitness of their theory and models; thereby, they "allow for assessment and theory confirmation or disconfirmation."[12] One may draw a question that there might be a problem when ancient society is described and explained through a modern theory. However, there must be "still a common humanity and a common search for a fully human life which draws these two worlds [ancient and contemporary worlds] together," and anthropology can be a bridge that explains the relationship between them.[13]

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[9] Elliott, *What Is Social-Scientific Criticism*, 18–20 (emphasis original).

[10] Elliott, *What Is Social-Scientific Criticism*, 9. As the title of Smith's article, "The Social Description of Early Christianity," indicates, what he has in mind is not social-critical methods of biblical interpretation, but rather the description of society as the contextual background of early Christianity. Cf. Smith, "Social Description."

[11] Elliott, "From Social Description," 30.

[12] Elliott, "From Social Description," 30. On the other hand, social historians who are closer to the social description *implicitly* employ their theories and models, and sometimes there is no such theoretical basis.

[13] Matthews and Benjamin, "Social Sciences," 12.

Cultural Anthropological Approach: Purity and Danger

As already mentioned, anthropology is one of the most diverse disciplines of social sciences used as a tool for biblical interpretation.[14] Indeed, Old Testament scholars are often interested in anthropology, whereas New Testament scholars are frequently interested in sociology.[15] In spite of this, anthropology is currently one of the most important theories that many New Testament scholars employ to develop their social-scientific methods.[16]

The topic of purity has been frequently examined through cultural-anthropological and historical-descriptive approaches.[17] Mary Douglas, a British anthropologist, has had a significant impact on biblical scholars with her analyses of the concepts of ritual purity.[18] In her seminal 1966 monograph, *Purity and Danger*, she uses

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[14] Richard L. Rohrbaugh provides several articles that examine the New Testament in various anthropological aspects. In the introductory section, he states as follows:

> The authors of this volume are primarily interested in interpreting biblical texts. We want to know what the NT means. Thus we have not been motivated to study cultural anthropology for the sake of doing historical ethnography. Nor do we use cross-cultural models for the purpose of doing social history, though that is an important task for others to undertake. Our concern is primarily to understand the NT by placing it more nearly in the social world out of which it came (Rohrbaugh, ed., *Social Sciences*, 10).

This statement reveals that the essays in this edited volume seriously employ anthropology in order to understand the New Testament.

[15] As Louise J. Lawrence observed, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* contains an entry on "Anthropology and the Old Testament" and "Sociology of Early Christianity," whereas "Anthropology" is not provided. However, Lawrence admits that "recent developments in New Testament Studies . . . should probably warrant inclusion of an entry on 'Anthropology and the New Testament' in subsequent editions." (Lawrence, "Introduction," 13). Cf. Rogerson, "Anthropology and the Old Testament"; and Garrett, "Sociology of Early Christianity."

[16] Most—if not all—edited volumes that engage social-scientific approach to New Testament studies contain a number of articles that employ anthropological perspectives. For example, Esler, ed., *Modelling Early Christianity*; Horrell, ed., *Social-Scientific Approaches*; Rohrbaugh, ed., *Social Sciences*; and Stegemann et al., eds., *Social Setting of Jesus*.

[17] For an overview of historical and descriptive approaches to the topic of purity, see Neyrey, "Clean/Unclean," 84–86.

[18] It is not an exaggeration to say that Douglas vitalized the topic of purity in the field of biblical theology, as many studies on purity and impurity in the Bible have been conducted in response to and on the basis of her research. See Neyrey, "Clean/Unclean."

the term *dirt* as an antonym of *purity* and describes it as follows:

> If we can abstract pathogenicity and hygiene from our notion of dirt, we are left with the old definition of dirt as matter *out of place*. This is a very suggestive approach. It implies two conditions: a set of ordered relations and a contravention of that order. Dirt then, is never a unique, isolated event. Where there is dirt there is system. Dirt is the by-product of a systematic ordering and classification of matter, in so far as ordering involves rejecting inappropriate elements.[19]

As a result, all social groups are unavoidably engaged in an activity that produces dirt and is impure.[20] Every social group has rules in place to maintain its unique identity, and anything allowed by the rule is pure while anything not allowed is impure. Since rules vary in each society, something or someone may be pure in one society but impure in another. Moreover, one may be clean in one situation but dirty in another, even within the same social system. Dirt is relative in this sense. As Douglas remarks, furthermore, "reflection on dirt involves reflection on the relations of order to disorder, being to non-being, form to formlessness, life to death."[21] To recapitulate, dirt indicates something out of place in a particular group, and therefore, it is "a matter of social perception and interpretation."[22]

Douglas offers an analogy in support of the notion of purity. She correlates purity and danger based on the idea of her mentor, Franz Steiner.[23] According to Steiner, "taboo is an element of all those situations in which attitudes to values are expressed in terms of

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[19] Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 44 (emphasis added). Elsewhere, she remarks as follows:
> The idea of dirt implies a structure of ideal. For us dirt is a kind of compendium category for all events which blur, smudge, contradict, or otherwise confuse accepted classifications. The underlying feeling is that a system of values which is habitually expressed in a given arrangement of things has been violated (Douglas, "Pollution," 109).

She argues that this description enables universal application without some "historical peculiarities of Western civilization."

[20] Williams, "Purity, Dirt, Anomalies, and Abominations," 208.

[21] Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 5. This is why she devotes considerable space to dirt and discusses it to illustrate the concept of purity.

[22] Neyrey, "Clean/Unclean," 88.

[23] Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 4–5.

danger behaviour."[24] The reference to danger is not the only way that social relations are formed and maintained; it is also "a major fact of human existence that we are able, and never were able, to express our relation to values in other terms than those of danger behaviour."[25] Similarly, Douglas provides two levels that demonstrate how the idea of dirt works: At the first level, "beliefs reinforce social pressures," and at the next level, "the ideal order of society is guarded by dangers which threaten transgressors," respectively.[26] She refers to this as "danger-beliefs," according to which "the whole universe is harnessed to men's attempts to force one another into good citizenship."[27]

Douglas's starting point of the distinction between pure and impure or clean and unclean in the Jewish religion is the creation account in the book of Genesis: God made everything "perfect" in the beginning, and each of creatures was distributed to the water, the air, and the earth.[28] Any animals, plants, and even humans that fit in a specific category of perfectness are pure, clean, and/or holy, while unfitting ones are impure, unclean, and/or unholy.[29] Likewise, a person's physical body should be as God has created it in terms of appearance,[30] as the physical body reflects social order when viewed from a distance.[31] The boundary between the two opposite states is closely related to the body representing a social system and its boundary. Thus, several features

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[24] Steiner, *Taboo*, 147. See also Davies, "Purity, Spirit and Reciprocity," 262.
[25] Steiner, *Taboo*, 147.
[26] Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 3.
[27] Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 3–4.
[28] Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 69–70.
[29] Later, she refined and expanded the classification of birds, fish, and animals, proposing three categorization rules: (1) the rejection of certain animal kinds as unfit for the table (Lev 11; Deut 14); (2) of those admitted as edible, the separation of the meat from blood before cooking (Lev 17:10; Deuteronomy 12: 23–7); (3) the total separation of milk from meat, which involves the minute specialization of utensils (Exod 23:19; 34:26; Deut 14:21) (Douglas, "Deciphering a Meal," 241–50).
[30] Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 63–65.
[31] Douglas called social order "macrocosm" and the physical body "microcosm" (Douglas, *In the Wilderness*, 63–82, esp. 68, 77).

regarding the boundary and the penalties for violating it must be alike.[32]

David P. Wright adroitly summarizes Douglas's insights as follows:

(1) She [Douglas] defines purity as normality and wholeness.
(2) This judgement of purity derives not from objective physical reality, but from the cultural understanding of a particular society. Purity rules are symbols—a language which express and reflect larger social concerns. The rules work in concert with other structures of thought to deliver and support a common message.
(3) The body is a locus where purity concerns are manifested. It is a symbol for—a microcosm of—the larger social body. Concerns about things entering and exiting the body reflect concerns about the boundaries of society.[33]

In summary, purity is all about normalizing the identity and cultural practices of a society.[34]

Jacob Neusner is another scholar who observed the various states of purity and impurity viewed by the Jews of the post-biblical period. Attempting to adapt Douglas's idea of purity in *The Idea of Purity in Ancient Judaism* (1973),[35] Neusner deals with three kinds of texts—the Hebrew scriptures, Second Temple literature, and Talmudic materials, which provide traces of how Jewish people perceived and treated the matters of "clean and unclean." Consequently, his contribution is noticeable since he discovered that the "clean" and "unclean" language distinguishes one sect from another.[36]

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[32] Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 141–59.

[33] Wright, "Unclean and Clean," 739.

[34] She later extends her purity ideas to deeper and more complex social aspects with a "symbolic universe" and "grid and group" models. She later extends her purity ideas to deeper and more complex social aspects with a "symbolic universe" and "grid and group" models. See Douglas, *Natural Symbols*.

[35] Douglas, on the other hand, appears to be inconvenienced by the absence of the model's body that was central to her portrayal of purity. The book's final portion is Douglas's critique and commentary, in which she evaluates Neusner's work, stating that the study was done in historical method despite his grappling with anthropological studies of purity rules in ancient Judaism (Neusner, *Idea of Purity*, 137–42).

[36] He further says that because of this, "the ideas adduced to explain or interpret purity are going to carry implications for the larger system of which they are a part" (Neusner, *Idea of Purity*, 127). Cf. Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 112–13. See also Neusner, "Map without Territory," in which Neusner delves into the world of Mishnaic authors, who classified everything as "clean" or "unclean." Cf. Neusner, "History and Purity."

In his book *Impurity and Sin in Ancient Judaism* (2000), Jonathan Klawans adopts and develops Douglas's theory that the Bible contains two types of impurity: ritual impurity and moral impurity.[37] Moral impurity is the result of grave sin, is not transmittable, and is primarily addressed in Leviticus's holiness code. Punishment or atonement is required in lieu of ritual purification. In contrast, ritual impurity is seldom a matter of sin because it can be alleviated through prescribed purifying rituals. Although moral impurity is not contagious, it can become permanent if there is no atonement for purification, and it defiles both the sanctuary and the land. Klawans draws this distinction from the Old Testament, ancient Jewish literature, and the New Testament, and applies it back to them. He does not seem to be sensitive to symbolism in cultural anthropology as Douglas is. Nonetheless, his distinction between ritual and moral impurity may be significant in explaining concerns of purity in the New Testament.[38]

Douglas's ideas on purity and pollution soon became prevalent among biblical scholars as an analytical framework to excavate various socio-cultural backgrounds. For instance, Bruce J. Malina has employed the concepts of "clean" and "unclean" and developed models to apply to the New Testament in an essay, "Clean and Unclean: Understanding Rules of Purity" in his own edited volume, *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology* (1993).[39] Based on several instances of an ordinary modern person's experience, he clarifies the meaning of purity and impurity, emphasizing the "line" between the two opposite concepts.[40] The line distinguishes anomalies or

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[37] Klawans, *Impurity and Sin*, 21–42.

[38] Klawans argues, for instance, that Jesus placed greater emphasis on moral impurity than on ritual impurity. "Jesus's concern was, strictly speaking, with the morally defiling effect that sin can have on individual sinners" (Klawans, *Impurity and Sin*, 150).

[39] Malina, ed., *The New Testament World*.

[40] He says, "Now both defilement and purification presuppose some movement across a symbolic line which marks off the clean from the unclean. Such line-crossing is a sort of transition from the clean to

abominations from purity in the system or culture by "purity rules," which concern "system and order, with definitions of general boundaries and of exclusivity, with the anomalies that simply defy classification or that are positively abominations."[41] Besides, purity rules directly relate to maintaining society's integrity, completeness, or wholeness because they "present a sort of grid that covers all aspects of society,"[42] According to him, "The purity rules of the society were intended to foster prosperity by maintaining fitting. Thus perfection—the wholeness marked off by purity rules—characterizes God, the people in general, and the individual."[43]

Malina analyzes, on the basis of Douglas's work, Israel's culture in terms of purity concerns related to marriage, firstborns, and Sabbath observances. After modeling the classification of individuals in Judaism according to Joachim Jeremias's fourteen genealogical categories of individuals in Second Temple Judaism, he presents seven types of individuals that reflect "an abstract conception of the purity lines."[44] In the same way, he categorizes animals into seven groups using Douglas's Venn diagram:

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the unclean state, or vice versa. And this transition is across a boundary . . . please note that between clean and unclean there must be a line" (Malina, "Clean and Unclean," 153–54).

[41] Malina, "Clean and Unclean," 157. Cf. He presents five ways that society might deal with anomalies: (1) leaders decide on a rule to reduce ambiguity and eliminate anomalies from attention; (2) society physically controls any anomaly; (3) society clearly spells out rules; (4) society labels any anomalous person, thing, or event as a public hazard to make the anomaly beyond discussion and furthering conformity; and (5) anomalies are ritually utilized to enrich meaning or call attention to other levels of existence (155–56).

[42] Malina, "Clean and Unclean," 157. Here, as mentioned above, Malina makes a way to pull out the concept of a symbolic universe that Douglas has coined. He says, "just as society as a whole is a social body defined by purity rules, so also is the individual" (157).

[43] Malina, "Clean and Unclean," 159.

[44] Malina, "Clean and Unclean," 159–62. Cf. Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*, 272.

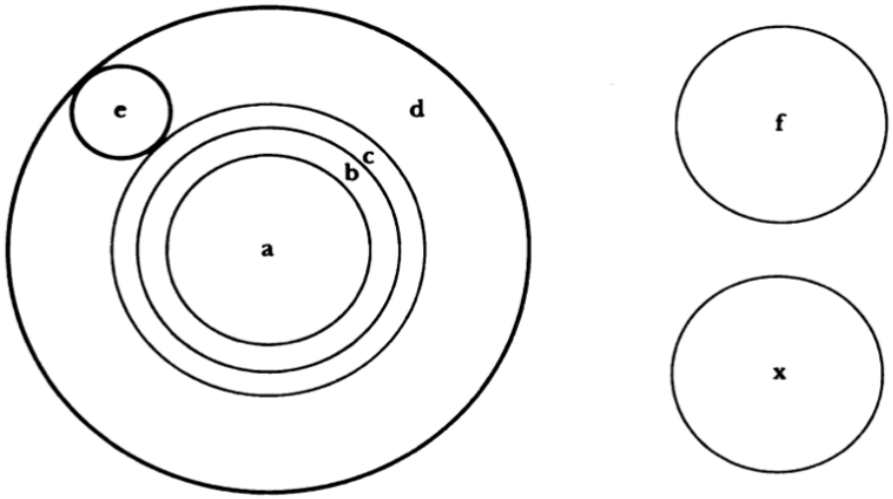

Figure 1: Seven Categories of Animals

x: abomination
f: always unclean
d: in the land of Israel
c: viviparous qualified
b: ready for Temple service
a: fit both for the Temple and the altar
e: somewhat ambiguously qualified for the group "c"[45]

The purity rules of Judaism were formed based on the object's distance to the center of the Temple (the sanctuary; God), as shown in the diagram. Judaism used it to pursue exclusivism by setting up complicated qualifying requirements to enter the sanctuary. In contrast to Judaism, Jesus, according to Malina, observed purity as the way God approached his people. To put it another way, Jesus viewed the concept of purity as the instrument for providing openness to all people who desire purification.

The existence of a line between purity and impurity is convincing, and its function as a confirmation of a group or community may be admitted in a broad sense by all those involved in this area of research, albeit with slight differences in detail.[46] When this

[45] Malina, "Clean and Unclean," 162–66. Cf. Douglas, "Deciphering a Meal," 245. This diagram applies to humans and animals alike.

[46] Douglas, to illustrate, defines the line as a "danger-belief" that functions as an "ideal order of society," whereas Neusner prefers the terminology of "clean" and "unclean" to distinguish one sect from

framework is used in New Testament studies, the location of Jesus and his followers is critical as a theory. Malina suggests that Jesus did not follow the purity rules in practice during his lifetime; instead, he tried to shift their application and purpose while sharing the sense of need for purity.[47] This is what Malina has presented elsewhere: Jesus is a "limit breaker," who can cross the line drawn by the social system and lead people to a new social status or position.[48] As a limit breaker, Jesus interacted with and led minorities of his contemporaries, such as "tax collectors and sinners" (Mark 2:17), beyond the boundaries that designated them as impure and unclean into a pure and clean member of God's covenant group.[49]

Similarly, Jerome H. Neyrey notes that Jesus was perceived as a "limit breaker" who was perpetually "out of place" due to his transgressions of purity rules.[50] In the study of Luke,[51] the "limit breaker" Jesus later becomes a builder of new maps, boundaries, and rules,[52] and his perspective on Jesus has resulted in the one who loosens boundaries and pursues the openness of the covenant community. Neyrey claims in his article, "The Idea of Purity in Mark's Gospel" (1986), focused on purity issues, that Jesus did not adhere to the contemporary Jewish law on purity as understood by the Jews: "people with ostensibly excellent purity ratings are Jesus' most dogged critics . . . What would purity-

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another. He classifies everything as either "cleanness" or "uncleanness" without exception. Compare Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 3 with Neusner, "Idea of Purity," 127. Cf. Neusner, "History and Purity."

[47] Malina, "Clean and Unclean."

[48] Malina, *Christian Origins*, 143–55. He uses the example of a sports team coach as an analogy (142–43, 154).

[49] This observation is based on Douglas's "grid and group" model, which Malina developed further throughout the same monograph. See Malina, *Christian Origins*, esp. 28–67.

[50] Neyrey emphasizes that purity-minded people would object to "just about everything Jesus did" in Mark's Gospel. To him, Jesus appeared to disregard Jewish maps of people, body, time, and places. See Neyrey, "Idea of Purity," 107–9.

[51] It is an article titled "The Symbolic Universe of Luke-Acts: The Turn the World Upside Down" that was published as one of the chapters in the edited volume, *The Social World of Luke-Acts: Models for Interpretation* (1991).

[52] Neyrey, "Symbolic Universe," esp. 282.

minded people object to about Jesus in Mark's gospel? *Just about everything Jesus did!*"[53] As such, he adopts Malina's "limit breaker" framework, asserting that "Jesus was so authorized as a 'limit breaker,'" who was "authorized to break taboos and cross prohibited boundaries."[54] Catherine M. Murphy goes one step further than Malina and Neyrey in her book, *John the Baptist: Prophet of Purity for a New Age* (2003). She observes Jesus and John the Baptist in the Synoptics as those who not only broke the line between purity and impurity, but also redrew the purity map.[55] She claims that the Gospel of Luke admits the genetic and behavioral purity of John's parents, as well as the purity of John and Jesus.[56] In her view, Jesus and John, through a series of events such as baptism and John's arrest, introduce new loci on the map of purity.[57]

Several scholars, on the other hand, assert that Jesus was unconcerned about purity. Stephen Westerholm, for example, describes Jesus' stance toward several aspects of the law, including ritual purity, as "an apparent indifference."[58] According to him, Jesus was not serious about the authority of the contemporary Pharisees because his view of the Torah was not statutory legislation but rather an expression of God's salvific love.[59] Similarly, John P. Meier emphasizes Jesus' silence on purity rules, which he characterizes as a "lack of concern or studied indifference."[60] Meanwhile, Thomas Kazen proposes "Jesus' *seemingly* indifferent stance towards various purity issues."[61] His discussion of

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[53] Neyrey, "Idea of Purity," 107 (emphasis original).
[54] Neyrey, "Idea of Purity," 112, 112n5, 121.
[55] Murphy, *John the Baptist*, 109–55.
[56] Her attention is primarily on John the Baptist. Still, she remarks, "if Elizabeth is pure, Mary is more pure; if John is pure, Jesus will be more so" (Murphy, *John the Baptist*, 124).
[57] Murphy, *John the Baptist*, 109–55, esp. 124–30.
[58] Westerholm, *Jesus and Scribal Authority*, 91.
[59] Westerholm, *Jesus and Scribal Authority*, 130–32.
[60] Meier, *Law and Love*, 411.
[61] Kazen, *Jesus and Purity Halakhah*, 8 (emphasis added).

the historical Jesus' apparent indifference, however, does not imply Jesus' genuine indifference. Arguing that Jesus saw himself as the one with God's authority,[62] he insists on the high possibility that Jesus relativized and "to a certain extent disregarded bodily impurity, but still within the framework of a basic purity paradigm."[63]

On the contrary to the scholars discussed so far, David A. deSilva contends in *Honor, Patronage, Kinship & Purity* (2000) that Jesus' earliest believers must have regarded his crucifixion as not merely a "noble death" but also a "sacrificial offering" that qualified for purification.[64] Jesus is still described as crossing the line by deSilva, but that is "to bring the unclean ones back to a state of cleanness and integration into the [Jewish] community."[65] Matthew Thiessen goes even further, describing that Jesus was sincere about the distinction between purity and impurity. In *Jesus and the Forces of Death* (2020), he refutes a prevalent interpretation that Jesus disregarded the Torah, particularly its purity laws, to liberate people from a Jewish religious system. Thiessen argues that "Jesus is involved in a broadscale purification mission," which was the same goal as Judaism.[66]

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[62] Kazen, *Jesus and Purity Halakhah*, 339.

[63] Kazen, *Jesus and Purity Halakhah*, 346.

[64] deSilva, *Honor, Patronage, Kinship & Purity*, 307. He seems to accept the "limit breaker" model though he does not mention it. He assumes that Hebrews holds a negative and critical attitude toward the Levitical sacrificial system (308).

[65] deSilva, *Honor, Patronage, Kinship & Purity*, 283. He concludes, "The Gospels thus present Jesus encountering a stream of ritually impure and potentially polluting people, but in the encounter their contagion does not defile Jesus; rather his holiness purges their pollutions, renders them clean and integrates them again into the mainstream of Jewish society where they can reclaim their birthright, as it were, among the people of God" (284–85).

[66] Thiessen, *Jesus and the Forces of Death*, 178–79. He concludes that Jesus overcame the power of death with life, health, and holiness based on purity laws. As previously stated, I am aware of an ongoing debate over various proposals regarding Jesus' attitude toward Jewish purity concerns. Among them, I agree with the proposal that Jesus was still "within the framework of a basic purity paradigm," though the extent may differ (Kazen, *Jesus and Purity Halakhah*, 8). For more recent discussions on this issue, see Kazen, *Impurity and Purification*, 217–49; Kazen, "Purification."

Although most of the scholars mentioned above do not directly discuss or apply the purity concerns in a cultural-anthropological sense, they do have the theory in mind as assumptions concerning Jesus' understanding of his socio-religious identity or boundaries. Nevertheless, in order to avoid an eclectic approach and pursue scientific analysis, we need an actual interpretive method to apply the theory to biblical texts. While the Old Testament allegedly contains several types of purity and purifying methods,[67] the book of Hebrews does not differentiate between them and instead focuses on sacrificial rites for purification. Since the author compares Jesus' sacrifice to the Levitical sacrificial system, an analytical model for sacrificial rites is required to bridge the gap between the theory and the text.

Purification Rituals in Hebrews

The idea of purity was always closely linked to ritual in ancient times. Regardless of an individual's ethnicity or religion, there existed particular regulations and statutes concerning purification rituals, instead of modern sanitizing methods based on biology, chemistry, and medical science. Therefore, it is imperative for scholars of biblical studies with a keen interest in the concept of purity to examine sacrificial rituals that may have served as a means of purification.

Thus, to examine the relationship between the two cultuses in Hebrews, four primary criteria will be employed: criteria for continuity and discontinuity, the distinction between moral and ritual purity, semantic domain theory, and the ritual structure. Based on Mary Douglas's anthropological concepts of purity and boundary, these criteria offer a

[67] See Klawans, *Impurity and Sin*; and Klawans, "Moral and Ritual Purity."

valuable framework for comprehending how the author of Hebrews perceives the formation of religious identity through sacrificial practice.

Criteria for Continuity, Discontinuity, Similarity, and Difference

Throughout this study, the terms *discontinuity*, *continuity*, *similarity*, and *difference* will be employed. In Hebrews scholarship, these terms have typically been used respectively to illustrate the similarities and differences between the Levitical sacrifices and Jesus' sacrifice. Given that the old and new cultuses are already distinct from one another, it is reasonable to assume that there exist both divergences and convergences across all domains between them. This study acknowledges the differences that exist between the Levitical sacrifices and Jesus' sacrifice. They are clearly distinguished. Nonetheless, I do not agree that this is best described as "discontinuity"; rather, I contend that the author emphasizes continuity despite the differences between them. To establish a case for discontinuity between the old and new cultuses, it is necessary to provide evidence that the old one was replaced by the new at a specific juncture. Put simply, if the old sacrificial system were completely replaced and prohibited, being substituted for a new one, it would result in a clear discontinuity between the two systems. As will be demonstrated throughout this study, however, the author of Hebrews does not present his cultic system as a replacement of the old with something new, but rather as a fulfillment of the established cultus.

As a result, it is inappropriate to use the term *discontinuity* to simply indicate *difference* because even seemingly dissimilar pieces of the old sacrificial system can play the same roles and have the same effects in the new system. Similarly, even seemingly

identical or similar elements in each system may have different roles and effects depending on their social, cultural, or religious contexts. In this study, the terms *discontinuity* and *continuity* will be used only to describe claims that see a temporal shift away from the old cultus, which is typically deemed inferior and insufficient, to a new cultus, which is typically discussed in terms of its positive characteristics.

These criteria will also be applied to the author's evaluation of Judaism. It is not appropriate to assume that someone is anti-Jewish simply because they use seemingly negative terms like *weak*, *unable*, or *repetitive*. Even though the author's descriptions show contrasts between the old and new cultuses and their ritual elements, we must avoid jumping to conclusions that Judaism is diametrically opposed to what the Hebrews author and readers should follow. It could be simple explanations about Judaism to provide information. Temporary or even limited descriptions of Judaism, particularly when viewed through a typological framework, can be understood as provisional, awaiting Jesus' fulfillment.

Moral and Ritual Purity

Klawans pointed out "three frequent errors [that] seem to predominate over much of the discussion on purity in New Testament scholarship."[68] He attributes these errors to the influence of Douglas's book *Purity and Danger*, although he acknowledges that her work is seminal overall: One is "blind identification of impurity with sin," another is "blind identification of purity with status," and the last one is a "previous misunderstanding . . . that the purity system was the tool by which the socially dominant Pharisees, or the

[68] Klawans, "Moral and Ritual Purity," 267.

priests who ran the Temple, asserted their power over those elements of society that they despised and wished to lord over."[69]

To prevent any erroneous assumptions that might cause confusion in the ritual and purity studies of the Bible, he emphasized the distinction between moral and ritual purity.[70] Particularly with regard to the first false assumption that all types of impurity are related to sins, he asserts that only moral impurity results in sinfulness and can thus be cleansed through sacrifices for sins, whereas ritual impurity has nothing to do with sins and is thus cleansed through rituals of purification.[71] The table presented below provides key differences between moral and ritual purity particularly based on the Old Testament:

Impurity Type	Moral	Ritual
Source	Prohibited deeds e.g., idolatry, incest, murder	Unavoidable reasons e.g., birth, death, sex, discharges
Effect	Defile sinners, land, and sanctuary until being forgiven	Defile other people, objects, and places through physical contact
Resolution	Purifying sacrificial ritual or punishment	Purifying ritual e.g., bathing, waiting
Sin	Yes	No
Contagious	No	Yes

Table 1: Differences between Moral and Ritual Purity[72]

[69] Klawans, "Moral and Ritual Purity," 267.

[70] See Klawans, *Impurity and Sin*, 21–42. Meier adds a "new type of impurity, genealogical impurity," which "appeared on the Palestinian scene after the Babylonian exile (6th century b.c.), around the time of Ezra and Nehemiah (5th–4th centuries b.c.)." It was enacted by a declaration that all Israelites, without exception, were "holy seed" (Ezra 9:2), which meant a prohibition of intermarriage with Gentiles (Meier, *Law and Love*, 347, emphasis original). Christine Elizabeth Hayes borrowed the term "genealogical impurity" from Michael Fishbane and began using it as a type of impurity. While Fishbane used the term to describe the Gentile lineage tainted by incest, Hayes interpreted it slightly differently. Meier explains, employs, and modifies her usage effectively. See Hayes, *Gentile Impurities and Jewish Identities*, 1–16, esp. 6–7; See also Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel*, 121.

[71] Klawans, "Moral and Ritual Purity," 267–71.

[72] I have mixed and modified Klawans's and Benjamin J. Snyder's tables (Klawans, *Impurity and Sin*, 27; Snyder, "Ritual Purity and the Origin," 187).

Some scholars caution against a strict dichotomy between the two and suggest additional classifications.[73] Moshe Blidstein provides examples of those who contend that sexual sin does not correspond perfectly with either of the two impurities.[74] However, he admits that, with a few exceptions, dividing it into two in a broad sense is helpful in comprehending the biblical concept of purity.

The author of Hebrews, however, makes no mentions of moral and ritual purity. The focus of Hebrews, as will be seen throughout the study, is not on purity or impurity as the state of people, animals, or objects. The author is rather interested in the process of transitioning from impurity to purity, also known as purification.[75] Given the author's references to the purifying efficacies of both old and new cultuses, the distinction between ritual and moral purity may be relevant to this study.

Both cultuses have purifying functions, but there is a distinction. In the Levitical sacrificial system, its rituals were performed for sin atonement (Heb 5:1, 3; 7:27; 8:3; 9:7) and had purifying efficacies (9:13, 19–22), but according to Hebrews, there was no provision for making worshipers perfect or taking away sins (9:9; 10:1, 4, 11). On the other hand, Jesus' sacrifice not only had the same purification effects (5:5; 8:3; 9:13–14), but it could also purify worshipers' consciences (9:14), take worshipers' sins (9:28), and make them perfect forever (10:12–14). Thus, in Hebrews, the old cultus was effective in

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[73] Blidstein, *Purity, Community, and Ritual*, 11, 39n111. For various other terminologies and additional categories, see Haber and Reinhartz, *They Shall Purify Themselves*, 9–30; Kazen, *Jesus and Purity Halakhah*, 214–22; Wright, "Spectrum of Priestly Impurity," 154.

[74] Blidstein, *Purity, Community, and Ritual*, 154. He provides an example of Marcel Simon, who argued that Pauline concept of πορνεία was beyond the moral-ritual dichotomy. See Simon, "Souillure morale et souillure rituelle." See also Gaca, *Making of Fornication*, 119–89; Hayes, *Gentile Impurities and Jewish Identities*, 1–16, 67–91; Knust, *Abandoned to Lust*, 59–64; Koltun-Fromm, *Hermeneutics of Holiness*, 53–73; Thomas, "Locating Purity."

[75] Purification is mentioned for the first time in Heb 1:3, where it is stated that Jesus "provided purification for sins," and this is one of the overarching themes of Hebrews.

ritual purification, whereas the new cultus demonstrated effectiveness in both ritual and moral purification.[76]

Semantic Domain Theory

Semantic Domain Theory developed by Johannes Louw and Eugene Nida may be a more sophisticated tool than any other for avoiding omissions or obscurity of relevant passages in specific Greek documents under consideration in this study. That is because a *semantic domain* is defined as "a group of meanings which share certain semantic components."[77] *Greek–English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains* (1989) by Louw and Nida organizes Greek words of the New Testament according to semantic domains, rather than listing according to alphabetical order as other Greek lexicons do.[78] It is, therefore, advantageous to identify texts that are relevant to our inquiry both linguistically and thematically.

It is worth noting that a variety of terms are available in the Greek linguistic system to refer to the ritual of sacrifice as purification. For example, the word καθαρισμός ("purification" in 1:3) is the first appearance, and there are also ἁγιάζω ("sanctify" in 2:11; 9:13; 10:10), ἱλάσκομαι ("atonement" in 2:17), θυσία ("sacrifice" in 5:1; 10:26), προσφέρω ("to offer sacrifice" in 5:3), τελείωσις ("perfection" in 7:11), τελειόω ("to clear" in 9:9; "to make perfect" in 10:1, 14), καθαρότης ("clean" in 9:13), καθαρίζω ("to cleanse" in 9:14, 22; 10:2; "to purify" in 9:23), ἀθέτησις ("removal, doing

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[76] See Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 101–2.

[77] Nida, *Componential Analysis*, 174. It must be applicable to all types of text-based research because "for any language, semantic domains consist simply of meanings which have common semantic components. How relevant such a domain is, how large it is, and at what level in the hierarchical structure it may function depend solely upon the total semantic structure of the language" (174).

[78] Louw and Nida, *Greek–English Lexicon*, 1:vi–xx. It was first released in 1988, with a second edition following in 1989.

away" in 9:26), ἀναφέρω ("to take away" in 9:28), περιαιρέω ("to take away" in 10:11), and ἄφεσις ("forgiveness" in 10:18). Besides the book of Hebrews, there are several allusions that sacrifice can be one of the ways for purification in Second Temple literature. To illustrate, Sir 7:31 says, "Fear the Lord and honor the priest, and give him the portion as was commanded to you from the beginning, and the offering for sin and the portion of the arms and the sacrifice (θυσία) of consecration (ἁγιασμός) and the firstfruits."[79]

Consequently, semantic domains can be further utilized to specifically identify the Hebrews author's treatment of matters related to purity. For example, we will need to consider the language included in the subdomains "Purify, Cleanse" (LN 53.28–32) and "Defile, Unclean, Common" (53.33–40) under the domain "Religious, Activities" (53),[80] as well as several terms used by the author, which are classified under the domain "Moral and Ethical Qualities and Related Behavior" (88).[81]

The Ritual Structure: Ritual Theory

In the book of Hebrews, both the Levitical sacrificial system and Jesus' once-for-all sacrifice are presented as means to achieve purification. The two cultic systems may differ in terms of the extent of purity and ritual structure. The relationship between the two cultuses can be identified by examining the similarities and differences that exist. As a result, the ritual structure needs to be discussed as a subsequent criterion tool.

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[79] Besides, the concept of sacrificial ritual for purification is mentioned in various Second Temple literature, such as the Mishnah (m. Zebaḥ.; m. Ṭehar.), the Halakhic Letter (4QMMT), and the Community Rule (1QS), which all make multiple references to sacrificial practices for purification. See Kazen, *Jesus and Purity Halakhah*, 63–89, 151–67.

[80] Louw and Nida, *Greek–English Lexicon*, 1:534–36.

[81] Louw and Nida, *Greek–English Lexicon*, 1:741–76.

Henri Hubert and Marcel Mauss provide an advanced interpretive model for an analysis of sacrifices.[82] According to them, there are five components of sacrificial rituals: (1) sacrifier, (2) sacrificer (priest), (3) sacrifice, (4) time, and (5) place.[83] Identifying each ritual element relies heavily on linguistic considerations, given the dependence of this research on texts like the Bible and various early Jewish documents.[84] These five constituents of a sacrificial ritual in the old and new cultuses, especially their roles in purification processes, can be compared, with an emphasis on how the differences may affect the author and readers' religious boundaries. The book of Hebrews provides insights into both the old Levitical sacrificial system and the new cultus of Jesus Christ, allowing for a comparison of their views on sacrifice through the analysis of each ritual element. Thus, identifying the typological relationship between each element of the old and new cultuses will help determine their hermeneutical interdependence and continuity.

At this point, we can apply semantic domain theory to comprehensively identify the related concepts in each ritual structure. First, as Hubert and Mauss define, "sacrifier" refers to "sometimes an individual, sometimes a collectivity—a family, a clan, a tribe, a

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[82] Except for Hubert and Mauss, there had been few studies that systematically performed ritual studies until Ithamar Gruenwald pointed it out in 2003. He considers their study to be "a transition from accidental observation to systematic study." Considering that it has "cross-religious" elements that include Israelite and Hindu modes of sacrifice, he says that its scope is "general observations rather than specific ones." However, its universal nature out to be more effective as a tool for identifying sacrifice in any texts (Gruenwald, *Rituals and Ritual Theory*, 181–83).

[83] Hubert designates the third element as "victim," whereas this study designates it as "sacrifice" to specifically avoid the implication that Jesus was involuntarily victimized. Jesus' death was a voluntary sacrifice (e.g., John 10:17, 18; Heb 10:7–10) (Hubert and Mauss, *Sacrifice*, 19–49). Some scholars argued for elements for ritual studies in response to and expanding on Hubert and Mauss's presentation. Gerald A. Klingbeil, for example, identified eight elements for analyzing a biblical ritual: (1) structure; (2) form, order, and sequence; (3) space; (4) time; (5) objects; (6) action; (7) participants and their roles; and (8) sound and language (Klingbeil, *Bridging the Gap*, 147–204). Likewise, Ronald L. Grimes proposed seven components: (1) actions; (2) actors; (3) places; (4) times; (5) objects; (6) languages; and (7) groups (Grimes, *Craft of Ritual Studies*, 231–93).

[84] See Klingbeil, *Bridging the Gap*, 154, 159, 168, 174, 181, and 189.

nation, a secret society," who is "*the subject to whom the benefits of sacrifice thus accrue, or who undergoes its effects*."[85] Although a "sacrifier" can be specified in a specific narrative or event as the occasion demands, it should usually refer to many and unspecified persons of the same religious circle. For instance, it refers to the Israelites or Jewish people in the context of Levitical sacrifices and to Christians or Christ-followers in the context of Jesus' sacrifice on the cross.

Second, a sacrificer is the *priest*, "an intermediary, or at the very least a guide."[86] As Hubert and Mauss illustrate,

> This is the *priest*. More familiar with the world of the gods, in which he is partly involved through a previous consecration, he can approach it more closely and with less fear than the layman, who is perhaps sullied by unknown blemishes. At the same time he prevents the sacrifier from committing fatal errors. . . . He is the visible agent of consecration in the sacrifice. In short, he stands on the threshold of the sacred and the profane world and represents them both at one and the same time.[87]

In some religions, a sacrifier could perform sacrifices on his own, but this was "fairly rare," and priests were always required as ritual agents.[88] Priests and high priests were considered necessary not only to perform sacrificial rituals but also to study the cultus because their identity and presence actively interact with their cultic actions.[89] Consequently, a sacrificer is fundamental when researching a sacrifice or sacrificial

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[85] Hubert and Mauss, *Sacrifice*, 10 (emphasis original).

[86] Hubert and Mauss, *Sacrifice*, 22–25.

[87] Hubert and Mauss, *Sacrifice*, 23 (emphasis added).

[88] Hubert and Mauss provide an example of a sacrifice to Amphiaraos (Oropus) in Greece that a sacrifier could perform in the absence of a priest. They claim there was only one exception: the Passover sacrifice, which allowed a sacrifier to kill sacrifices "in the absence of any Levite or Cohen and outside Jerusalem" (Hubert and Mauss, *Sacrifice*, 115n86).

[89] Grimes avers that each element of ritual cannot be understood "as a hermetically sealed unit." He insists on the interconnection between ritualists and their ritual actions, emphasizing the intentions of those who perform rituals. He offers several sample questions to ascertain the ritualists' intentions: What does that gesture mean? Why did you say that? How do words *about* rituals function? How do they differ from words *in* rituals? Are verbalized meanings the only kind? What are the other kinds? What are the implied (as distinct from the overtly stated ones) meanings? (Grimes, *Craft of Ritual Studies*, 249, emphasis original).

system. A sacrifier can be identified in the text by its semantic domains, which are arranged as LN 53.85 (ἱερουργέω, "to serve as a priest"), 53.86 (ἱερατεία, "priesthood"), 53.87 (ἱερεύς, "priest"), 53.88 (ἀρχιερεύς, "chief priest"), 53.89 (ἀρχιερεύς, "high priest"), 53.90 (ρχιερατικός, "highpriestly"), 53.91 (Λευίτης, "a Levite"), 53.92 (Λευιτικός, "Levitical").[90] Additionally, priestly actions performed by priests and high priests during ritual services serve as identifiers of the sacrificer in the text. They include the semantic domains 15.172 (προσφέρω, "to offer"), 40.9 (ἱλάσκομαι, "to make atonement"), 53.28 (καθαρίζω, "to purify"), and 88.26 (ἁγιάζω, "to make holy").[91]

The above two elements, sacrifier and sacrificer, along with "the place," which will be mentioned last, are the first steps in the ritual, as the "entry into the sacrifice,"[92] and thirdly, the "sacrifice" is the last element before the initiation of the ritual. Hubert and Mauss say, "Everything converges on the victim [sacrifice] who is now about to appear. Everything is *ready for its reception*. It is brought in."[93] One of the most important requirements for sacrifices is that they be free of flaws according to religiously prescribed standards in order to fulfill their sacred nature.[94] The sacrificial death of the sacrifices was regarded as an honor because it separated the sacrifice "from the profane world; it was *consecrated*," which was "the useful effects of the sacrifice."[95] The sacrifice, like a priest (a sacrificer), serves as an intermediary agent, facilitating

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[90] Louw and Nida, *Greek–English Lexicon*, 1:543; 2:312.
[91] Louw and Nida, *Greek–English Lexicon*, 1:203, 502, 534, and 744.
[92] Hubert and Mauss, *Sacrifice*, 20.
[93] Hubert and Mauss, *Sacrifice*, 29 (emphasis added).
[94] Hubert and Mauss, *Sacrifice*, 29–31.
[95] Hubert and Mauss, *Sacrifice*, 35. Although there are various methods of killing the sacrifice, such as burning and eating, it makes no difference particularly when identifying it from the text. As Hubert and Mauss say, "clearly, the two rites had thus the same meaning" (37). What really matters is that "immediately after the victim [sacrifice] has been choked to death its sacrificial purity is assured by a special rite" (41).

communication among all cultus participants.[96] As details vary in how to deal with sacrifices according to each religious tradition and custom, it would be more proper to name them "sacrifices" or "(sacrificial) offerings" interchangeably. The terms related to sacrifices are found in semantic domains LN 15.211 (ἀνάγω, "to offer to") and 53.16–27 of the English index "offering, sacrifice": 53.16 (προσφορά, "offering, sacrifice"), 53.17 (ἀναφέρω, "to offer"), 53.18 (ἀνάθημα, "offering"), 53.19 (θύω, "to sacrifice"), 53.20 (θυσία, "sacrifice"), 53.21 (ἱερόθυτος, "what has been sacrificed"), 53.22 (κορβᾶν, "gift to God, offering"), 53.23 (ἀπαρχή, "first portion, first offering"), 53.24 (ὁλοκαύτωμα, "whole burnt offering"), 53.25 (θυμιάω, "to offer incense, incense offering"), 53.26 (ἄρτοι τῆς προθέσεως, "consecrated bread"), and 53.27 (σπένδω, "to pour out an offering").[97]

Fourth, time needs consideration as well, because the ritual "cannot take place at any time . . . For not all times of the day or year are equally propitious for sacrifice; there are even times at which it must be ruled out."[98] As such, Hubert and Mauss consider a specific moment or period of time to be proper for a specific sacrificial rite. It may be appointed as a holiday by a religious convention. Also, they took account of the duration and number of times "according to the nature and the purpose of the ceremony."[99] Later, Ronald L. Grimes pointed out that the concept "ritual time" does not have a clear definition since it may refer to various distinct methods of calculating a ritual's "orchestration of time," and proposed various kinds of ritual time as follows:

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[96] Hubert and Mauss, *Sacrifice*, 44. As one of the ritual participants, the kind of animal could be determined by a variety of factors, such as the other participants, their environment, and the ritual's purpose. See also Klingbeil, *Bridging the Gap*, 191–92.

[97] Louw and Nida, *Greek–English Lexicon*, 1:207, 533–34; 2:307, 317.

[98] Hubert and Mauss, *Sacrifice*, 25.

[99] Hubert and Mauss, *Sacrifice*, 25.

- ritual duration: how long a ritual performance lasts
- ritual endurance: how long a ritual has survived historically
- ritual timing: when a ritual happens
- ritual phasing: the temporal patterning ("rhythm") of a ritual; a ritual's articulation of its beginning, middle, and end ("plot")
- ritual regularity: the evenness of intervals between enactments
- ritual frequency: how often a ritual happens
- ritual recursivity: a ritual's tendency to loop or turn back on itself
- ritual cross-temporality: time(s) to which a ritual refers or with which it aspires to connect[100]

Ritual time cannot be specifically identified in the text due to its diversity; however, it can be identified by searching other ritual elements that are being examined in this section because it is essential for ritual studies. Even a minor temporal difference between two or more sacrificial systems, particularly between the old and new cultuses in the Bible and early Jewish literature, can be significant.

Lastly, "the place of the ceremony," such as "in a temple or in a place already sacred in itself," is counted as a ritual space that is "already sacred in itself," obviating the need of "preliminary consecration."[101] Smith describes ritual as "first and foremost, a mode of paying attention," and he observes that this characteristic of ritual expounds "the role of place as a fundamental component of ritual: place directs attention."[102] The significance of ritual space is expanded through integrating various modes of emplacement: "They could be taught about in abstract topographies; they could be transported to another place; they could be extended to other sorts of social space; they

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[100] Grimes, *Craft of Ritual Studies*, 262–67. He believes that it may seem evident at first since rituals often have a distinct beginning and conclusion as well as designated performance occasions, but it may also be "less obvious." Additionally, "timing is not always determined by clocks and calendars."

[101] Hubert and Mauss, *Sacrifice*, 25.

[102] Smith, *To Take Place*, 103. He illustrates the relationship between ritual and place through "the case of built ritual environments—most especially, crafted constructions such as temples." His conclusion is that "sacrality is, above all, a category of *emplacement*" (103–4, emphasis added). Grimes summarizes Smith's thought as follows: "Thus. the 'where' of ritual becomes theoretically more important than the 'how' of it" (Grimes, *Craft of Ritual Studies*, 260).

could become sheerly intellectual systems."[103] Besides, space is "not the recipient but rather the creation of the human project" and "an *active* product of intellection rather than its passive receptacle."[104] Similarly, Grimes emphasizes the significance of a ritual place, rejecting the definition "any place where a ritual occurs" and observing its influence on the nature of the ritual as well as other ritual elements.[105] He clearly recognizes, however, that it is interpreters, not places *per se*, who assign active roles to ritual places.[106] Semantic domains are again helpful for identifying ritual places because they can be described in a variety of ways in the text: LN 6.100 (ναός, "replica temple"), 6.114 (θυσιαστήριον, "altar"), 6.115 (βωμός, "altar"), 6.116 (θυμιατήριον, "incense altar"), 7.2 (οἶκος, "house, temple, sanctuary") 7.15 (ναός, "sanctuary"), 7.16 (ἱερόν, "temple"), 7.17 (σκηνή, "tabernacle"), 7.18 (ἅγιον, "sanctuary"), 7.19 (εἰδωλεῖον, "temple of an idol"), 53.54 (σέβασμα, "sanctuary").[107]

The identification of the semantic domains of each ritual elements is crucial for determining the direct and indirect references to either or both of the two cultuses within Hebrews. This process is an essential step in establishing their relationship and discovering the continuity between them. The chart below shows the locations of Hebrews passages, identified by terms based on semantic domains, pertaining to each of

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[103] Smith, *To Take Place*, 109. "In each of these," he says, "there is no break with the dynamics of ritual itself."

[104] Smith, *To Take Place*, 26 (emphasis added). For him, space actively affects ritual.

[105] Grimes, *Craft of Ritual Studies*, 256–59. As he points out, most rituals have places where they can be performed whether or not participants are aware of it. He maintains that a ritual can lose its effectiveness if it is not performed in the proper location. Furthermore, he says, "In some cultures, space not only mean; they also act . . . So space is not necessarily passive, the spectator or but of human design" (258–59).

[106] Grimes, *Craft of Ritual Studies*, 261. He does not deny that ritual space is active, but he is wary of generalizing it to "ritual everywhere or ritual in general."

[107] Louw and Nida, *Greek–English Lexicon*, 1:65–67, 80, 82–83, 539; 2:270, 318, 325. These are not the only limiting factors because there may be various proper nouns and pronouns that indicate specific locations. However, it is still important to note specific ritual terms related to place because each clearly denotes ritual places even when used alone.

the five categories of ritual elements, as well as the initial distinctions between the old and new cultuses.[108]

Ritual Elements	Differences		Hebrews passages
	Levitical Sacrifices	Jesus' Sacrifice	
Sacrifier	"Our ancestors"	"We"/"Us"	N/A
Sacrificer	Human high priests	Jesus high priest	5:1–10; 7:4–28; 8:1–6; 9:1–14, 23–28; 10:11–14
Victim	Animals (blood)	Jesus (blood)	9:11–14, 15–28; 10:1–4
Time	Repeatedly	Once for all	7:26–28; 9:11–14, 15–28; 10:1–18
Place	Mosaic tabernacle	Heavenly tabernacle	8:1–6; 9:1–14

Table 2: Ritual Elements and Hebrews Passages

Particularly, using semantic domain theory has the benefit of broadening our investigation scope to encompass important passages in Hebrews that could be missed in a study concentrating solely on pre-selected lexemes. Accordingly, data pertaining to both the Levitical sacrificial system and Jesus' sacrifice will be gathered from the book of Hebrews across the above-mentioned ritual categories. This data will then be analyzed and used to explain the similarities and dissimilarities between the two cultuses. That is, the contrasts between them will also be acknowledged and examined. Throughout this series of analyses, as well as an additional spatial analysis that will be suggested below, I will demonstrate that Hebrews establishes a close relationship between the two cultuses and that they are dependent on one another from a hermeneutical and theological standpoint, problematizing the notion that the author sees "discontinuity" between them.

In order to achieve a more comprehensive analysis of the ritual concept of space, it is essential to incorporate critical spatial theory alongside the purity concerns stated

[108] The passages are selected not according to the verse in which each element is mentioned, but according to the discourse unit that contains the verse proposed by Westfall in her monograph, *A Discourse Analysis of the Letter to the Hebrews: The Relationship between Form and Meaning*, published in 2005.

above. Ritual spaces, as culturally and symbolically constructed environments, are more than just physical locations; they are dynamic fields of meaning shaped by power relations, social practices, and boundaries of purity and impurity. While cultural-anthropological purification thoughts serve as a foundation for understanding these spaces, critical spatial theory expands on the analysis by emphasizing the complex interplay between spatial dynamics and social identities. By utilizing this theoretical framework, the study can move beyond static interpretations of the heavenly and earthly tabernacles in Hebrews as ritual places and discover how they actively construct, negotiate, and reinforce religious identity and community boundaries. This broader perspective will enable a more nuanced interpretation of how space functions within ritual practices, making it an indispensable complement to the cultural-anthropological approach.

Procedure

This dissertation will attempt to answer two questions through its analysis: (1) In the book of Hebrews, what is explicitly said about the relationship between the two cultuses?; and (2) What, if anything, does this indicate about the author of Hebrews's perspective and evaluation of the Levitical sacrificial system? To address these concerns, the following procedures will be carried out primarily on the basis of the cultural anthropological and critical spatial approaches to the concept of purity in Hebrews.

The four categories of ritual elements—sacrificer, sacrifice, time, and place—will be examined from the selected Hebrews passage.[109] The emphasis is on how each ritual

[109] With the exception of the first, sacrifier, among the five ritual elements that Hubert and Marcel Mauss have proposed (Hubert and Mauss, *Sacrifice*, 19–49).

component differs between the old and new cultuses and how the author deals with it. Meanwhile, the author's concern for purity is to be demonstrated by investigating the chosen Hebrews passages for each element. In other words, the author's statements about ritual elements will be analyzed to determine the author's understanding of the relationship between the two sacrificial systems.

Three considerations will be made to determine the similarities and differences between the two cultuses. First, the origin and identity of each cultic element need to be investigated. Second, it is imperative to clearly define each element's description, role, and function. Third, the extent or characteristics of the purity status attained through purification rituals can be compared. Each of these criteria will determine the socioreligious boundaries that the Hebrews author establishes for both the old and new cultic systems, thereby establishing their relationship.

The four ritual elements will therefore be discussed in the following four chapters. In the following chapter, ritual place—Mosaic and heavenly tabernacles—in Hebrews will be designated as one of the spatial theory trialectics to determine their relationship. The similarities and differences between the two tabernacles proposed by the cultural-anthropological perspective will then be examined to determine how the author of Hebrews perceives the Mosaic tabernacle in relation to the heavenly one. Following that, the sacrificer (human Levitical high priests and Jesus as high priest, sacrifice), sacrifice (animals and Jesus as sacrifices), and ritual time (repeatedly and once-for-all) will be covered in three separate chapters, similar to the chapter on ritual place. The data gathered using semantic domain theory from selected Hebrews passages will be analyzed in each chapter in order to establish the author's evaluation of the old cultus and its

relationship with the new one. In the final section of each chapter, the relationship of the ritual elements between the old and new cultuses drawn, based on the previously identified similarities and differences, will be explained in the same way that Hebrews evinces a typological treatment of the old cultus.

Finally, the analytical tools derived from cultural-anthropological and critical spatial theories and procedures mentioned so far will contribute to demonstrating that Hebrews establishes a *symbiotic* relationship between the old and new sacrifices. So to speak, the author emphasizes the new cultus practiced by Jesus Christ, hermeneutically relying on the Levitical sacrificial system; and he respects the Levitical cultus while relying existentially on Jesus' cultus. According to the descriptions provided by the author of Hebrews, the two cultuses are inextricably linked. In the author's presentation, both the old and new cultuses are crucial for explanation and justification.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the primary objective of this research will be to reveal the social context of Hebrews, particularly with regard to issues of purity. This study will attempt to demonstrate that Hebrews introduces and presents Jesus' once-for-all sacrifice *in comparison to* and *on the basis of* the Levitical sacrifice. More specifically, the description and emphasis on Jesus' sacrifice in Hebrews are hermeneutically and theologically dependent on the Levitical sacrifice and in continuity with it. To summarize, Hebrews shows a *symbiotic* relationship between the old and new sacrifices.

Even though the author of Hebrews emphasizes the excellence of Jesus' sacrifice, he never diminishes or ignores the efficacy of the Levitical sacrifices. Instead, he

recognizes its purifying function. Given the prevalence of purity concerns among contemporaries, the Hebrews author's recognition of the Levitical sacrificial system's purifying function must have been suggestive to the first readers. Not only did the author not wish to disparage the old cultus, but he also valued it as the basis for the new cultus, Jesus' sacrifice.

This study does not claim to be the end of any arguments about Hebrews or its social and historical context, which are still subject to scholarly debate. Instead of addressing a contentious issue, the cultural-anthropological background of Hebrews, particularly the concept of purity, will be confirmed first, and then the relationship between two seemingly opposing cultic systems, the Levitical sacrificial system and the new system established by Jesus, will be established. While there are a few social-scientific studies of Hebrews, they are either socio-rhetorical rather than scientific in nature, or they do not focus on the cultic system.[110] Similarly, while there are some studies of Hebrews done through the lens of critical spatiality, it is difficult, if not impossible, to find one that examines the temples (or tabernacles) with this lens except for those of Westfall and Berquist.[111] Therefore, this dissertation aims to break new ground in Hebrews studies by investigating the cultic system using cultural-anthropology and critical spatial theory-based scientific methodologies. I hope that this attempt elicits a variety of responses, whether positive or negative, as well as additional research on the book of Hebrews utilizing the same methodologies and/or the issues relating to the two cultic systems in Hebrews.

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[110] E.g., deSilva, *Honor, Patronage, Kinship & Purity*; Johnson, *Going Outside the Camp*; Kim, *Polemic in the Book of Hebrews*; and Salevao, *Legitimation in the Letter to the Hebrews*.

[111] E.g., Berquist, "Critical Spatiality"; and Westfall, "Space and Atonement." cf. Aitken, "The Body of Jesus"; Gelardini, "Charting 'Outside the Camp.'"

CHAPTER 3: RITUAL PLACES IN HEBREWS

In Chapter 1, I identified problems with scholarship that perceives a pejorative view of the Levitical sacrificial system in Hebrews, suggesting instead that we ought to perceive their relationship as dependent on one another. Since both cultic systems pursue purification for sins, as will be discussed throughout this study, an analytical tool was said to be required to identify references to purity and purification within cultic contexts from the text. In this respect, the ritual theory that contains five ritual elements—sacrifier, sacrificer, sacrifice, time, and space—was suggested.[1] Excluding the first element, the sacrifier, which indicates the beneficiaries of ritual results, the remaining four ritual elements will be used to identify purity-related passages in Hebrews.

Our first focus will be on ritual places, as spatial theory can be directly applied to establish the relationship between the two tabernacles in Hebrews, as well as the cultural-anthropological perspective focusing on purity concerns. Once the relationship between the earthly and heavenly tabernacles is understood, its dynamics can be extended and applied to the relationship between the two cultic systems, the Levitical sacrificial system and Jesus' sacrifice, which include all of their ritual elements. In this chapter, therefore, we will focus on the two tabernacles in Hebrews as ritual places where purification is performed.

[1] See Hubert and Mauss, *Sacrifice*, 19–49. Cf. Klingbeil, *Bridging the Gap*, 147–204; Grimes, *Craft of Ritual Studies*, 231–93.

The book of Hebrews describes the tabernacle (σκηνή) as the place where both the old and new sacrificing rituals for purification are performed. The old and new ritual spaces, like the other ritual elements, are distinct from one another. The Levitical sacrifices were carried out in the earthly tabernacle built by Moses, whereas Jesus' sacrifice was carried out in the heavenly tabernacle. Because the author presents Jesus' sacrifice in relation to the Levitical sacrificial system, the relationship between the two tabernacles is also established. The author mentions the tabernacles in Heb 8:1–6 and 9:1–14, which allow us to investigate the relationship that the author establishes. Their relationship, particularly whether or not the author considered their continuity without a negative view of the earthly tabernacle, can be established using three criteria mentioned in the previous chapter: origin and identity, description and function, and degree of attained purity status.

The origins of both tabernacles are mentioned in 8:2 and 8:5, while their cultic function is described in 9:1–14. According to the majority of Hebrews scholars, 9:1–10 describes the earthly tabernacle in comparison to the heavenly tabernacle in 9:11–14.[2] Finally, 9:13–14 discusses the feature or degree of purity attained through the rituals performed in each tabernacle. When we consider these three criteria, the similarities and differences between earthly and heavenly tabernacles become clear. Furthermore, the relationship between them becomes clearer when viewed through the lens of spatial theory, which seeks to comprehend the dynamics of various spatial dimensions.

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[2] See for example, Allen, *Hebrews*, 469; Attridge, *Hebrews*, 245; Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 387; Lane, *Hebrews*, 2:233; Peterson, *Hebrews*, 206. All of them view Heb 9:11 as a contrast to the passage preceding it, 9:1–10. Particularly, Cockerill says, "The opening words, 'But Christ,' show that these verses [9:11–14] stand in *sharp contrast* with vv. 1–10" (Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 387, emphasis added). See also Westfall, *Discourse Analysis*, 196–97. As Westfall says, therefore, the comparison between the earthly and heavenly tabernacles forms a group in 9:1–14.

Therefore, this chapter will begin by defining and describing the earthly and heavenly tabernacles in spatial terms in order that their relationship can be understood more thoroughly. The similarities and differences between the two tabernacles will then be examined using the criteria listed above to determine their continuity. It is undeniable that Platonic dualism has influenced the interpretation of the tabernacles in Hebrews in two ways. First, in the Platonic view, the earthly tabernacle, where human high priests served, is overlooked because materiality is regarded as inferior to spirituality.[3] Considering the heavenly tabernacle to be the true one, as opposed to the earthly tabernacle, which is a copy and shadow, results in the earthly tabernacle being denigrated as originally defective. Second, those who oppose the Platonic view frequently see the heavenly tabernacle as an abstract metaphor.[4] Against both views, the thesis of this chapter is that the earthly and heavenly tabernacles are equally valued by the Hebrews author as being hermeneutically interdependent.

Spatial Considerations

Dynamics of Spatial Trialectics

According to Soja's spatial theory,[5] the three dimensions of space—Firstspace,

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[3] Advocates for the utilization of the Platonic perspective by Hebrews include Cody, *Heavenly Sanctuary and Liturgy*, 78–82; Dey, *Intermediary World and Patterns*; Thompson, *Hebrews*; Attridge, *Hebrews*, 28–30; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 686; Schenck, *Cosmology and Eschatology in Hebrews*, 144–81; and Johnson, *Hebrews*, 17–21.

[4] E.g., Williamson, *Philo and the Epistle to the Hebrews*, esp. 579; Hurst, *Hebrews*, 7–42; Guthrie, "Hebrews in Its First-Century Contexts," 428–29. Cf. Barnard, *Mysticism of Hebrews*, 104–5.

[5] For the history of critical spatial theory and its development, see Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," 23; Soja, *Postmodern Geographies*, 140. See also Warf and Arias, eds., *Spatial Turn*, 1. Particularly, its emergence and development have been marked by skepticism about the scholarship's overemphasis on historicity and historicism over the concept of space. For example, Barnard McGrane says, "Nineteenth-century anthropology, from this perspective, existed then as the axis whereby differences residing in geographical space were turned and turned until they became differences residing in developmental historical time, i.e., the axis whereby the simultaneity of geographical space was transformed into the successive linearity of historical evolutionary time" (McGrane, *Beyond Anthropology*, 94. For more

Secondspace, and Thirdspace—are not limited to one specific place.[6] Instead, they are interconnected and coexist, which each representing a unique aspect of our interaction with and understanding of space. This theory is not about representing a particular space, but rather about conceptualizing space in a dynamic and relational manner.[7] For instance, a city park can simultaneously embody all three aspects. As a Firstspace, it is recognized for its physical associations with maps and plans. As a Secondspace, it serves as a platform for social interactions. As a Thirdspace, it encompasses symbolic meanings and imaginings that people associate with it. Thus, according to the theory, these three dimensions can represent various facets of a single space, different locations, or even non-physical, imagined spaces. This approach enables a more holistic comprehension of space that extends beyond the confines of the physical domain.[8]

The author of Hebrews was not aware of postmodern spatial theory, but it has

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detailed description and critique of historicism, see Soja, *Thirdspace*, 164–83). Regarding the importance of spatial concept as social theory, see Harvey, *Social Justice and the City*; Harvey, *Limits to Capital*; Harvey, *Urbanization of Capital*; Harvey, *Condition of Postmodernity*; Harvey, "Between Space and Time."; Soja, *Postmodern Geographies*; Soja, "Postmodern Geographies and the Critique of Historicism."; Soja, *Thirdspace*; and Soja, *Postmetropolis*.

[6] Soja, *Thirdspace*, 10–11. Also, he coined the term "trialectics" to present "not just a triple dialectic but also a mode of dialectical reasoning that is more inherently spatial than the conventional temporally-defined dialectics of Hegel or Marx" (10). Earlier, Michel Foucault proposed three kinds of space: space in reality, "homotopia"; perfect and ideal space, "utopia"; and an entirely different space, "heterotopia," which contains a variety of imaginary matters of our daily lives such as rest homes, cemeteries, gardens, museums, and historical sites (Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," esp. 22–27; Dehaene and de Cauter, eds., *Heterotopia and the City*). "Heterotopia" was a completely new concept of space that no one had previously defined as a place. He defines it as "the ones that have the curious property of being in relation with all the other sites, but in such a way as to suspend, neutralize, or invert the set of relations designated, mirrored, or reflected by them" (Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," 16–17; see also Smith, *Map Is Not Territory*, esp. 129–46). Henri Lefebvre, one of Foucault's contemporaries, proposed three distinct categories of space: (1) physical space or perceived space; (2) mental space or conceived space; and (3) social space or lived space (Lefebvre, *Production of Space*, 1–20). Similarly, David Harvey classified space into three types: (1) absolute space, in which material spatial practice occurs; (2) relative space, which contains representations; and (3) the space of representation, which is relational (Harvey, *Spaces of Global Capitalism*, 120–24).

[7] According to the theory, space is created and produced by societies and should be considered in relation to a variety of social phenomena. See George, "Introduction," xi; Massey, *For Space*, 9–12.

[8] For more comprehensive descriptions about the dynamics between the three dimensions of spaces, see Soja, *Thirdspace*, 53–82. For more various examples, see Soja, *Thirdspace*, 186–236.

correspondences to the ancient meaning of space. As Casey argues, spatial theory is not a new concept of space, but rather a new method of illustrating and representing space.[9] The theory is also appropriate for the ancient concept of space, and thus provides a good representation of the relationship between all of the types of space described in Hebrews.[10]

Firstspace and Secondspace

According to spatial theory, Firstspace is known as a physical and material sense, namely, perceived space. In the book of Hebrews, the heavenly tabernacle is not an abstract or metaphysical space, but rather a physical and experiential one. Jesus would serve at a sanctuary that can endure forever, because he is "a priest forever (Ps 110:4)," and it must have been the heavenly tabernacle, which is the eternal place built by God in heaven (Heb 9:24b). Several passages in Hebrews reveal that Christ is at a certain location, for example, "at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven" (1:3), "at my right hand" (1:13), in "the inner sanctuary behind the curtain" (6:19), "at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven" (8:1), in "the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not made with human hands, that is to say, is not a part of this creation" (9:11), "the Most Holy Place" (9:12), "at the right hand of God" (10:12), and "at the right hand of the throne of God" (12:2). All these indicate one and the same place in heaven, not on earth.

As the location of Jesus in Hebrews, Westfall insightfully suggests that Firstspace

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[9] Casey, *Getting Back into Place*, esp. 3–8; Casey, *Fate of Place*.

[10] Initially, Soja developed critical spatiality through actual and conceptual trips to Los Angeles, where he projected the archetype of the postmodern urban area's future. He did this throughout his trilogy on spatial theory—*Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (1989), *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places* (1996), and *Postmetropolis: Critical Studies of Cities and Regions* (2000). See also Soja, "Beyond Postmetropolis," esp. 454–55.

"gives him [Jesus] a physicality that prevents abstraction."[11] According to Exod 25:40 and Heb 8:5, the heavenly tabernacle is a prototype for the earthly one. Through its explicit citation of Exod 25:40, Hebrews regards "the heavenly tabernacle as more physical and concrete than the earthly tabernacle in the OT narrative, which, significantly, was also unseen—it had not been used for centuries."[12] Indeed, the author's use of Exod 25:40 emphasizes the presence of the actual tabernacle in heaven.[13] In Heb 8:2, The author refers to the heavenly tabernacle as τῆς σκηνῆς τῆς ἀληθινῆς ("the true tabernacle"), which emphasizes its spatial identity as perceived space.

On the other hand, the author's reference to the earthly tabernacle as ὑποδείγματι καὶ σκιᾷ ("copy and shadow") in 8:5 reveals its characteristics as conceived space because it is what Moses *conceived* and *illustrated* according to the prototype in heaven, as will be argued in the next section.[14] Moreover, Hebrews elaborates on the arrangement of the earthly tabernacle's inside and the performance carried out by the Levitical high priest in 9:1–7. It is the author's *illustration* as he conceived the tabernacle, and he refers to it as παραβολή ("illustration") in 9:9. This implies that the heavenly tabernacle may be Firstspace, while the earthly tabernacle may be Secondspace.

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[11] Westfall, "Space and Atonement," 235, 244. "This is not a Platonic ideal or abstraction," she says. Because Jesus had a physical body, where he stayed had to be physical as well. Both Jesus and his abode in heaven must be realistic, rather than ideal.

[12] Westfall, "Space and Atonement," 247.

[13] Guthrie, "Hebrews," 969–70. According to Guthrie, "Hebrews' reference to the heavenly tabernacle, from which the earthly tabernacle was copied, concerns the permanent heavenly dwelling place of God over against the earthly tabernacle, which was merely temporary and provisional." Although he suggests a conflictual relationship between the heavenly and earthly tabernacles by citing Exod 25:40, the point here is that the heavenly tabernacle has existed as a physical location.

[14] Because of its uniqueness and physicality, the earthly tabernacle may have served as Firstspace for the people of the Old Testament. However, the readers of Hebrews must have understood it as Secondspace because it is described as a representation of the original in heaven. We exclude other possibilities because the focus of this study is on the Hebrews author's description.

Thirdspace

Thirdspace is the way a certain space is experienced. Thirdspace in Hebrews, in particular, is the tabernacle where the author's intention and hope reside. As lived space, the Thirdspace tabernacle is evidently connected to the life of readers based on the exhortations of the Hebrews author. All three dimensions of space do not have to be derived from a single physical location because the theory is more concerned with the interplay and interconnectedness of these spatial dimensions in the context of social and cultural processes.[15] Thus, what matters regarding Thirdspace is the state of life, which is where everything comes together as the experience of each person.[16] As "thirding produces what might best be called a cumulative trialectics that is radically open to additional otherness,"[17] all the states of human life must be Thirdspace, whether one appreciates its existence or not. Regardless of the date of Hebrews, there were no tabernacles that the author and first readers were able to physically access. This is especially true for the state of life in faith, as Thirdspace encompasses both perceived and conceived spaces as a form of sanctification—a "real-and-imagined" place, as Soja put it.[18]

Additionally, Thirdspace has transgressive features against Firstspace and

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[15] Soja's focus is on comprehending the complexities and fluidity of spatial relationships in social, cultural, and geographical settings. The theory promotes investigation into how spaces are produced, experienced, and understood by individuals and communities, recognizing that these processes can occur at various scales and locations. See Soja, *Thirdspace*, 53–82.

[16] Soja, *Thirdspace*, 57. Soja envisions Thirdspace by utilizing Jorge Luis Borges's "brilliant evocation of the *Aleph* as the place 'where all places are' to provoke new ways of looking at and understanding contemporary Los Angeles" that he once did in his previous book *Postmodern Geographies*. The Aleph is "one of the points in space that contains all other points" (54–55, emphasis added). The Aleph emphasizes Thirdspace's inclusivity as a key quality. See also Borges, "The Aleph and Other Stories"; Soja, *Postmodern Geographies*, 222–48. Cf. C. R. Baker and Beaumont, "Afterword: Postsecular Cities," 256–58.

[17] Soja, *Thirdspace*, 61.

[18] Soja, *Thirdspace*, 11.

Secondspace.[19] As Westfall points out, some exhortations in Hebrews for the readers to "enter the Most Holy Place" (10:19) and "to eat" "at the tabernacle" (13:10) were indubitably transgressions of the conventional notion of the people in Second Temple Judaism.[20] Also, the encouragement to "go to him [Jesus] outside the camp, bearing the disgrace he bore" (13:13) might not have been readily accepted by the most first readers—if not all—nor by many contemporary Christians in the twenty-first century CE. Therefore, the state of life in faith promoted by Hebrews can be seen as Thirdspace in many aspects.

Even though Thirdspace is the center of the spatiality as an integration of Firstspace and Secondspace, the focus of this study is on the relationship between them, particularly the first two in Hebrews. In light of spatial theory and identification of Firstspace, Secondspace, and Thirdspace performed thus far, this study moves on to an examination of the relationship between Firstspace and Secondspace in Hebrews.[21]

Firstspace and Secondspace as Antitype and Type

As we begin our investigation of the relationship between the old and new cultuses in Hebrews, particularly in terms of the four ritual elements—ritual place, sacrificer, sacrifice, and ritual time—it is helpful to consider how typology influences how we interpret the Hebrews author's mentions of the relationship between the Firstspace and Secondspace. Typology, in essence, involves the study of types and antitypes and their

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[19] Soja, *Thirdspace*, 96–105. Cf. Loveday, "Short Construction, the Third Space of Architecture," 11–12. See also Hooks, *Yearning*, 223–85.

[20] Westfall, "Space and Atonement," 238. Cf. Berquist, "Critical Spatiality," 183.

[21] Nevertheless, to avoid confusion, the terms *heavenly tabernacle* and *earthly tabernacle* will be used more commonly than *Firstspace* and *Secondspace*.

connections in the Old and New Testaments;[22] it includes both historical and theological aspects and explores the relationships between them.[23]

In typology, the relationship between elements is frequently understood as one of type and antitype,[24] in which an initial form (the antitype) finds its representation and fulfills a subsequent counterpart (the type) as the final goal. This interpretive shift allows us to see Secondspace, which is often associated with conceptual, representational spaces, as a type that anticipates and foreshadows the genuine reality represented by Firstspace, thereby framing Firstspace as the antitype—the fulfillment of Secondspace's characteristics.

The concept of Secondspace in Hebrews corresponds to the typological notion of a provisional or preparatory reality that points to future fulfillment. As seen above, the earthly tabernacle described in Hebrews is a tangible, material space, yet it functions as a "copy and shadow" (Heb 8:5) of the heavenly tabernacle. In this context, the earthly

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[22] According to Ribbens, typology is the study of types (Greek: τύποι) in the Bible, identifying correspondences between the Old Testament characters, events, or institutions and their New Testament counterparts. These correspondences are evident not only in the facts, but also in their theological significance. Types frequently foreshadow New Testament realities and reveal patterns of divine-human interaction. Unlike allegory, which decodes symbolic meanings unrelated to the narrative, typology derives its meaning from the inherent relationship between Old and New Testament elements. Examples include the old cultic system, which foreshadowed Jesus' new cultic system. Typology can help us understand the unity and fulfillment of the Bible (Ribbens, "Typology and Types").

[23] According to David L. Baker, "The *basis of typology* is God's consistent activity in the history of his chosen people" (Baker, *Two Testaments, One Bible*, 180, emphasis original). See Achtemeier, "Typology," 926. More broadly, it can be defined as a "form of biblical interpretation which deals with the correspondences between traditions concerning divinely appointed persons, events, and institutions, within the framework of the salvation history." I. Howard Marshall remarks, "Typology may be defined as the study which traces *parallels* or *correspondences* between incidents recorded in the OT and their counterparts in the NT such that the latter can be seen to resemble the former in notable respects and yet to go beyond them" (Marshall, "Assessment of Recent Developments," 16, emphasis added).

[24] Typology is fundamentally concerned with the relationship between two or more elements. W. Edward Glenny defines typology as having three common definitive features: (1) "There must be an identifiable Scriptural pattern or correspondence between the OT type and the NT antitype." (2) Typologically corresponding elements should be based on "historical facts—persons, actions, and institutions." (3) Typological interpretation is only possible when the OT type and the NT antitype "are considered to be divinely ordained representations or types of future realities that will be even greater and more complete" (Glenny, "Typology," 628–29). See Goppelt, *Typos*, 17.

tabernacle, conceived by God, built by Moses, and used by the Levitical priests, can be viewed as a type—a representation that symbolically prefigures the enduring and "true tabernacle" of Secondspace, located in heaven where Jesus ministers eternally. This typological relationship deepens our understanding by presenting Secondspace as a foreshadowing construct that leads to and is fulfilled in the Firstspace, which manifests in the heavenly reality that contains true substance and permanence.

Firstspace, as the antitype, represents the realization and culmination of the values embedded in Secondspace, encompassing everything in its ultimate and perfect form. Whereas Secondspace involves the material and ritual elements of the earthly tabernacle, Firstspace is where these elements are fulfilled. This heavenly space is described in Hebrews as a place "not made with human hands" (9:11), a perfected realm into which Jesus entered with his own blood, resulting in eternal redemption (9:12).[25] Thus, the typological transition from Secondspace to Firstspace reflects a progression from the initial, earthly shadow to a perfected heavenly reality, highlighting the latter's enduring character.

Furthermore, the typological framework of type and antitype also helps us understand the purpose behind each spatial dimension. Secondspace, as a place essential in its role as a tangible and comprehensible structure, inherently points beyond itself, inviting anticipation of a complete reality. Firstspace, in fulfilling the typological promise of Secondspace, embodies the ultimate goal of divine communion and eternal salvation made possible by Jesus. This progression from type to antitype is consistent with the

[25] Some interpret Heb 6:19 as describing Jesus' entrance into the heavenly sanctuary. For example, Gäbel, *Die Kulttheologie des Hebräerbriefes*, 227–28; Grässer, *An die Hebräer*, 1:384; Johnson, *Hebrews*, 173; Lane, *Hebrews*, 1:154;

overarching narrative of fulfillment in Hebrews, in which the old cultus is completed and perfected by the new cultus performed by Jesus.

In conclusion, by reframing the relationship between Firstspace and Secondspace in typological terms, we recognize a dynamic of anticipation and fulfillment that reflects the larger theological vision in Hebrews. Secondspace serves as a type—a preparatory space that anticipates the eternal reality of Firstspace, the antitype, where divine promises are fully realized. This shift from spatial theory to typology enriches our interpretation by demonstrating how the physical and temporal elements in Hebrews point to a transcendent, eternal reality. Thus, Hebrews invites readers to progress from the provisional spaces of the old covenant toward the ultimate fulfillment found in the heavenly tabernacle, as well as all the new cultus's ritual elements, through which Jesus intercedes perpetually on behalf of humanity.

Origin and Identity of the Two Tabernacles

The book of Hebrews depicts both the earthly and heavenly tabernacles as divinely originated spaces with distinct but interconnected roles in the context of worship and sacrifice. To better understand their similarities and differences, particularly in terms of their divine origin and identities, we will examine the theological, anthropological, and spatial implications of the text. Drawing on cultural-anthropological purity concerns and the critical spatial theory, we can investigate how these tabernacles are both compared and distinguished in the text, without portraying the earthly tabernacle negatively. The earthly tabernacle was not inferior in the sense of being not good or defective, but was foundational in establishing the pattern.

Origins of the Tabernacles

Divine Origins of Both Tabernacles

Both the earthly and heavenly tabernacles in Hebrews originate from God. This is a critical point of similarity. Undoubtedly, God built the heavenly tabernacle, which was not set up by a human being (Heb 8:2; 9:11). Although Moses was the human constructor, moreover, the earthly tabernacle has a divine origin because it was built in accordance with God's will and instructions (8:5). No matter what additional explanations are added about the earthly tabernacle, the fact that God is its origin and that the author is fully aware of it must serve as the foundation for further understanding.

Both the earthly and heavenly tabernacles aim for purification, as directed by the divine will. Hebrews 9:21–22 describes the process of purification in the earthly tabernacle according to the law. While the author of Hebrews recognizes the similarity in the divine origin and purpose of purification for both tabernacles, he differentiates between the methods used in each. When discussing how Jesus performed purification in the heavenly tabernacle in 9:23–26, the author highlights key differences in the ritual elements, such as the sacrificer, blood, and the frequency of the ritual. These distinctions will be explored further in later chapters of this study. Ultimately, both tabernacles share the same divine purpose of purification, establishing the same socioreligious boundary for the author and readers regardless of the extent of the purity status.

The Mode of Construction

While both tabernacles share divine origins, the primary distinction between them is in

how they were built. The earthly tabernacle was built by human hands, following God's instructions to Moses (8:5). The heavenly tabernacle, on the other hand, was established directly by God, with no contributions from humans, as evidenced by 8:2; 9:11, 24. Several scholars interpret human participation in the establishment of the earthly tabernacle as the reason for its deficiency.[26] However, given that the author of Hebrews knew the builder was Moses, whom he greatly admired,[27] it is unlikely that he simply used human intervention as a basis for deficiency. Rather, the author's description of how God instructed Moses to build the tabernacle in 8:5b emphasizes the divine origin of the earthly tabernacle. Although the author refers to human and Jesus high priests in verses 3 and 4, his focus is on the places of purification ritual, the earthly and heavenly tabernacles, when we consider that he begins subsection 8:1–6 with the term *main point*.

The Author's "Main Point"

Hebrews 8:1–6 is included in the section that introduces Jesus as the mediator of the new covenant (8:1—10:18). Most, if not all, scholars agree that 8:1—10:18 forms a major section of Hebrews, albeit slight differences on its range and subtitle.[28] As Attridge remarks, thus, Heb 8:1–6 is the beginning subsection of the "heart of the christological exposition of Hebrews."[29] There have been developments of Jesus' priestly death and heavenly exaltation in 2:17—3:1; 4:14—5:10; and 6:19—7:28 after the first introduction

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[26] E.g., Church, "Temple in the Apocalypse of Weeks and in Hebrews," 114; Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 356; Guthrie, "Hebrews," 968–70; Motyer, "The Spirit in Hebrews," 226. Schreiner, *Hebrews*, 47–48. Cf. Moffitt, *Rethinking the Atonement*, 125.

[27] See D'Angelo, *Moses in the Letter to the Hebrews*, 151–258. See also, Westfall, "Moses and Hebrews 3.1–6," and the related discussion below.

[28] See for example, Bruce, *Hebrews*, 180; Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 79–80; Guthrie, *Structure of Hebrews*, 79; Isaacs, *Reading Hebrews and James*, 104; Kistemaker, *Hebrews*, 18; Lane, *Hebrews*, xcvi; Peterson, *Hebrews*, 187. Cf. Attridge, *Hebrews*, 16, 216; Westfall, *Discourse Analysis*, 188.

[29] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 216–17. He sees this as the pinnacle of Jesus' exaltation as the high priest.

in 1:3, and it is about to be recapitulated and deepened subsequently. The Christ, who was introduced in the previous chapter (7:1–28) as the eternal Son of God, is told that "he has now become through his self-offering . . . a High Priest 'perfected forever' (7:28) and thus 'the Source of eternal salvation' (5:9)."[30]

At the very beginning, in 8:1, the author begins with the word κεφάλαιον, which can mean either "summary" or "main point" but preferably the latter.[31] The point is this: "We have such a high priest." The author makes an effort to concentrate on "such a high priest," who was previously mentioned in 7:26. In addition, the conjunction, δέ, which directly follows κεφάλαιον indicates a "logical or emphatic contrast with the preceding text" to convey that the author is adding something new and important in order to underline his main point in "both continuity and discontinuity" with what has been said so far.[32] After a thorough discussion in the previous passage, the author is now "returning to the mainstream of his argument" while also marking "the starting point of a fresh stage in that argument."[33]

The passage describes Jesus, the high priest, sitting down beside God the Father in heaven. Then, after making an assumption—or making sure—that Jesus is the high priest who completed the atonement for our sins (8:1; cf. 1:3),[34] the location where the

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[30] Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 345. In this sense, Cockerill says, "the story of chapter 7 continues."

[31] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 217. Westfall defines the word as "a discourse marker that highlights a main point" (Westfall, *Discourse Analysis*, 190). Cf. Offering three possibilities regarding the nuance of the word κεφάλαιον—gist, summary, and completion, Lane excludes the second one, saying, "The second of these nuances is excluded in 8:1 since the writer does not summarize what he has been saying, but in 8:1–2 he passes to a new point." He supports the first meaning, "gist," as most commentators and translations do (Lane, *Hebrews*, 200). See also Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 400; Guthrie, *Hebrews (TNTC)*, 172–73; Koester, *Hebrews*, 374–75.

[32] Westfall, *Discourse Analysis*, 190.

[33] Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 399–400. Ellingworth identifies a "double function" of the phrase, Κεφάλαιον δὲ ἐπὶ τοῖς λεγομένοις.

[34] Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 350–51. See Hooker, "Christ, the 'End of the Cult,'" 202; Koester, *Hebrews*, 375. Morna D. Hooker and Koester call it the "finality of Christ's work as high priest."

high priest Jesus serves is mentioned, as well as an indication of where he does not serve that was built by a human being (8:2). Furthermore, the author makes several distinctions and comparisons between the old and new sacrificial systems in various aspects. While verses 2 and 5b compare the two tabernacles, verses 3, 4, and 5a explain and contrast the role of human high priests with that of Jesus Christ. Verse 3a reiterates the general principle already stated in 5:1: a high priest offers both gifts and sacrifices. As a result of this principle, "thus" (ὅθεν), Jesus must have offered a sacrifice as a high priest (8:3b). However, he would not become a high priest if he remained on earth, as high priests already existed on earth who offered sacrifices in the earthly tabernacle (8:4). As Moffitt argues,

> [Hebrews] 8:4 clearly locates Jesus' priestly ministry in heaven after his life and death on earth. The writer's logic is clear. *The authority of the Law remains valid on earth*, and on earth there already exists a lawfully appointed order of priests. Therefore, Jesus, being from the tribe of Judah (7:14), cannot serve in that priesthood. What then qualifies Jesus to serve as a priest? . . . Jesus can be a priest because he has the necessary qualification for another order of priesthood—that of Melchizedek, a priesthood which one has not by genealogy but by enduring life.[35]

Even Heb 8:4 may sound as if the law has the power to prevent Jesus from performing high priestly duties on earth. At the very least, the author respects the law in terms of its cultic system. Respecting the value of human priests and their sacrifices, Jesus did not become the high priest on earth but in heaven. Just as human high priests served in the earthly tabernacle, Jesus requires a sanctuary in which to perform his purifying ministry.

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[35] Moffitt, "If Another Priest Arises," 76 (emphasis added). Moffitt insists on distinguishing between the heavenly and earthly priesthoods and limits Jesus' high priesthood to heaven based on the author's mention of Jesus' priesthood in heaven. He goes on to argue that "the great atoning moment of the incarnation occurred not when Jesus was crucified but after he was resurrected and ascended into heaven" (Moffitt, "Blood, Life, and Atonement," 211–12). See also Moffitt, *Atonement and the Logic of Resurrection*.

The main point that the author wants to discuss is twofold: first, "we do have such a high priest," Jesus, the great high priest, and second, he serves in the heavenly tabernacle, implying that Jesus' place of high priestly service in heaven is the antitype of the one Moses built. More precisely, the author wants to present Jesus' priesthood from a new perspective of a detailed exposition of the heavenly tabernacle. Although verses 3 and 4 mention the function of human high priests and Jesus, what the author focuses on is where they perform their duties, as stated in verse 5. Specifically, the author explains how Moses built the earthly one on the mountain in obedience to God's instructions, citing Exod 25:40.

Moses, a Human Being

The author's "formulaic quotation" of Exod 25:40 in verse 5 catches our attention.[36] When citing the Old Testament passages, Hebrews does not employ Paul's typical introductory formula, γέγραπται ("it is written").[37] The Hebrews author's unique introductory formula is a form of λαλέω ("to say"), mentioning that it is God who speaks.[38] Johnson remarks:

> The way Hebrews introduces these citations is distinctive among New Testament writings for its variety and non-literary character. Nowhere does the author introduce quotations that we recognize as biblical, as "scripture," that is, as writing (*graphē*). . . . With God as the understood subject, Hebrews introduces citations with expressions such as "He said" (1:5), "He says" (1:6; 2:12; 8:8; 10:15), "by saying" (3:15), "He has said" (4:3), "the one who said" (5:5), "He has promised" (12:26), and "He swore by saying" (6:13–14).[39]

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[36] The term "formulaic quotation" derives from Stanley E. Porter's five categories of citation: Formulaic quotation, direct quotation, paraphrase, allusion, and echo. The formulaic quotation is "the easiest to discuss since . . . the author wishes to label the words that follow as a quotation" (Porter, "Further Comments," 107). For the definitions of other four types of citation, see Porter, "Further Comments," 106–9.

[37] Guthrie, "Hebrews' Use of the Old Testament," 274; Hays, *Echoes of Scripture*, 113.

[38] Guthrie, "Hebrews' Use of the Old Testament," 274; Pierce, *Divine Discourse*, esp. 35–90.

[39] Johnson, "The Scriptural World of Hebrews," 239–40.

Despite being a verb φημί rather than λαλέω in Heb 8:5, it belongs to the same sub-semantic domains as λαλέω, "Speak, Talk" (LN 33.69–108): 33.69 (λέγω; φημί, "to say, to talk, to tell, to speak") and 33.70 (λαλέω, "to speak, to say, to talk, to tell").[40] Given the author's statement that "in the past God *spoke* . . . through the prophets" (1:1, emphasis added) and "in the last days he has *spoken* . . . by his Son" (1:2, emphasis added), as well as his several other Old Testament (LXX) quotations throughout the book, his use of the verb "says" (NET, NASB) as a description on the origin of the earthly tabernacle here in 8:5 reveals his willingness to authorize it as the one with the divine origin.[41]

The manner in which God revealed the pattern to Moses may also have an impact on the relationship between the two tabernacles, as it is related to the manner in which Moses witnessed the prototype heavenly tabernacle in order to build the tabernacle on earth. God, according to the author of Hebrews, revealed the pattern of the heavenly tabernacle prior to speaking to him to make everything. At this point, Philo interprets the term *shown* (δείκνυμι) Platonically as a symbol, based on his Platonic assumption that intelligible forms cannot be captured by the physical eyes of humans.[42] However, the Hebrews author nowhere suggests that Moses saw the heavens symbolically and thereby gained abstract knowledge. Rather, the author presents a possibility that Moses ascended to heaven, as Moffitt suggests.[43] If the author of Hebrews is assuming that Moses

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[40] Louw and Nida, *Greek–English Lexicon*, 1:396.

[41] Simon J. Kistemaker proposes the archaic English term "quoth he" to demonstrate the divine origin of the citation See Kistemaker, *Psalm Citations*, 40.

[42] See Philo, *Moses* 2:74–75. The point he is making is that Moses did not actually see the heavenly realities, but rather gained knowledge and understanding of them. He states unequivocally that the heavenly things are "appreciable only by the intellect" (See also Philo, *QE* 2:52, 82).

[43] For a more in-depth discussion of Moses' ascent into heaven when he saw the heavenly tabernacle, see Moffitt, *Atonement and the Logic of Resurrection*, 150–62. See also Moffitt, *Rethinking the*

perceived the heavenly tabernacle and maybe even ascended into heaven to perceive it "locally," the earthly tabernacle based on this divine experience cannot be described negatively. Accordingly, Moses' conceptualizations of the heavenly tabernacle serve as the foundation for the organization of the earthly one, demonstrating the importance of studying the earthly tabernacle in order to develop conceptualizations of heaven.

Thus, while the two tabernacles appear to have different construction modes despite sharing the same divine origin, the difference reinforces the same divine origin, particularly when we examine the author's citation of Exod 25:40 in Heb 8:5. It means that the author never disparages the earthly tabernacle and instead respects it in the same way that he does the heavenly one. Moffitt rightly concludes about the relationship between the earthly and heavenly tabernacles as follows:

> As his interpretation of Exod 25:40 in Heb 8:5 indicates, the heavenly tabernacle served as the *source* for the earthly structure. . . . In the author's view, the real subject of the earthly sacred space is also its source—the heavenly tabernacle. Thus the earthly space neither is an exact replica of the heavenly tabernacle nor represents the entirety of the cosmos. Rather, because Moses saw the pattern of the heavenly edifice, *he built the earthly one in such a way as to have an analogous structure*, even if the earthly structure is only a shadowy sketch.[44]

Moses constructed the earthly tabernacle based on the heavenly tabernacle that God showed him. It was Moses who built the earthly tabernacle, but God caused him to do it. Furthermore, God provided him with the model to follow. The earthly tabernacle was thus existentially dependent on the heavenly one. Its very existence was founded on what exists in heaven.

Atonement, 255–57. According to him, "Hebrews envisions Jesus's ascension (his "passing through the heavens," 4:14) in terms of his entering into the heavenly tabernacle (see esp. 8:1–2; 9:24) and into the heavenly holy of holies in particular" (174).

[44] Moffitt, "Serving in the Tabernacle in Heaven," 274 (emphasis added). For his entire discussion and argument, see Moffitt, "Serving in the Tabernacle in Heaven," 267–74. See also Moffitt, "It Is Not Finished," 163: "one can learn something of the heavenly structure and its cultic service, and so also about where Jesus is and what Jesus is presently doing, by looking at its earthly model."

Made with Human Hands

While the phrase“human being” (ἄνθρωπος) in 8:2 refers to Moses, and while it has no negative connotations, as seen thus far, a question may arise regarding the term χειροποιήτου in 9:11 that is rendered as “made with human hands” whether it contains a pejorative meaning toward the earthly tabernacle in opposition to the heavenly one.[45] The term χειροποιήτου is frequently used in the LXX to denote pagan idols in a pejorative sense (e.g., Lev 26:1, 20, 30; Isa 2:18; 10:11; 19:1; 21:9; 31:7; 46:6; Dan 5:4, 23; Jdt 8:18), but in the New Testament it refers to the Jerusalem temple or an earthly temple or tabernacle (e.g., Mark 14:58; Acts 7:48; 17:24; 2 Cor 5:1; cf. Eph 2:11),[46] not necessarily in a negative sense.

In Heb 9:11 and 9:24, the contrast between “made with human hands” and “not made with human hands” seems to serve more as a mere distinction than a value judgment. Regardless of human hands, both tabernacles share the divine origin and served essential roles in each of their sacrificial systems. The author of Hebrews appears less concerned with diminishing the earthly tabernacle’s significance in these passages and more focused on emphasizing the heavenly tabernacle that it pointed toward. Therefore, the term *not made with human hands* is best understood as a way of distinguishing the eternal, heavenly tabernacle from its earthly counterpart without implying any inherent flaw or deficiency in the latter.

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[45] There are two schools of thought on the identity of the heavenly tabernacle: whether it represents the literal tabernacle in heaven or a metaphor for Jesus’ resurrected body. For an overview, see Hurst, *Hebrews*, 24; Schenck, “Archaeology of Hebrews’ Tabernacle Imagery,” 238–39. This study, of course, is consistent with interpretations that regard it as the actual heavenly tabernacle. See, for example, Westfall, “Space and Atonement.”

[46] Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 451.

Identities of the Tabernacles

The similarities and differences between the two tabernacles can also be found in their identities, as described in the book of Hebrews, particularly chs. 8 and 9. It is noteworthy that the heavenly tabernacle is referred to as the "true" one (Heb 8:2; 9:24), whereas the earthly one is described as a "copy and shadow" (8:5). Although the two descriptions appear to contradict each other, they do not when examined individually. This section examines these two terms and concepts to conclude that Hebrews does not convey a negative connotation about the earthly tabernacle.

The "True" Heavenly Tabernacle

The author makes the first explicit distinction between the earthly and heavenly tabernacles when he introduces the high priest Jesus and the place where he serves. He describes Jesus' serving place as the "true tabernacle set up by the Lord, not by a [mere] human being" (τῆς σκηνῆς τῆς ἀληθινῆς, ἣν ἔπηξεν ὁ κύριος, οὐκ ἄνθρωπος) in 8:2,[47] and it indicates the heavenly tabernacle.[48] The possibility of the existence of another one built by a human being is raised here, with verse 5 confirming that it is the earthly one

[47] The NIV inserts the word "mere" before "human being," but there are no corresponding words in the Greek text. This word is not included in the majority of English translations. Inclusion of this adjective may result in a misunderstanding, causing the readers to put a wrong nuance that the author did not intend. Most importantly, it may lead the readers to impose unnecessary limitations on human beings, which is also associated with Platonism.

[48] Whether "the sanctuary" (τῶν ἁγίων) and "the true tabernacle" (τῆς σκηνῆς τῆς ἀληθινῆς) are the same or not is controversial among scholars. As Church argues, Hebrews is "more interested in the relationship between the earthly and heavenly sanctuaries than the relationship between supposed inner and outer compartments of the heavenly sanctuary. . . . The expression identifies the sanctuary that the high priest serves as τὰ ἅγια ('the sanctuary'), which it then defines more closely as ἡ σκηνή ἡ ἀληθινή ('the true tent')" (Church, *Hebrews and the Temple*, 403). For more detailed discussion on this issue, see Attridge, *Hebrews*, 217–18, 222–23; Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 354; Grässer, *An die Hebräer*, 2:82–83; Johnson, *Hebrews*, 199.

built by Moses. Although it is not specified whether the readers were already familiar with the Mosaic tabernacle or not before,[49] the author introduces both the earthly and heavenly tabernacles at this point (e.g., 8:1–2; 9:11–12, 24), and they might appear to be at least superficially opposed to each other.

As a result, readers may become interested in the relationship between the two tabernacles, which appear diametrically opposed,[50] with the possibility that the false one exists as a counterpart to the true one. However, the term *true* does not always denote the inverse of the concept "false." According to G. K. Beale, "The reference to the tabernacle as 'true' in Hebrews 8:2 and 9:24 connotes both (1) that which is 'genuine' or represents 'the real state of affairs' of reality and (2) prophetic typological fulfillment. . . . Hebrews refers to the heavenly tabernacle as 'true' because it is the fulfillment . . . of everything the Old Testament tabernacle and temples foreshadowed."[51] Thus, the significance of 8:2 is that the God-built heavenly tabernacle is the original one, serving as a typological fulfillment of the earthly one, without implying that the other, the earthly tabernacle, is a forgery.[52]

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[49] It is generally held that the first readers of Hebrews were Christians who were familiar with several Old Testament passages and the Levitical sacrificial system. We can therefore assume that they were already familiar with the Mosaic tabernacle. However, their ethnicity is controversial. They were either Jewish Christians or Gentile Christians, or possibly both. In any case, it is certain that they were already familiar with the Levitical sacrificial system. See Carson and Moo, *Introduction to the New Testament*, 609–10.

[50] The author's references to the "finality of Christ's work as high priest" followed by its place, the heavenly tabernacle that God built, emphasize the place and set it up for comparison with another one that was built by a human being (Hooker, "Christ, the 'End of the Cult,'" 202; Koester, *Hebrews*, 375).

[51] Beale, *Temple and the Church's Mission*, 295–96; see also 373–74. He says, "They [the Old Testament tabernacles] were all intended to be imperfect models and temporary 'copies' of the coming true, eternal temple" (296). I agree with his typological understanding in general, but I disagree with his claim that the earthly types were intended to be "imperfect."

[52] The typological relationship between the two tabernacles will be synthetically discussed in the chapter's concluding remarks.

The Earthly "Copy and Shadow"

The author refers to the heavenly tabernacle as the "true" one in 8:2, whereas the earthly tabernacle is referred to as a "copy and shadow" of the heavenly one in 8:5. Although verses 2 and 5 are in the same subsection, 8:1–6, it is incorrect to regard them as conceptually opposed because each verse mentions both tabernacles for different purposes. Jared C. Calaway remarks, "Together the two passages [Heb 8:1 and Exod 25:40 cited in Heb 8:5] create a consistent cosmological framework, making the earthly handmade sanctuary the 'antitype' to the true, heavenly 'type' Moses saw and from which he modeled his 'shadowy illustration.'"[53]

Verse 2 refers to the heavenly tabernacle as the true one, emphasizing that it is where the high priest Jesus serves, as opposed to the one built by a human being. On the other hand, verse 5 describes the earthly one as a copy and shadow of the heavenly one, confirming that "copy and shadow" does not contradict "true." The author describes the two tabernacles as "what is in heaven" and "a sanctuary that is a copy and shadow" respectively.

It is important to understand why the author refers to the two tabernacles in 8:5, which are inherently opposed to one another: one in heaven and the other as a copy and shadow. Since spatial theory presents two seemingly opposing spatial concepts, Firstspace and Secondspace, identifying the relative links between the conceptual spaces and their corresponding tabernacles may aid the interpretation of the message of Hebrews as a compelling alternative to the Platonic view.

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[53] Calaway, *Sabbath and the Sanctuary*, 108. He had previously identified the *contrast* between the earthly "copy" and the heavenly "true." However, he actually recognizes their relationship as typological rather than contrasting. Cockerill also observes the "typological continuity between the old and new" (Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 391).

Moses built the earthly tabernacle as a "copy and shadow" (ὑποδείγματι καὶ σκιᾷ) of the heavenly one (8:5),[54] and it was his obedience to God's instruction (cf. Exod 25:40). The expression ὑποδείγματι καὶ σκιᾷ ("copy and shadow") is an antonym of the term ἀληθινῆς ("true") in verse 2, which connotes authenticity, and both clarify each other's meaning.[55] Everything belonging to heaven is a prototype, whereas the earthly system is like a "copy and shadow" that eventually indicates and reveals the heavenly system.[56] Koester observes the description of the earthly tabernacle as a "copy and shadow" as follows:

> Some take the comment to be pejorative, an affirmation that the earthly sanctuary is "only" a copy of the true one (NJB; REB), but for most people in antiquity, the idea that the earthly sanctuary represented the heavenly one would have been reason to revere it. Jewish writers valued the Temple as a place for prayer, even though they understood that God was not confined there (1 Kgs 8:27–30; Philo, *Special Laws* 1.66, 68). Therefore, if the Temple was a copy of a heavenly design (Wis 9:8), one might assume that there could be no better sanctuary on earth.[57]

As Secondspace points to the reality of Firstspace, so the earthly tabernacle, like a map or a blueprint, points to the reality of the heavenly tabernacle. Accordingly, the earthly tabernacle as Secondspace represents the true heavenly tabernacle, Firstspace. It

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[54] Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 358. In terms of the meaning and role of the conjunction ὅθεν in detail, see Westfall, *Discourse Analysis*, 193.

[55] See Westfall, *Discourse Analysis*, 190–91. Lane said, "the expression 'true tabernacle' is used in contrast not to what is false but to what is symbolical and imperfect." Lane's terminology "imperfect" is problematic since it means that God's instructions in Exodus are not perfect. Even there is not any reference why he uses this term with the right expression "symbolical" which can be inferred in the light of the subsequent verses. Excluding the word "imperfect," Lane's remark is acceptable. "'True tabernacle' is used in contrast not to what is false but to what is symbolical" (Lane, *Hebrews*, 1:205–6). See also Cody, *Heavenly Sanctuary and Liturgy*, 151.

[56] As Jared C. Calaway argues, "'copy' as ὑπόδειγμα is counter-positioned with 'heavenly things,' making the earthly rites in the earthly temple all 'copies' of the heavenly events" (Calaway, *Sabbath and the Sanctuary*, 107).

[57] Koester, *Hebrews*, 383. See also Philo, *Spec. Laws* 1:66, 68. He continues, "It is only through comparison with the heavenly tent (Heb 8:2) that the limitations of the earthly shrine or 'shadow' can be seen (8:5)." He refers to the "limitations of the earthly shrine," but it appears that the author of Hebrews does not compare the earthly and heavenly shrines, deciding which is better and which is worse. Unless specifically stated, the concept and term "shadow and copy" do not need to be interpreted in a negative light.

conceptualizes it, in Soja's terms, ordering it and assigning social meaning to it.

In light of Platonic dualism, the earthly tabernacle may be regarded as inferior and vulgar because it once existed on earth, even though the author and readers of Hebrews could only conceive it. Philip Church remarks, "Those who adopt the reading 'copy and shadow' sometimes suggest that the tabernacle or temple are inferior to the heavenly sanctuary, often on the basis that they are material structures."[58] Bruce claims that the concept of copy and shadow has "some affinity with Platonic idealism," but only in terms of language, not "his essential thought."[59] At the very least, the majority of Hebrews scholars who deny the influence of Platonism on Hebrews acknowledge their linguistic similarity as Bruce does. There is, however, no clear evidence that the author used the Platonic language for any purpose. Platonic influence cannot be assured solely through the author's use of language such as "copy and shadow" or concepts that appear to be opposite such as "heaven" and "earth," particularly since he was quoting the LXX. "There is in any case no need to look to Platonic influences for the idea of a building on earth reflecting a heavenly counterpart, since there are parallels both in Judaism and earlier in other parts of the ancient Near East," Ellingworth claims.[60] Thompson insists on the ancient worldwide pervasiveness of "the idea that the sanctuary is a copy of a heavenly original."[61]

In total denial of the Platonic influence on Hebrews, Lincoln D. Hurst claims as follows:

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[58] Church, *Hebrews and the Temple*, 1.

[59] Cf. Bruce, *Hebrews*, 184. See Calaway, *Sabbath and the Sanctuary*, 106–7.

[60] Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 408. For a detailed argument that the earthly tabernacle as a copy and shadow of the heavenly one was "indeed a widespread concept in early Judaism," see Steyn, "On Earth as It Is in Heaven."

[61] Thompson, *Hebrews*, 168.

> . . . ὑπόδειγμα is not a word characteristic of Philo. In the entire Philonic corpus, it is used only four times (*De conf. ling*. 64; *quis rer*. 256; *De somn*. II. 3; *De post. C*. 122), as opposed to three times in Hebrews. Classical Greek usage (including that of Plato and Philo) preferred παράδειγμα to ὑπόδειγμα.[62]

The author used ὑπόδειγμα instead of παράδειγμα possibly because παράδειγμα occurs twice in Exod 25:9 (25:8 LXX) when referring to the heavenly pattern that God showed Moses, and because Philo's uses of παράδειγμα may be understood in a Platonic sense due to its transcendental nuance.[63] Regardless of his intention, the author's use of the term ὑπόδειγμα goes in the opposite direction of a Platonist worldview. Accordingly, Platonic dualism and its influence cannot be specified when reading and interpreting the concept of the earthly tabernacle as a shadow and copy of the heavenly one.

Moreover, it is worthwhile to hear what Hurst says about translating the word ὑπόδειγμα into "copy," as several English translations do.[64] He notes that ὑπόδειγμα is always translated as "sample," "suggestion," "symbol," "outline," "token," or "example" in all ancient Greek literature, with the exception of a few biblical translations of Heb 8:5 and 9:23, and defines its meaning with E. Kenneth Lee's definition as "'something suggested as a *basis* for imitation or instruction'—a basis for something which comes later."[65] After presenting two assumptions that led to this problematic translation, one of which is the influence of Plato, he proposes "outline," "pattern," and "blueprint" as

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[62] Hurst, *Hebrews*, 13. On the other hand, Philo uses παράδειγμα eighty-eight times, mostly in a Platonic sense. Cf. Josephus uses both terms interchangeably (Moore, "True Tabernacle," 59–60). I agree with Hurst in rejecting Platonic interpretations of Hebrews, but not in his sense of a complete apocalyptic interpretation of the heavenly tabernacle. See the next section.

[63] Moore, "The True Tabernacle," 60. He argues for "the sense 'representation'—a pattern of something prior and not only of something subsequent" as "a latent possible meaning for ὑπόδειγμα" (62). "Thus ὑπόδειγμα must bear the nuance of an imitation or representation of a heavenly reality" (64). For the specifics of Moore's argument regarding the meaning of the term ὑπόδειγμα, see Moore, "The True Tabernacle," 59–64.

[64] Hurst, *Hebrews*, 13–17.

[65] Hurst, *Hebrews*, 13–19, esp. 13. Lee, "Words Denoting 'Pattern,'" 168 (emphasis added by Hurst).

alternates.[66]

Additionally, it is important to acknowledge that the Greek word τύπος ("pattern") and its original Hebrew equivalent תַּבְנִית ("pattern") in Exod 25:9, 40 also reveal the divine origin of both the genuine heavenly tabernacle and its pattern.[67] This is because the pattern itself represents the heavenly tabernacle, and Moses built the earthly tabernacle in accordance with the pattern in obedience to God. As Davidson contends, therefore, there is a typological relationship between the earthly and heavenly tabernacles, with the former representing the latter and the latter fulfilling the former.[68] Thus, the concepts and categories represented in the former can be used to understand and navigate the latter. In this sense, it is difficult to believe that the author holds any negative views about the earthly tabernacle. Besides, the more elevated the heavenly tabernacle, the more respected the earthly one.

According to spatial theory, Secondspace is both a "mental space" and a "conceived space."[69] Most of all, a map has its own value and function, as it suggests the existence of the real terrain and leads to it. The heavenly tabernacle is represented by the earthly tabernacle in this way. One may mistakenly think that Secondspace is abstract, as it is a conceived one.[70] Despite its lack of accessibility, the earthly tabernacle was not a

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[66] Hurst, *Hebrews*, 16. Although I agree with his alternatives, "copy" will be used consistently to indicate the word to avoid any confusion. The purpose of this research is not to correct the translation. The ASV, CEB, ESV, NASB, NIV, and RSV translate ὑπόδειγμα into "copy."

[67] Cody, *Heavenly Sanctuary and Liturgy*, 16–17. See Wis 9:8.

[68] Davidson, *Typology in Scripture*, 388. Davidson conducts a comprehensive examination of both terms τύπος and תַּבְנִית in order to arrive at this conclusion regarding their typological relationship (367–88).

[69] As seen so far, even Platonic dualism does not regard "mental" and "conceived" ones as deficient.

[70] Soja, *Thirdspace*, 10. Besides Soja's naming as "Secondspace," as mentioned in the methodology section, it is also called "Mental Space" (Lefebvre) and "Representations of space" (Harvey). This is particularly the case when considered apart from the Platonic dualism. These designations may lead to the misconception that this space is abstract, but the critical spatiality rejects this notion.

mere figment of imagination but rather a representation of the heavenly tabernacle as conceived by the author of Hebrews. Secondspace, the earthly tabernacle, which once existed but is now invisible, points to Firstspace, the heavenly tabernacle, which is invisible but will become visible someday.

The verb λατρεύω ("to serve") is important because it directly shows what high priests do. In other Greek literature, it means "work for hire" or "serve," frequently with a negative connotation of slavery or force, but all New Testament usages are in a cultic sense, including idolatry.[71] The object is "a copy and shadow of the heavenly one" (ὑποδείγματι καὶ σκιᾷ . . . τῶν ἐπουρανίων), and high priests "serve" it in a cultic sense. There are two places: the heavenly one and its copy and shadow, and both are places where religious rites can be performed (the act of λατρεύω) by those who are in charge.[72]

The author's intention to respect the earthly tabernacle is revealed by his reference to Moses, who established it in the past. On the assumption that the author of Hebrews regards Moses as a "type of Christ" and establishes a "parallel between Jesus and Moses,"[73] mentioning Moses as the tabernacle's builder implies his respect for the earthly tabernacle. Additionally, the passive voice of the verb χρηματίζω ("was warned"),

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[71] λατρεύω, *NIDNTTE*, 3:95–96.

[72] The terms "copy and shadow" have no negative connotations. However, it is beyond the scope at this moment to delve deeper into their meaning.

[73] Westfall, "Moses and Hebrews 3.1–6." Although a large number of New Testament scholars argue that Moses is denigrated as inferior to Christ in Hebrews, Westfall argues that the author respects Moses as a "highly respected individual and leader who functions as a type of Christ, rather than the target of a polemic" (201) by analyzing Heb 3:1–6. She rejects the subheading "Christ superior to Moses" for 3:1—4:13, as held by Hughes and a number of later Hebrews scholars. Her conclusion is as follows: "The topic entity of the passage is the readers' identity as partners with Jesus in terms of being members of his house. Their relationship with Jesus is illustrated or elaborated by a comparison of Moses' relationship with his house" (200). Besides, Moffitt says, "Jesus is also the one who, like Moses, has gained power and authority over the devil, the spiritual being who holds the power of death" (Moffitt, *Atonement and the Logic of Resurrection*, 161). See also Attridge, *Hebrews*, 104; Attridge, "Paraenesis in a Homily," esp. 220–21; Lane, *Hebrews*, 1:73. Cf. Buchanan, *Hebrews*, 57; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 27; Hughes, *Hebrews*, 3–4, 125; Westcott, *Hebrews*, 72.

which means "to impart a divine message,"[74] makes it clear that God is the one who gave the message because it was "a common term for a divine communication."[75] As such, the author explicitly states that God provided Moses with the blueprint so that he could use it to build the tabernacle (8:5). Since the author refers to God as the subject of the establishment of the earthly tabernacle, it is evident that Hebrews did not intend to devalue the tabernacle built by Moses. Similar to this, spatial theory does not assign any relative value to any space, even when comparing or contrasting them. In relation to the others, each space is significant in its own right.

In this regard, Firstspace and Secondspace do not have a dominant relation to each other. Some attempt to find a contrast between the locations of the two tabernacles, in heaven and on earth,[76] but the author does not present "what is in heaven" as a contrast to what is on earth. Rather, given the positive sense of the phrase "copy and shadow" as seen above, the heavenly and earthly tabernacles are being linked together. Because Moses built the tabernacle in response to God's "warning," the earthly one was existentially based on the heavenly one, according to the author of Hebrews. The author sees the earthly tabernacle as a representation and therefore a source of meaningful organization that sheds light on how human beings conceptualize the tabernacle in

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[74] χρηματίζω, BDAG, 1089; χρηματίζω, *NIDNTTE*, 4:683–85. See also Johnson, *Hebrews*, 201.

[75] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 219–20. As Attridge points out, Josephus and Philo also make use of this phrase to emphasize divine utterances (Josephus, *Ant*. 5:42; Philo, *Mos*. 2:238). Hans-Friedrich Weiss uses the term, "passivum divinum" (divine passive) and says, "Gott selbst hat dem Mose diese Weisung erteilt" (God himself gave Moses this instruction) (Weiss, *Der Brief an die Hebräer*, 437). Due to its widespread use, the fact that Philo also used the expression when quoting the same Exodus passages cannot support the Philonic influence on the book of Hebrews. See Williamson, *Philo and the Epistle to the Hebrews*, 504–18. Cf. Philo, *Alleg. Interp*. 3:102.

[76] For example, Koester, *Hebrews*, 383: ". . . by contrasting these earthly institutions with their heavenly counterparts . . ."; Peterson, *Hebrews*, 192: "Hebrews contrasts . . . an earthly tabernacle with the historic accomplishment of Jesus . . . The distinction between the earthly and the heavenly . . ."; Attridge, *Hebrews*, 219: ". . . the contrast between ideal model and sensible copy . . ."

heaven. It is a resource for forming a Secondspace view of the heavenly tabernacle entered by Jesus and needing to be entered by the readers of Hebrews.

Finally, the author of Hebrews recognizes that the earthly and heavenly tabernacles share the same divine origin. The modes of construction differ, but it is undeniable that the same God built both, demonstrating the author's respect for both the earthly and heavenly tabernacles. The author depicts the uniqueness of the earthly tabernacle's construction mode as a human builder, Moses. Given that Moses' status as a revered Old Testament figure, referring to the earthly tabernacle as the one Moses built is unlikely to be derogatory. Moreover, the phrase "not made with human hands" serves to distinguish the heavenly tabernacle from the earthly one without any pejorative connotations for the latter. The author's conceptual expressions of both tabernacles, "true" and "copy and shadow," also do not establish a worse-better relationship, but rather emphasize the author's respect for both. As a result, each tabernacle serves a purifying purpose in God's plan, pointing to the same divine reality and equally valuable identities without casting one as inferior to the other.

Descriptions of the Two Tabernacles

To determine the similarities and differences between the two tabernacles, we must first determine what each was like and what it was for. The similarities and differences that the author of Hebrews identified will be confirmed by investigating their visibility and accessibility, the performances that took place, and their inner structures. The relationship between the two tabernacles will be further clarified by analyzing it in terms of purity and spatiality, arguing that the author never denigrates the earthly tabernacle.

Visibility and Accessibility of the Tabernacles

The earthly and heavenly tabernacles have one significant similarity. Regardless of the book's historical context, such as date and location, the author and first readers of Hebrews were unable to physically see or enter both tabernacles. At the same time, the reasons for each of them being invisible and inaccessible were different. Thus, examining the similarities and differences in their visibility and accessibility will be beneficial in determining their relationship, as intended by the author.

The Earthly Tabernacle: Now Invisible, but Formerly Existed Reality

Debates on the Date of Hebrews

The majority of scholars concur that there is no consensus regarding the exact date Hebrews was written.[77] The most important question regarding the date of Hebrews is whether it was written before or after the destruction of the Jerusalem temple in 70 CE. Most Hebrews scholars and commentators advocate for a pre-70 date due to various factors. These include the author's utilization of the present tense when discussing the practices of the old cultus (e.g., Heb 7:27–28; 8:3–5; 9:6–7), the presence of an erotema, specifically the question "Otherwise, would they not have stopped being offered?" in 10:2, and the absence of any mention of the destruction of the Jerusalem temple throughout the entire book.[78]

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[77] For various options of the date of Hebrews, see McCullough, "Some Recent Developments," 152; and McCullough, "Hebrews (2)," 117–19.

[78] For example, see Allen, *Hebrews*, 74–78; Bruce, *Hebrews*, 20–22; Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 34–41; deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 20–21; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 29–33; Hagner, "Hebrews: A Book for Today," 7–8; Harris, *Hebrews*, 4–5; Johnson, *Hebrews*, 38–40; Lane, *Hebrews*, 1:lxii–lxvi; Lindars, *Theology of the Letter to the Hebrews*, 19–21; Peterson, *Hebrews*, 21–22; and Schreiner, *Hebrews*, 5–6. However, particulars vary between them.

In contrast, each of these can also be used for the post-70 date of Hebrews, or at the very least, they can be easily refuted. Stanley E. Porter, for instance, disputes the notion of restricting the present tense in Greek to refer to the present time.[79] Moreover, there are several examples of Josephus who used the present tense when referring to the sacrificial cult in the Jerusalem temple in 93–94 CE and Clement of Rome who mentioned the ritual of the temple in the present tense in 95–97 CE, definitely after the destruction of the Jerusalem temple.[80] Some scholars argue that the author does not mention the Jerusalem temple (ναός), which was a common term used to indicate temples during the Hebrews period along with the term ἱερόν ("sanctuary"), but instead refers to the earthly tabernacle (σκηνή) because the temple had already been destroyed.[81] Due to the lack of clear evidence, however, it is difficult to specify the precise date when the book of Hebrews was written, either before or after 70 CE, and only the range of 49–96 CE is indisputable.[82]

Not the Temple but the Tabernacle

As Koester points out, Hebrews's silence on the Jerusalem temple could be "suitable either before or after the temple's destruction" in 70 CE because:

> before 70, the author might have focused on the Tabernacle because the Mosaic statutes concerning the Tabernacle constituted the divinely revealed basis for the sanctuary and the priestly practices of subsequent generations. Descriptions of the Tabernacle were available through the Jewish Law, even to those who lived outside of Palestine and who had never seen the Temple. Yet these same factors also obtained after A.D. 70. Although the Temple was destroyed, it was not

[79] Porter, *Verbal Aspect*, 188–208.

[80] Josephus, *Ant*. 4:102–150, 224–257; 1 Clem. 41.

[81] For example, see Eisenbaum, *Jewish Heroes of Christian History*, 7; Kistemaker, *Hebrews*, 14–16; Koester, *Hebrews*, 375.

[82] Attridge and Koester, for example, offer broad date ranges as 60–100 and 60–90 CE, respectively, without narrowing down the date. See Attridge, *Hebrews*, 6–9; and Koester, *Hebrews*, 50–54. See also Eisenbaum, "Locating Hebrews," 226–31.

> immediately clear that it would not be rebuilt, and later rabbinic sources include rulings concerning sacrifices. Accordingly, Hebrews' interest in the Law's enduring provisions for a sanctuary could have been designed to move Christians away from hope for a restoration of the old order and toward the new life in Christ.[83]

Whether we assume the book was written before or after 70, the same question arises as to why the author chose to focus on the *tabernacle*. Why did he not mention the temple in Jerusalem if it still existed? What prompted the author to choose the tabernacle if the temple had been destroyed and neither the temple nor the tabernacle existed? In this regard, it is necessary to explain why the author chose the tabernacle as the site of the Levitical sacrificial system.

According to Steve Motyer, the author of Hebrews used strategically indirect words and expressions "to avoid spelling out directly the implications of his Christology, and instead to conduct the argument wholly in *scriptural* terms, using language which distances his argument from the precise situation he addresses, while making his meaning clear for all who follow his presentation carefully."[84] As a result, his use of the tabernacle rather than the temple enables both his first readers and us to avoid pointless disputes regarding the old cultus, its locations, and any other relevant disputes.[85] It appears to be

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[83] Koester, *Hebrews*, 52–53.

[84] Motyer, "Temple in Hebrews," 181–82 (emphasis original). He asks the question, "What would have been the rhetorical impact if Hebrews had actually employed direct references to the Temple and Temple practices in the places where we can see clear allusions hidden under indirect language?" (179). He answers as follows:

> If we rewrote these passages in the ways suggested, the effect would be clear. Hebrews would mount a massive ideological assault on the Jerusalem Temple and cultus. It would become a *fierce* attack, going beyond anything else in the New Testament, severing the link between the heavenly and earthly temples, denying the effectiveness and even the divine origin of the earthly cult, and replacing it wholesale with the worship of Jesus who alone atones for sin and gives access to God (180, emphasis original).

[85] The so called "Exodus motif" of Hebrews deserves consideration as an additional reason why Hebrews mentions the Mosaic tabernacle instead of the Davidic or Herodian temples. For details on the reading of Hebrews in this way, see Johnsson, "Pilgrimage Motif"; Käsemann, *Wandering People of God*; and Thiessen, "Hebrews and the End of the Exodus."

based on the assumption that the author and readers of Hebrews were involved in disputes over temple rituals. However, there is no evidence of a dispute over the rituals performed in the Jerusalem temple, nor of the author's attempt to avoid potential disputes in the Hebrews text.

While it is important to speculate on the author's choice of using the term σκηνή instead of ναός, the significance lies in its implication. Most importantly, the fact that the earthly tabernacle is presented as the place of the Levitical cultus in Hebrews allows us in the twenty-first century to view the tabernacle in the same way that the first readers did in the first century. That is because the tabernacle built by Moses and used in the wilderness after the Exodus until the entrance to Canaan is identically invisible to readers of all ages. It allows us to designate the earthly tabernacle as Secondspace, establishing a spatial relationship with Firstspace, the heavenly tabernacle.

The Heavenly Tabernacle: Now Invisible, but Existing Reality

The characteristics of the heavenly tabernacle have long been debated. Lincoln Hurst recognized two major approaches, which are as follows:

(a) A *metaphor* for something else
    (1) the whole cosmos
    (2) heaven
    (3) the eucharistic body of Christ
    (4) the glorified body of Christ
    (5) the church as the body of Christ
    (6) an event or events, such as the death of Christ on earth and his ministry in heaven
(b) There is in heaven *an actual tent*
    (1) interpret the tent Platonically
    (2) claim that the heavenly tent is the eschatological sanctuary of Jewish apocalyptic[86]

[86] Hurst, *Hebrews*, 24–25. Cf. Jamieson, "When and Where Did Jesus Offer Himself?" esp. 342–54.

He distinguished between a metaphorical heavenly tabernacle and a literal tent that exists in heaven. Although some scholars are critical of this taxonomy,[87] it appears to have served as the foundation for a more comprehensive examination of the heavenly tabernacle in Hebrews. Without mentioning whether the physical and spatial reality of the tabernacle is in heaven or not, George MacRae distinguishes between the existence of a "complete temple in heaven" and the conception of a "temple-structured universe"—the former being identical to Jewish apocalyptic literature and the latter to Hellenistic Judaism—and argues that Hebrews contains both perspectives.[88]

Numerous scholars adhered to this distinction until Nicholas J. Moore refused to draw a clear line between the two and instead proposed a spectrum. In a very recent article published in 2023, he refuses to separate "an apocalyptic notion of a temple structure within heaven from a Hellenistic idea that the universe is a temple" and proposes a new taxonomy that consists of four points: (1) A temple-plan in heaven; (2) A temple in heaven; (3) Temple as heaven; and (4) Temple as cosmos.[89] Whether or not one agrees with Moore's taxonomy, it is important to note that it is difficult to refute the possibility that the author of Hebrews perceived the tabernacle in heaven because he always provides explanations for the heavenly tabernacle along with the earthly one, particularly in chs. 8–9.[90] Nonetheless, the mainstream of Hebrews scholarship has favored either Platonism or Jewish apocalyptic eschatology.

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[87] Nicholas J. Moore, for instance, deemed his distinction to be "unhelpful and anachronistic" (Moore, "True Tabernacle," 58). See also Schenck, "Archaeology of Hebrews' Tabernacle Imagery," 238–39.

[88] MacRae, "Heavenly Temple and Eschatology," esp. 177.

[89] Moore, "Heaven and Temple," esp. 3.

[90] Only a few scholars contend that the tabernacle imagery is metaphorical. E.g., Schenck, "Archaeology of Hebrews' Tabernacle Imagery."

On the other hand, recent scholarship, most notably by Hurst and Church, has shifted to interpret the heavenly sanctuary as an eschatological reality—a future dwelling where God will live with his people.[91] Hurst contends that Hebrews portrays the "true tabernacle" as an eschatological reality inaugurated by Jesus' ministry and still to be realized, emphasizing a "linear apocalyptic" approach in which events unfold progressively in a temporal sequence.[92] According to Hurst, the heavenly tabernacle is more than just an eternal, spatial realm; it is a future dwelling place for God's people, established by Jesus as the first to enter.[93] Church expands on Hurst's ideas, interpreting the "true tabernacle" in Hebrews as a metaphor for God's eschatological dwelling with his people rather than as a structure in heaven or on earth.[94] He proposes that the community of believers experiences this future reality proleptically, temporarily embodying this tabernacle until God ultimately dwells with them.[95] This viewpoint interprets the heavenly tabernacle in Hebrews not as a static space but as a symbol of future fulfillment.

Koester has issued a challenge, saying, "The problem is that Hebrews operates with both categories, yet it fits neatly into neither category."[96] Although the heavenly tabernacle may have multiple dimensions of understanding, he emphasizes its spatial nature. He writes, "The opposite of 'true' can be 'false,' but in Hebrews the earthly

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[91] Moore, "True Tabernacle."

[92] Hurst, *Hebrews*, 10–11.

[93] Hurst, *Hebrews*, 38–42.

[94] Church, *Hebrews and the Temple*, 435. See Moore, "True Tabernacle," 49–51. Church claims, "The author understood the tent pitched by the Lord to be the eschatological dwelling place of God with his people." He draws parallels with Old Testament imagery, such as Balaam's oracle describing Israel's camp in Num 24, to reinforce the idea that Hebrews envisions God's presence with his people as a mobile, dynamic reality rather than a fixed, heavenly sanctuary (Church, "True Tent").

[95] Church, *Hebrews and the Temple*, 88, 431–32.

[96] Koester, *Hebrews*, 98, see also 59–63.

sanctuary is not a false sanctuary, since God himself commanded that it be built (Heb 8:5).”[97] According to Scott D. Mackie, the concept of accessing the heavenly tabernacle in Hebrews is more than just symbolic; it represents the actual participation of believers in Jesus’ priestly ministry.[98] He argues that this “heavenly sanctuary mysticism” in Hebrews invites believers to “draw near,” not only in an abstract sense but also as a transformational experience in which the community becomes part of God’s family through a profound encounter with God in the heavenly sanctuary.[99] This mystical experience affirms believers’ status as members of God’s household. Moore recently criticized Hurst and Church for proposing a future-oriented, symbolic understanding of the heavenly sanctuary, as mentioned above.[100] He calls for an integrated approach that incorporates both spatial and eschatological dimensions in order to properly comprehend the theological complexity of the heavenly tabernacle in Hebrews.[101] Thus, regardless of its various qualities, the spatiality of the heavenly tabernacle cannot be disregarded, especially when compared to the earthly tabernacle in Hebrews.

The first appearance of the word “tabernacle” (σκηνή) in Hebrews is in Heb 8:2, and it apparently indicates the one in heaven, which is distinguished from the earthly one mentioned in 8:5, the second appearance of σκηνή. The author identifies the heavenly tabernacle as the place where the high priest Jesus serves and which the Lord set up (8:2) so as to make sure that it is an existing place in reality. The earthly tabernacle being compared is a historical reality, and the sacrificial ritual is what the Levitical high priests

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[97] Koester, *Hebrews*, 376.
[98] Mackie, “Heavenly Sanctuary Mysticism,.”
[99] Mackie, “Heavenly Sanctuary Mysticism,” 88–90.
[100] Moore, “True Tabernacle,” 49–51.
[101] Moore, “True Tabernacle.”

performed historically in the past. As a result, it is reasonable to conclude that the heavenly tabernacle exists and that Jesus literally served there, as described in Hebrews. As such, the author's argument rests on the existence of the tabernacle in heaven.[102] Even though the earthly tabernacle, which existed in the past but no longer does, is unquestionably real, it is regarded as a "copy and shadow" (8:5; cf. 9:24). Accordingly, the heavenly tabernacle, which is the true counterpart of the earthly one, can be considered the tangible substance itself and not merely an abstract metaphor. Therefore, one can conclude that the author is arguing that there is an actual tabernacle in heaven, regardless of what it symbolically denotes.[103]

Visibility and Accessibility: Implications

As a matter of fact, both the heavenly and earthly tabernacles were invisible at the moment of the author's authoring and the readers' reading. Regardless of the dating of Hebrews, as stated above, it is undeniable that the Mosaic tabernacle must have been invisible at the time of Hebrews's authoring and first reading. The Mosaic tabernacle existed in reality so long ago that it was certainly invisible in the first century. Likewise, the heavenly tabernacle is invisible to everyone, but it evidently exists in some sense as

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[102] Attridge lists several examples and objects, saying, "In the reality of which the Yom Kippur ritual is a 'shadow,' the true High Priest also performs his atoning ritual by passing through a tabernacle, but in this case it is the 'true' tent that God has pitched (8:2)" (Attridge, *Hebrews*, 246). In addition, Cynthia Long Westfall goes deeper regarding the actual locus of earth and heaven, employing a spatial theory. See Westfall, "Space and Atonement."

[103] The original context of Exod 25:40 does not necessarily "reflect belief in a heavenly temple" because the book of Exodus does not specify what Moses saw on the mountain. According to Exod 25, Moses was instructed to construct the earthly tabernacle and all its furnishings according to the pattern. As Moore insists, "what matters is that *by the Second Temple period*, belief in a heavenly temple was widespread," and it is highly probable that the author and readers of Hebrews held the same belief (Moore, "True Tabernacle," 56, emphasis original). However, the Hebrews author's quotation of Exod 25:40 in Heb 8:5 "reinforce[s] the theological thought that there is a heavenly tabernacle" (Guthrie, "Hebrews," 969–70). Cf. Pr Azar 1:31, 34; *b. Ḥag*. 12b; 1 En. 14:8–24; 71:5, 8.

the author calls it the "true tabernacle" (Heb 8:2).[104] The earthly tabernacle was once visible but is now invisible, whereas the heavenly tabernacle has never been visible but will be in the future. However, these two tabernacles share both invisibility and reality, allowing for comparison, as does Hebrews. The heavenly and earthly tabernacles appear together in Heb 8:5 for these reasons.

Through the relationship between the two tabernacles, it is revealed that the heavenly tabernacle is the original. One should not be confused as to which tabernacle is the authentic one. The heavenly tabernacle is the substantial one, and the earthly tent that Moses built was a shadow. If the shadowy tabernacle were actual and visible, the actual locus could not be a metaphor, implying that both tabernacles are real and substantial according to the description in Hebrews. However, it is worth noting that they are both currently invisible, with one of them becoming visible in the future. The two tabernacles' shared invisibility connects believers to the present and future fulfillment gained by the heavenly tabernacle. Although the author does not explicitly mention the possibility of seeing the heavenly tabernacle, his use of "draw near" (7:19; 10:22) and the phrase "to come" (2:5; 7:11; 13:14) allude to its future visibility. Therefore, the author considers the earthly tabernacle, which was once visible to the ancestors, to be valued as a representation of the heavenly one (8:5).

It is easy to assume that because both the earthly and heavenly tabernacles are invisible, they are also inaccessible. It is correct in the case of the earthly tabernacle because it once existed and was accessible, but it no longer exists. As noted above,

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[104] "Closely related to the 'narratively real' space of the tabernacle but *clearly distinguished from* it is what Hebrews regards as the 'true' tabernacle," says Ellen Bradshaw Aitken, emphasizing the reality of the heavenly tabernacle (Aitken, "The Body of Jesus," 198, emphasis added). For more information on the meaning of the *true* tabernacle in respect to the two tabernacles, see the previous section.

however, Hebrews depicts the heavenly tabernacle as accessible to believers in a real, transformative way through Jesus' priestly work. This access is not metaphorical, as some claim;[105] rather, it entails a form of mystical participation in the heavenly realm. This unique access invites believers to "draw near" (Heb 4:14–16; 10:19–23), allowing them to enter the heavenly tabernacle even while on earth in a proleptic, eschatological sense. Such access is made possible by Jesus' atonement, which provides believers with a glimpse of the divine presence that will be reserved for the eschatological future. Thus, the heavenly tabernacle, while currently invisible, becomes proleptically accessible, unlike the earthly one.[106]

Both the earthly and heavenly tabernacles are, by nature, hidden from everyday perception, but they serve distinct theological functions. While the earthly tabernacle is currently inaccessible, the heavenly one is proleptically accessible and will eventually be physically accessible to the faithful. This distinction, however, does not imply a negative attitude toward the earthly tabernacle. Instead, Hebrews values its significance in salvation history, presenting it as a divinely patterned after the heavenly tabernacle. As the sacred prototype of God's presence, the earthly tabernacle retains its honored status as the first, God-ordained manifestation of his presence among his people, even though it is no longer accessible.

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[105] E.g., Attridge, *Hebrews*, 204, 288–89; deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 70; Isaacs, *Sacred Space*, 127–59; Koester, "God's Purpose and Christ's Saving Work"; Scholer, *Proleptic Priests*, 91–149

[106] Calaway explains that Hebrews frequently uses terms such as "enter" (εἰσέρχομαι) and "draw near" (προσέρχομαι / ἐγγίζομεν) as cultic language to describe access to the heavenly sanctuary and God's Sabbath rest. These terms, which were typically applied to priests, are now extended to believers, who, like him, can approach God in the heavenly sanctuary. The author of Hebrews redefines Sabbath rest as an eternal, heavenly reality rather than just a weekly ritual. Through this, believers imitate God by resting and Jesus by entering beyond the curtain into God's presence, making Sabbath an entrance into heavenly realities, including the heavenly tabernacle (Calaway, *Sabbath and the Sanctuary*, 80).

Inner Structures of the Tabernacles

Hebrews 9:1–5 describes the inner structure of Moses' earthly tabernacle. However, he abruptly stops explaining it, saying, "We cannot discuss these things *in detail now*" in verse 5b. We need to look into why he describes the inside of the earthly tabernacle in such detail and why the heavenly tabernacle is not described at all. These similarities and differences will reveal the author's perspective on the earthly tabernacle in comparison to the heavenly one.

Inner Structure of the Earthly Tabernacle in Such Detail

Brief Literary Context

In Heb 9:1–14, the high priesthood of Jesus, which was the main point of 8:1 and its accompanying subunit 8:1–13, is developed "in the light of the review of the atonement provisions of the old covenant."[107] Following a detailed depiction of the inside of the earthly tabernacle (9:2–5), its worship provisions (9:6–7), and its significance (9:8–10), the efficacy of Jesus' high priesthood is explained (9:11–14) in particular.

The author introduces a new paragraph in Heb 9:1 with the conjunctional clause μὲν οὖν ("now"), which "marks a resumption of the theme of the old covenant" from 8:7–13 (LN 91.6–7).[108] Given that the author stated in the preceding paragraph, 8:7–13,

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[107] Lane, *Hebrews*, 2:234. Lane only mentions Heb 9:1–10 because he considers 9:11–14 to be a subsection of 9:11–28, not 9:1–14. The difference in categorization of sections of Hebrews, however, has no bearing on the relationship between the old and new cultuses, as well as both tabernacles. Cf. Westfall, *Discourse Analysis*, 196–97, 197n20. Westfall points out that the division of this section is contentious.

[108] Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 420. Most scholars acknowledge the resumptive transition here at 9:1 with μὲν οὖν, albeit under different names, such as "resumptive force" (Allen, *Hebrews*, 458); "common resumptive 'now' (οὖν)" (Attridge, *Hebrews*, 231). Lane and Peterson call it "transitional participle" (Lane, *Hebrews*, 2:217). and "transitional conjunction" (Peterson, *Hebrews*, 200). But Louw and Nida put it as the "markers of considerable emphasis" (Louw and Nida, *Greek–English Lexicon*, 1:811). As Westfall adds, the "emphasis is greater if the disputed καί is part of the text" (Westfall, *Discourse Analysis*, 197n22). See also the following paragraph, which discusses the textual variants of the conjunction καί in 9:1.

that the old covenant is disappearing and the new is coming, his use of this resumptive conjunction indicates that he wishes to add something to what he just mentioned, either the old covenant or the new, or both. Then he makes reference to the two components that the "first covenant" (ἡ πρώτη) included,[109] "regulations for worship" and "an earthly sanctuary," which are listed in reverse order: the arrangement of the tabernacle in 9:2–5 and the regulations for sacrificial worship in 9:6–7, followed by an explanation of the significance of both in 9:8–10. Furthermore, the emphatic μὲν οὖν (there on the one hand) can be linked with the μέν . . . δέ (on the one hand … on the other hand) construction, which signals the correlation between 9:1 and 9:11.[110]

Such Detailed Descriptions

In Heb 9:1, there is a textual variation unit. Did the author of Hebrews use an additional conjunction καί before mentioning the first covenant or not? Due to the difficulty in determining whether it was originally included or omitted, both NA28 and UBS5 placed it in brackets within the text, and the UBS committee rated the inclusion of καί "{C}," which denotes that "the Committee had difficulty in deciding which variant to place in the text."[111] Attridge insists that it is "probably an interpolation" because the inclusion of

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[109] Only "the first" (ἡ πρώτη) is mentioned in the Greek text, not "covenant." Nonetheless, it is clear that the author intended "the first covenant." Ellingworth proposes a stylistic explanation as well as the textual-external evidence. See Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 420–21. See also Attridge, *Hebrews*, 231; Koester, *Hebrews*, 393.

[110] Westfall, *Discourse Analysis*, 197. She chooses the δέ in verse 11 among those in 3, 6, 7, 11 based on the fact that "the entities associated with the μέν in 9:1 are the earthly tabernacle and the priestly service of the first covenant" and "the preceding co-text in 8:1–13 would constrain the reader's expectation that the correlation or contrast will be made with the *heavenly tabernacle* and Jesus' priestly ministry of the second covenant" in 9:11 (emphasis added). See Harris, *Hebrews*, 209; Lane, *Hebrews*, 2:229. Cf. Ellingworth argues against this simply because of the distance (Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 420).

[111] Aland et al., *The Greek New Testament: Apparatus*, 8–9. There are four levels of certainty: "The letter A indicates that the text is certain. The letter B indicates that the text is almost certain. The letter C, however, indicates that the Committee had difficulty in deciding which variant to place in the text. The letter D, which occurs only rarely, indicates that the Committee had great difficulty in arriving at a

καί may imply that "the *new* covenant has 'regulations for service' and a 'worldly sanctuary,'"[112] which he does not support. If the use of καί is the original reading, it implies that the new covenant is identical to the old one in that they both have tabernacles and worship regulations to be kept. Attridge objects to it because the new covenant should not include a sanctuary that is influenced by worldly elements, as indicated by the "pejorative" connotation of the adjective κοσμικός.[113] However, it should be noted that κοσμικός as a term itself does not necessarily carry a negative nuance in Hebrews, particularly since the Platonic view is refuted.

Moreover, καί does not have to encompass the adjective, but rather only two nouns, "regulations" and "sanctuary," suggesting that both old and new covenants have them. Thus, as Ellingworth avers, the inclusion does not necessarily weaken or alter the author's intention.[114] Rather, as already stated, the author's use of the word καί indicates his intention to compare the two covenants at the same level, with a particular focus on the tabernacles. As such, 9:2 first introduces the earthly tabernacle through 9:5, followed by the regulation, which sheds light on the tabernacle's function and regulations. At the end of the paragraph (9:10), the author turns spontaneously to the new covenant as the successor of the old covenant.

"An earthly sanctuary" (ἅγιον κοσμικόν, 9:1) is mentioned in 9:2–5. Because the author uses the term σκηνή ("tabernacle") instead of ἅγιος ("sanctuary") in 9:2, it may

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decision."

[112] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 230n1 (emphasis original). He claims that the new covenant did not have both "regulations for worship" and "an earthly sanctuary" (230–32). See also Lane, *Hebrews*, 2:214; Cf. Zuntz, *Text of the Epistles*, 209–14.

[113] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 231–32.

[114] Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 420. He concurs that the Hebrews author contrasts the old and new covenants, as the majority of commentators. Hebrews 3:1–6 is one instance of how the author "proceed[s] from comparison to contrast." However, in 3:1–6, Jesus and Moses are not being contrasted as being in opposition to one another. See Westfall, "Moses and Hebrews 3.1–6."

appear that the author is referring to different objects or simply the "sanctuary" as a part of the whole "tabernacle." However, as Norman H. Young points out, Hebrews uses the word ἅγιος in the neuter singular with an article in 9:1 to refer to the entire tabernacle.[115] As a result, Heb 9:2 begins mentioning the earthly tabernacle as one of two components of the first covenant mentioned in 9:1.[116]

The author describes the inner structure of the tabernacle in detail in 9:2–5a, but he quickly concludes it and makes a transition to his next point, the introduction of the first covenant's regulations for worship (9:6–7), after saying, "But we cannot discuss these things *in detail now*" (9:5b). According to Koester, the author's brief explanations of the tabernacle "alludes to his familiarity with the subject matter [the earthly tabernacle]."[117] We may assume that the author's primary focus is on what will be followed rather than what is being mentioned, but his description from verse 2 onwards can be considered meticulous enough. If the author had a negative opinion about the earthly tabernacle, he would not want to demonstrate his familiarity with such a detailed depiction of something that is not the main point. Even if he had to provide some detailed explanations of the worship regulations performed in the earthly tabernacle, he has no reason to mention the inner structure of what he wishes to criticize.

Details of the Heavenly Tabernacle

Whereas the inside of the earthly tabernacle is described in detail in 9:1–5, the author

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[115] Young, "The Gospel according to Hebrews 9," esp. 198–99. He counters Rudolf Bultmann's negative view of Hebrews by focusing on the meaning of τὰ ἅγια in Heb 9. Although I disagree with one of his conclusions, that Heb 9:1–10 asserts "the impotence of the old Levitical system" (209), his analysis and distinction of Hebrews' usages of the word ἅγιος are convincing.

[116] See Koester, *Hebrews*, 400.

[117] Koester, *Hebrews*, 404.

makes no mention of the inner structure of the heavenly tabernacle. Regardless of whether the author respects or disrespects the earthly tabernacle, no one would deny that he holds high regard for the heavenly one, where Jesus' once-for-all sacrifice is performed. Given this, it is surprising that there is no mention of the inner structure of the heavenly tabernacle in Hebrews. In fact, the author had already alluded to the interior of the heavenly tabernacle, albeit indirectly. As previously discussed, God showed Moses the heavenly tabernacle on the mountain and then instructed him to build the earthly one (8:5).

When the Hebrews author refers to the establishment of the earthly tabernacle on the basis of the heavenly one in 8:5, he quotes Exod 25:40 from the LXX. There is a noun πάντα ("everything") in this verse, but the LXX does not have it.[118] Some scholars insist that this word was present in the LXX text held by the author of Hebrews and his contemporaries at that time. Friedrich Schröger, for instance, argues for the LXX's general tendency to add πάντα to the Hebrew Masoretic Text (hereafter MT).[119] On the other hand, there are also possibilities that the author added it as objective "to indicate a summary of Ex. 25."[120] No matter who added πάντα, the addition "emphasize[s] the total

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[118] Due to the fact that Philo also does the same thing, several scholars observe a connection or at least a resemblance between Hebrews and Philo. Kenneth J. Thomas, however, rejects any parallels between Hebrews and Philo on this occasion. He says, "Philo's text is otherwise quite different and appears to be a combination of xxv. 8 and 40 (LXX) . . . Philo used the citation to demonstrate the superiority of Moses to Bezalel, whereas in Hebrews it is used to demonstrate the superiority of Christ to Moses" (Thomas, "The Old Testament Citations," 309). He claims that the Hebrews author cited Exod 25:40 in Heb 8:5 to emphasize Christ's superiority over Moses, with which I disagree. Nonetheless, he merits mention because he limits Philo's potential influence on the possibility that "the additional πάντα was suggested to the author of Hebrews from his knowledge of Philo's text and that he used it to fit *his own interpretation of the quotation*" at most (309, emphasis added).

[119] Schröger, *Der Verfasser des Hebräerbriefes*, 159–60. Williamson suggests that the addition of πάντα "may have stood in the LXX version used at that time at Alexandria" (Williamson, *Philo and the Epistle to the Hebrews*, 558).

[120] Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 407. Mary Rose D'Angelo says, "the author has added 'all' (πάντα) . . . [T]he formula is a summary of the commands given to Moses in Ex. 25–31 as they are understood within the context of a much larger development arising from the (originally naive) belief that God's heavenly

dependence of the copy [the earthly tabernacle] on its heavenly model."[121] The author is depending on that accuracy to describe the heavenly tabernacle. In other words, the earthly tabernacle is a sufficiently reflective copy of the heavenly one.

The book of Exodus does not specify what Moses saw on the mountain; instead, God simply states that he revealed "the pattern . . . on the mountain" (Exod 25:40). According to Exod 25, Moses was given the task of building the earthly tabernacle and arranging all of its furnishings according to the pattern that God had shown him. The author of Hebrews cites the Exodus passage after commenting on what God told Moses before he constructed the earthly tabernacle, which was a copy and shadow of the heavenly one. The author demonstrates his belief in the heavenly tabernacle as a model for the earthly one. According to Calaway, the "pattern" that God showed Moses reflects not only an earthly model, but also the fundamental structure of the eternal heavenly tabernacle. He contends that this pattern serves as more than a blueprint, representing the eternal and sacred structure that already exists in heaven.[122] In the eyes of Hebrews, the basis of the conceptual and spatial organization of the "earthly tabernacle" exists in reality as a "heavenly tabernacle."[123]

The author seems to believe that Moses completed his mission to build the earthly tabernacle in accordance with what he saw, the heavenly tabernacle. He had to "make *everything*," including the *inner structure*, in obedience to God's command (8:5). The

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dwelling is also a temple." See D'Angelo, *Moses in the Letter to the Hebrews*, 205–22, esp. 205 and 209–10.

[121] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 220. D'Angelo further states, "all the features of the cult become clues to the revelation of heavenly realities" (D'Angelo, *Moses in the Letter to the Hebrews*, 214).

[122] Calaway, *Sabbath and the Sanctuary*, 104–9.

[123] Calaway explains that when the author of Hebrews mentions this pattern, he intends to help readers understand the earthly tabernacle as more than just a shadow of the heavenly one. Instead, it encourages them to view it as an "enduring heavenly structure" (Calaway, *Sabbath and the Sanctuary*, 183–84).

interior of the heavenly tabernacle did not need to be described because the earthly tabernacle, which Moses had already successfully copied, is explained. Accordingly, while the author does not describe how it looked inside, it is reasonable to assume that the earthly tabernacle's inner structure must adequately reflect the genuine heavenly one. Therefore, it is unlikely that the author denigrates the earthly tabernacle in any way. If the earthly tabernacle is regarded negatively, the heavenly one that was successfully reflected will be similarly denigrated.

Blood-Offering Places

The book of Hebrews describes both the earthly and heavenly tabernacles as places where blood was offered as a purification sacrifice. While the blood is the same type of offering, the difference is whose blood was offered. Although the details of sacrificial blood as a ritual element will be discussed in a later chapter of this study, this section will look at how the author describes the two tabernacles as blood-offering places. Its similarities and differences will help us understand the author's perceived relationship between the two tabernacles, with a focus on his assessment of the earthly tabernacle.

Worship Regulations in the Tabernacle

As discussed above, the author describes the inside of the earthly tabernacle in detail in Heb 9:1–5a, demonstrating his regard for it as a precise representation of the heavenly tabernacle. Nonetheless, the description of its interior was not his main point. As Koester puts it, "In 9:5b, what is the most important for his argument is not the sanctuary [itself],

but the ministry that takes place within it."[124] The adjective νῦν ("now") "implies 'at the stage in the argument,' though in fact the author does not return to this point later." Rather than returning to this point later, he is employing a "conventional way of cutting short a discussion" on the inner structure of the earthly tabernacle.[125]

The author brings up the earthly tabernacle to emphasize the worship regulations that had to be followed in it. As Westfall clarifies, "lest the readers should be misled by this extensive expansion on the furnishings, the author adds an elaboration of corrective clarification: it is not the time to talk about this in detail. This clarification has the effect of *placing additional focus on what immediately follows as being more to the point* than the details about the furnishings."[126] Thus, the blood must be emphasized as a ritual element in this context, but not as an element in and of itself, but as one offered in a ritual place, the earthly tabernacle.

Blood Is Offered

The author accounts for the regulations for worship in the earthly tabernacle in Heb 9:6–7. He earlier distinguished Ἅγια Ἁγίων ("the Most Holy Place") from Ἅγια ("the Holy Place") in 9:2–5, and his attention now shifts to those who could enter each of the places. His distinction between the two places in the earthly tabernacle is now consistently expanded to include who entered each place, when they did so, and what they brought.[127] The priests entered the outer room (the Holy Place) on a regular basis, while the high

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[124] Koester, *Hebrews*, 404. He claims that this is a rhetorical technique called "*paraleipsis*." For similar expressions for purposes, see 2 Macc 2:20–32; Philo, *Heir* 221. Cf. Philo, *Moses* 2:71–108, esp. 97–100. It also represents a "slight shift" in focus to the remaining subsection, 9:6–10 (Westfall, *Discourse Analysis*, 197).

[125] Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 431.

[126] Westfall, *Discourse Analysis*, 198 (emphasis added). 69

[127] deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 298.

priest entered the inner room (the Most Holy Place) once a year with blood.

The introductory phrase in 9:6, τοῦτων δὲ οὕτως κατεσκευασμένων ("When everything had been arranged like this"), clarifies that the author now turns to direct attention to the rituals taking place in the earthly tabernacle with the furnishings, whose arrangements were previously described in 9:2–5.[128] In particular, the author distinguishes between the outer and the inner rooms and briefly explains how the Levitical priestly and high priestly ministries were carried out. Despite the fact that there were several ritual procedures in the outer room,[129] he quickly concludes the description with just the regular entrance of the priests (9:6). The focal point appears in the following verse (9:7), which is the high priest's entrance into the inner room with blood.[130]

The blood, which appears for the first time in a cultic context in the entire book, serves as a means of sin purification. The author notes that the high priest "offered" (προσφέρω) the blood as the main function of the inner room of the earthly tabernacle.[131] Lane points out the significance of the author's use of προσφέρω as follows:

> The singular use of the verb προσφέρειν, "to offer," in reference to the application of blood in the Most Holy Place is without parallel in the biblical cultic material. The translators of the LXX used the verbs ῥαίνειν, "to sprinkle," and ἐπιτιθέναι, "to apply," to denote the act of aspersion. The subsequent use of προσφέρειν in reference to Christ's death (9:14, 25, 28; 10:12) suggests that the writer has described the annual sprinkling of blood in the inner sanctuary in this way in order to prepare his readers to recognize the *typological parallel* between the high point of the atonement ritual under the old covenant and the self-offering of Christ on the cross. This inference finds support when the writer applies the Day of Atonement ritual to Christ in 9:25–28. *The annual entrance of the high priest for*

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[128] The conjunction δέ, in particular, is transitional rather than contrastive, thus signifying the author's shift in focus (Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 433).

[129] To illustrate, the designated priests entered the Holy Place every day, morning and evening, to trim the lights on the lampstand (Exod 27:20–21), burn incense on the incense-altar (Exod 30:7–8), and once a week set the new loaves on the table of showbread (Lev 24:8–9). See Bruce, *Hebrews*, 206.

[130] At first glance, 9:6 and 9:7 appear to contrast the outer and inner rooms, as well as the priests and high priests who serve there, but they should be read as a description of the earthly tabernacle in comparison to the heavenly tabernacle in 9:11–14. See Vanhoye, *Old Testament Priests*, 184–85.

[131] The blood represents the sacrifice, which will be discussed in greater detail in a later chapter.

> *blood aspersion in the Most Holy Place finds its eschatological fulfillment in Christ's death* (προσφορά, "offering"; 10:10, 14).[132]

The author clearly recognizes that the earthly tabernacle is where the purification ritual is carried out by offering blood. It becomes clearer in 9:11–12, where he refers to the earthly tabernacle again, this time in comparison to the heavenly one.

It is noteworthy that 9:11–12 consists of a single complex sentence arguing for the importance of the high priest Jesus, his new sacrifice, and the new tabernacle, namely, the new sacrificial system. The heavenly tabernacle is presented as the place where "eternal redemption" can be fulfilled through Jesus' blood (9:11–12), while there is no reason to interpret the earthly tabernacle as a negative or defective ritual place. The earthly tabernacle undoubtedly addressed purity issues in a manner that was entirely consistent with contemporary practices of purity with blood offerings. By faithfully carrying out its assigned functions, the earthly tabernacle demonstrated the need for the heavenly tabernacle, which will house Jesus' final perfection. As a result, the similarities between the two tabernacles as places of blood offerings for purificaiton, as well as the differences in the type of blood used, never demonstrate the author's pejorative view of the earthly tabernacle. Rather, he sees the earthly tabernacle as a hermeneutical foundation for the heavenly tabernacle.

Purity Obtained in the Tabernacles

Both the earthly and heavenly tabernacles were established to purify believers. Based on

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[132] Lane, *Hebrews*, 2:223 (emphasis added). See Attridge, *Hebrews*, 276–77; Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 444; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 505–6; Grässer, *Erich. An die Hebräer*, 2:224; Koester, *Hebrews*, 198–99; Lane, *Hebrews*, 2:223; Nelson, "He Offered Himself," 254; Westcott, *Hebrews*, 314; Richardson, *Pioneer and Perfector of Faith*, 41–42. See also Young, "The Gospel According to Hebrews 9," 207–10.

this, we may discover more extensive similarities and differences between them when we examine purity as a method of approaching God, as well as the type and extent to which it can be obtained in each of the tabernacles. Accordingly, whether the author had a negative opinion of the earthly tabernacle or not will be determined. Furthermore, we can draw a socio-religious boundary line that the author may have in mind based on the purity associated with each tabernacle.

Type and Extent of Purification

There are a few passages in Hebrews that appear to suggest that the earthly tabernacle is inferior as a ritual place. Particularly, Heb 9:8–10 seems to address the limitations of purification that can be obtained in the earthly tabernacle. Given the author's perception that the old covenant was not flawed in its divine origin and intended purifying function (9:18–22), he does not discuss the merits and demerits of their purifying function. There are discernible distinctions between the two tabernacles. Given the difference between the blood of Jesus and that of animals, as previously explained, it is reasonable to expect differences in the efficacy of each tabernacle's purification function. This is elucidated in 9:9, which states that the animal sacrifices offered in the earthly tabernacle "were not able to clear the conscience of the worshiper." Nonetheless, Hebrews never describes this impossibility as a flaw or defect. Instead, in accordance with the original divine plan, it was designated to be implemented "until the time of the new order" (9:10) which signifies Jesus' cultus with the heavenly tabernacle.[133] The continuity between the two

[133] Through the reference to the Holy Spirit as the subject, it sounds like a "special insight which was not previously available to readers of the OT but which has clarified the meaning and purpose of the cultic provisions for Israel in the light of the fulfillment in Christ. The Holy Spirit disclosed to the writer that, so long as the front compartment of the tabernacle enjoyed cultic status, access to the presence of God

tabernacles can be observed at this point. If the function of the earthly tabernacle was divinely designed and intended to remain active until the arrival of the new one, the emergence of the new tabernacle must be interpreted as a continuation and fulfillment of God's plan, with no disrespect to the old one.

The author is aware that the old covenant intentionally limited its efficacy in order to not fully "clear the conscience of the worshiper" (9:9), thereby giving way to the "new order" (9:10). The use of the term παραβολή ("illustration") implies the author's perception of the earthly tabernacle as the type (LN 58.63).[134] Because the type naturally anticipates its antitype, the idea of anticipation and preparation can be applied to the earthly tabernacle. The major motivator for expecting the heavenly tabernacle should be the "cleans[ing] of the conscience of the worshiper" (9:9), which seems to be a limitation of the earthly one. However, it is originally intended as a deliberate and temporary restriction, making the readers of Hebrews eager to be led to the heavenly tabernacle. The phrase "until the time of the new order" in 9:10b suggests that the limitation will be removed in the subsequent new covenant with the heavenly tabernacle. In other words, until the appearance and validation of the heavenly tabernacle, the earthly tabernacle carried out its designated function in adherence to the old covenant established by God.

Consequently, as regards apparent relative flaws or limitations of purity that can be obtained through purification rituals in the earthly tabernacle in comparison to the one in the heavenly tabernacle, they do not necessarily indicate a negative nuance of the

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was not yet available to the congregation" (Lane, *Hebrews*, 2:223). It becomes clearer in 9:9 when the author says, "This is an illustration (παραβολή) for the present time." See Koester, *Hebrews*, 398.

[134] The word παραβολή refers to a "symbol" (Louw and Nida, *Greek–English Lexicon*, 1:592). It functions as a "model or example pointing beyond itself for later realization" and thus can be interpreted as a "type" or a "figure" that points "to the present age" (παραβολή, BDAG, 759). See Koester, *Hebrews*, 398.

author because he was aware that everything about both tabernacles is perfect in the sense of God's original design. Besides, as noted in 9:13–14, the purification rituals performed in both tabernacles serve the same purpose of purification.

Access to God's Presence

The author compares the purification rituals of the earthly and heavenly tabernacles in Heb 9:13–14, emphasizing both the significance of the old cultus performed in the earthly tabernacle and the ultimate efficacy of Jesus' heavenly offering. It is emphasized that, whereas the earthly tabernacle provided an outward cleansing, Jesus' sacrifice in the heavenly tabernacle brings inward purification, cleansing the conscience and thus allowing believers direct access to God. They appear to be diametrically opposed to each other, particularly in terms of the contrast between outward and inward purifications and access to God, but the author makes no distinction between good and bad or better and worse relationships between the tabernacles or their related cultic aspects.

Outward and Inward Cleanliness

Both the earthly and heavenly purification rituals cleanse the worshipers (9:13–14). In the earthly tabernacle, the ritual use of animal blood acts as a purification medium for ceremonial defilement, allowing the priests and people to be outwardly clean. Similarly, the heavenly tabernacle involves purification, but Jesus' own blood is offered, resulting in a cleansing of our consciences that separates us from death-leading acts. This difference is frequently misinterpreted as a contrast between the heavenly tabernacle's superior

moral and complete purity and the earthly tabernacle's inferior ritual purity.[135] Moreover, only the heavenly tabernacle holds the purification ritual that frees believers "from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God" (9:14b), which is not explicitly stated in terms of the earthly tabernacle in 9:13. It appears that there is a significant difference between outward and inward purity.[136]

God's Presence

The earthly tabernacle, in particular, had a place where God's presence was present, though 9:13 does not mention it. In 9:8, the restriction on access to the inner room of the earthly tabernacle, the Most Holy Place, is discussed. Regardless of what "the first tabernacle" (τῆς πρώτης σκηνῆς) means, whether it refers to the inner room of the earthly tabernacle or the earthly tabernacle as a whole,[137] the author does not deny the presence of God in the Most Holy Place of the tabernacle.[138] God was present in the earthly tabernacle, and the high priest had access through ritual purification, but the qualification of perfection was not obtainable. Thus, as John W. Kleinig puts it, "both the 'first tent' of the tabernacle and the tabernacle as a whole were 'emblematic of the first covenant,' providing a way to God."[139]

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[135] Regarding the distinction between moral and ritual purity, see Klawans, *Impurity and Sin*, 21–42; Klawans, "Moral and Ritual Purity." See also the previous chapter. Cf. Koester, *Hebrews*, 119–20.

[136] E.g., Attridge, *Hebrews*, 250; Bruce, *Hebrews*, 214–16; Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 396; Guthrie, *Hebrews (TNTC)*, 190; Koester, *Hebrews*, 414–16; Lane, *Hebrews*, 2:239; Peterson, *Hebrews*, 209–10; Schreiner, *Hebrews*, 269. Most commentators emphasize the inferiority of outward purity as opposed to inner purity, ignoring the author's stance toward the old cultus.

[137] For more information on the dispute over this issue, see Attridge, *Hebrews*, 240; Bruce, *Hebrews*, 208–9; Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 381–82; Gelardini, "Inauguration of Yom Kippur," 239, 255–56; Koester, *Hebrews*, 405; Lane, *Hebrews*, 2:216.

[138] Ribbens, *Levitical Sacrifice and Heavenly Cult*, 164–65.

[139] Kleinig, *Hebrews*, 424. Cited in Peterson, *Hebrews*, 205. See Ribbens, *Levitical Sacrifice and Heavenly Cult*, 93. DeSilva understands this as a limitation that was "unsatisfactory" to the author of Hebrews, and even he evaluates that "the promise of God 'dwelling in the midst' of his people (cf. Ezek 37:27; Zech 2:11; 2 Cor 6:14—7:1) went *unfulfilled*" (deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 299, emphasis

A Fortiori "How Much More"

We need to pay more attention to how the author presents what the heavenly tabernacle cultus has to offer, as this is his main point. In a long single sentence in 9:13–14, the author employs the so-called *a fortiori* argument, which begins with the subjunctive "if" and then continues with the phrase "how much more, then." Because it "presupposes that the conditional clause be true," the author's statement about the efficacy of the old cultus is emphasized as true, placing a stronger emphasis on the subsequent statement about Jesus' sacrifice in the heavenly tabernacle.[140] Thus, while the author's argument centers on the heavenly tabernacle, the earthly tabernacle is not devalued, but rather highly respected as the foundation for the excellence of the heavenly tabernacle.

Concluding Remarks

This chapter used a combined methodological approach grounded in cultural anthropology, with a focus on purity concerns and spatial theory, to elucidate the interdependence and continuity of the earthly and heavenly tabernacles in Hebrews. These approaches, taken together, provide a comprehensive lens through which to understand the author of Hebrews's view of ritual places, demonstrating a continuity rather than a dichotomy between the old and new cultic systems.

The primary objective of this chapter was to investigate the spatial and purity

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added). I disagree with him, particularly on the unfulfilled promise of God.

[140] Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 453. The latter half of this sentence, 9:14, about Jesus' sacrifice "is best understood as introducing an exclamation, as in 2 Cor 7:11, rather than a rhetorical question or a mere statement" (456). See Allen, *Hebrews*, 473; Harris, *Hebrews*, 224, 226; Lane, *Hebrews*, 239.. Cf. Bruce, *Hebrews*, 216.

dimensions of the earthly and heavenly tabernacles in order to determine their relationship, with a focus on the author's attitude toward the earthly one. Purity is an important consideration in this framework. The earthly and heavenly tabernacles serve as parallel but complementary spaces for purification rituals, with each having a divinely mandated purpose. The earthly tabernacle, which provides a physical space for Levitical sacrificial rituals, is regarded as a "shadow and copy" of the heavenly tabernacle. However, this distinction does not imply inferiority; rather, the earthly tabernacle is intrinsically valuable within the divine schema because it serves as a foundation and typological foreshadowing of the ultimate heavenly purification made possible by Jesus' sacrifice. Through the lens of spatial theory, we understand that each space operates within a broader relational framework: the earthly tabernacle serves as a representation of the heavenly one, laying a hermeneutical foundation as the author relies on the earthly one to emphasize the value of the heavenly one. Conversely, the earthly tabernacle is existentially dependent on the heavenly one because Moses built it in accordance with the heavenly pattern. In light of this interdependence, it can be concluded that the author does not hold a pejorative view of the earthly tabernacle.

The spatial dynamics described by the author of Hebrews are typological. The earthly tabernacle prefigures the heavenly one, serving as a foundational type pointing forward to Jesus' sacrifice in the heavenly tabernacle. This typological relationship allows the author of Hebrews to uphold the ritual of the earthly tabernacle and its theological significance while simultaneously positioning it as a figure that finds its fulfillment in Jesus' high priesthood. This typological structure is more than just

allegorical;[141] it incorporates both historical continuity and theological escalation, connecting the old and new cultuses. The typology emphasizes that the old cultus, represented by the earthly tabernacle, is inextricably bound to and realized in the new, thereby connecting the historical and the eschatological.

From a cultural-anthropological perspective, the purity concern is woven into these spatial considerations and typological connections. Purity is an important boundary marker, distinguishing between sacred and profane spaces and highlighting the transformative effect of the heavenly tabernacle, where Jesus' eternal priesthood achieves unblemished purification. Hebrews underscores the purification accomplished in the heavenly tabernacle as a fulfillment of the earthly tabernacle's Levitical sacrificial system.

In conclusion, this chapter demonstrates that the author of Hebrews does not dismiss the earthly tabernacle, but rather incorporates it into a typological and spatial framework that affirms its value within the continuum of God's redemptive plan. Employing spatial theory and cultural anthropological purity concern, the chapter concludes that the earthly tabernacle functions as an anticipatory space, mirroring and preparing for the heavenly tabernacle, thereby establishing the typological relationship. Thus, this chapter confirms the interdependence and continuity of the two tabernacles, emphasizing the theological coherence that unites the old and new cultic systems in the

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[141] Jean Daniélou characterizes the "allegory [used] by such as Philo, and some of the Fathers after him . . . [as] a recrudescence of nature-symbolism, from which the element of *historicity* is absent" (Daniélou, *Lord of History*, 89, emphasis added). Nevertheless, Daniélou is not the earliest scholar who distinguished allegory from typology. According to David L. Baker, the distinction "was formulated as early as 1762 by J. Gerhard: 'Typology consists in the comparison of facts. Allegory is not so much concerned in facts as in their assembly, from which it draws out useful and hidden doctrine'" (Baker, "Typology and the Christian Use," 324). Baker cited Gerhard from Goppelt. See Goppelt, *Typos*, 7. See also Ribbens, "Typology of Types," 85; Wright, *God Who Acts*, 61.

pursuit of purification. The logic that demonstrated the two tabernacles' relationship according to spatial theory will serve as the foundation for the other three ritual elements—sacrificer, sacrifice, and time—which will then be examined through a cultural-anthropological lens to establish criteria for locating evidence on how purity concerns in Hebrews influence the socioreligious boundaries drawn by the two cultuses and their relationship.

CHAPTER 4: SACRIFICERS OF CULTUS IN HEBREWS

In the preceding chapter, I discussed the relationship between the two ritual places, the earthly and heavenly tabernacles. It was argued, using a cultural-anthropological lens and spatial theory, that the author does not denigrate the earthly tabernacle but rather values it as a foundation for the heavenly tabernacle. Both tabernacles, which perform purification rituals, share several characteristics, such as divine origin, invisibility, inner structure, blood as ritual sacrifice, purification role, and access to God, while also differing in ways that contribute to their theological and hermeneutical interdependence. Thus, the earthly and heavenly tabernacles are in typological continuity, with the former laying the groundwork for the latter, and the latter fulfilling the former. Subsequently, this chapter will discuss the old and new sacrificers of cultus in Hebrews, as well as their relationships.

The book of Hebrews, like other Old and New Testament books, state that high priests host and carry out all purification rituals. The author identifies them as Levitical high priests and Jesus as sacrificers of the old and new cultuses, respectively. Jesus, in his role as both high priest and sacrifice, offered "purification for sins" as depicted in Heb 1:3. Nonetheless, the author of Hebrews does not explicitly state that Jesus was either the high priest or the sacrifice in the passage. Instead, the author explicitly reveals Jesus' identities and titles as necessary throughout the book, while comparing him to the Levitical high priests. Hebrews contains a multitude of accounts concerning the cultic

high priest, with particular emphasis on Jesus Christ as the high priest who executed the ultimate sacrifice for the benefit of the readers. This chapter will examine the author's references to both high priesthoods, as well as their similarities and differences, which will demonstrate that the author has a positive attitude toward the old cultus's sacrificers, the Levitical high priests.

The term ἀρχιερεύς ("high priest") and related terms within the same semantic domain (LN 53.85–92) are used in various ways in Hebrews.[1] As a result, the following passages are the units or subunits that contain at least one of these terms and discuss the high priesthood: Heb 5:1–10; 7:4–28; 8:1–6; 9:1–14, 23–28; and 10:11–14.[2] These passages reveal the similarities and differences between the Levitical high priests and Jesus, the high priest. This chapter will use three criteria established in the methodology chapter and used in the previous chapter for ritual places: the high priests' origin and identity, descriptions of their performance, and what they achieved in terms of purity. Accordingly, the relationship between the Levitical high priests and the high priest Jesus will become more apparent.

Therefore, this chapter will begin by defining both high priests, focusing on how the author introduces and defines each of them. Their similarities and differences will then be examined using the aforementioned criteria to determine whether (dis)continuity or interdependence is conveyed by the author's descriptions. When considering their relationship based on purity concerns and the use of spatial concepts, the author's

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[1] Louw and Nida, *Greek–English Lexicon*, 1:543.

[2] This study adheres to the structure of Hebrews as propounded by Westfall, which is based on discourse analysis, particularly utilizing systemic functional linguistics, and discusses each ritual element referred to in the units or subunits in Hebrews that she classifies. See Westfall, *Discourse Analysis*.

description of both high priests confirms their typological relationship.[3] This chapter will conclude that the author does not hold a pejorative view of the Levitical high priests, but rather respects them as the hermeneutical foundation for emphasizing Jesus as the ultimate high priest.

Identifying Sacrificers of Both Cultuses

Before delving into finding and examining the similarities and differences between the two cultic sacrificers in Hebrews, it is necessary to ascertain the author's perception and identification of each of these elements within the text. In Hebrews, the new cultus's high priest is evidently Jesus. This point is introduced at the beginning of the book, in Heb 1:2b–3, as part of the first section, which gradually develops its topics. Jesus' high priesthood is subsequently introduced as a new title in 2:14–18; 3:1–6; and 4:14–15. Jesus is referred to as the high priest who "is able to help" (2:18) people by "mak[ing] atonement for the sins" (2:17), on whom we should "fix . . . [our] thoughts" (3:1), and who can "emphasize with our weaknesses" (4:14–15). His high priestly ability of salvation should stem from his sinlessness (4:15), while his salvific ministry can be applied to humans because of his humanity (2:17–18; 4:15). Although some information about Jesus' high priesthood is provided, it is still fragmentary and merely an unorganized list until the end of ch. 4. In 5:1, the author initiates a comparison between Jesus and the Levitical high priests, specifically discussing the old cultus in relation to the new cultus.

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[3] See France, *Jesus and the Old Testament*, 38–79. The relationship between the old and new sacrificial systems, as well as each of their components, will be described using typological concepts and language. An *antitype*, which represents the culmination of history, *fulfills* a *type* as a preparation. Further elaboration on this matter will be explained later in this chapter.

The term *high priest* (ἀρχιερεύς) appears a number of times in Hebrews, referring to both Jesus (e.g., Heb 2:17; 3:1; 4:14, 15; 5:5, 10; 6:20; 7:26; 8:1; 9:11) and the high priests in general (e.g., 5:1; 7:27; 8:3; 9:7, 25; 13:11). The term *priest* (ἱερεύς) is also used several times by the author to refer to Melchizedek (e.g., 7:1, 3), Jesus (e.g., 5:6; 7:11, 15, 17, 20, 24; 8:4; 10:21),[4] and the Levitical priests (e.g., 7:5, 14, 21, 23, 28; 8:4; 9:6; 10:11). Except for the Levitical high priest and priests, each of whom had a specific role during the sacrificial ritual, as seen in 9:6–7, Hebrews makes no remarkable distinction between ἀρχιερεύς and ἱερεύς in his discussion of Jesus. As Ellingworth points out, the author interprets ἱερεύς as ἀρχιερεύς in his references to Ps 110:4 in Heb 5:5–10 and 7:26, and he even employs ἱερεύς as Jesus' title, albeit with qualifying adjectives such as ἕτερος (7:11, 15) or μέγας (10:21).[5]

This section will look at how the author of Hebrews identifies the two ritual sacrificers: the high priest. Prior to conducting an in-depth comparison and analysis of the relationship between the sacrificers of both cultuses, the author's introduction to them and proposals for their qualifications will be examined. The author's introduction to Jesus as the high priest in 2:14–18; 3:16; and 4:14–15, in particular, serves as the foundation for the comparison of the Levitical human high priests, which we will discuss in the following section.

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[4] In Heb 10:21, Jesus is referred to as the "great priest" (ἱερέα μέγαν), which is a synonym for "high priest" (ἀρχιερεύς) and appears nowhere else in the New Testament. Nevertheless, it appears frequently in the LXX (e.g., Lev 21:10; Num 35:25, 28, 32; 2 Kgs 12:11; 22:4, 8; 23:4; 1 Chr 9:31; 2 Chr 24:11; 34:9; Neh 3:1, 20; 13:28; Hag 1:1, 12, 14; 2:2, 4; Zech 3:1, 8; 6:11; Jdt 4:6, 8, 14, 15:8; 1 Macc 12:20; 14:20; 15:2; 2 Macc 14:13; Sir 50:1).

[5] He also notices the author's preference for ἀρχιερεύς over ἱερεύς, but he argues that this is simply due to ἱερεύς's subordinate position (Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 183).

Jesus, the High Priest

In Heb 1:2b–3, the author provides seven descriptions that characterize the qualities and accomplishments of the Son as God's ultimate messenger. Jesus is appointed as (1) "heir of all things"; he (2) "made the universe"; (3) he is the "radiance of God's glory"; (4) he is the "exact representation of his being"; (5) he is "sustaining all things"; (6) he "provided purification for sins"; and finally (7) "he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven."[6] These seven descriptions of Jesus are presented in various ways throughout the book,[7] but the sixth one, that he "provided purification for sins" (1:3), requires special attention in this study due to its direct relevance to ritual.[8] Based on this final description, we can anticipate the purification for sins through Jesus' ritual performance, whether he acts as a high priest, a sacrifice, or both. Also, it provides us with an overarching perspective that allows us to draw socio-religious boundaries.[9]

Jesus is initially recognized as the high priest due to the fact that "he had provided purification for sins," as stated in 1:3. This purification is a defining characteristic of his high priesthood. The verb ποιέω ("made") is not a cultic term, which can be rendered in a broad sense (LN 90.56; e.g., "to do," "to perform," "to practice," "to make"),[10] so we

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[6] Bruce, *Hebrews*, 46–50. Bruce calls these "seven facts . . . about the Son of God" (46). John P. Meier, on the other hand, bases his lists of "the seven Christological designations" on Heb 1:2b–4 and offers slightly different lists. He combines the designations of Jesus as "the radiance of God's glory" and "the exact representation of his being" found in 1:3a, and adds the fact "he became as much superior to the angels" from 1:4a as the seventh (Meier, "Structure and Theology," esp. 176–88).

[7] Although Heb 1:1–4 is not an introduction to the entire book of Hebrews, but rather a prelude to the larger section (1:1—2:4), it contains the book's overall theme. See Westfall, *Discourse Analysis*, 90–98. See also Attridge, *Hebrews*, 36; Peterson, *Hebrews*, 61. Cf. Black, "Hebrews 1:1–4," 177–79; Bruce, *Hebrews*, 45; Buchanan, *Hebrews*, 3, 9; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 90; Guthrie, *Structure of Hebrews*, 118, 145; Harris, *Hebrews*, 11; Johnson, *Hebrews*, 63; Koester, *Hebrews*, 174–76; Lane, *Hebrews*, 1:9; Vanhoye, *Structure and Message*, 23, 40, 79; Wills, "Form of the Sermon," 281.

[8] As I. Howard Marshall remarks, the term "purification" does not appear until Heb 9, but related terms and concepts do (Marshall, "Soteriology in Hebrews," 264).

[9] See Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 141–59; Malina, "Clean and Unclean," 155–57; Wright, "Unclean and Clean," 739.

[10] Louw and Nida, *Greek–English Lexicon*, 1:803.

should verify whether its object is cultic.

The object is καθαρισμός ("purification"), and it appears only twice in the New Testament, here in 1:3 and again in 2 Pet 1:9. However, its cognate words, καθαρότης ("purity," "cleanness") and καθαρίζω ("to cleanse," "to purify"), which belong to the same semantic domain (LN 53.28),[11] are used several times in Hebrews in the context of sacrificial ritual (e.g., Heb 9:13–14, 22–23; 10:2). Sacrificers (high priests) are the agents who actively—if not willingly—perform the cultus in these passages,[12] whether they are mentioned explicitly or alluded to implicitly. In light of this, it is reasonable to conclude that Jesus, the central figure, is referred to as the visible agent, the *high priest*, who "provided purification for sins" in 1:3.[13]

The Levitical High Priests

The author of Hebrews does not mention the old cultus in Heb 1–4. In 5:1, he begins to describe the old cultus and its ritual elements in comparison to those of the new cultus. It should be noted that the author's references to the old cultus are always linked to Jesus' new cultus. Thus, all the Hebrews passages that mention human high priests contain references to Jesus as the high priest. While the author explicitly refers to Jesus or Christ, the Levitical high priests are identified as "among the people," "every," "the other," or not specified at all.[14] This indicates that the author and readers consider the Levitical

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[11] Louw and Nida, *Greek–English Lexicon*, 1:534.

[12] The fact that high priests as "visible agent[s] . . . had to take certain extra precautions in order to be able to sacrifice" demonstrates that their role in the ritual was active rather than passive. For instance, they were required to "wash before entering the sanctuary," "abstain from wine and fermented liquids," "put on linen garments," and so on (Hubert and Mauss, *Sacrifice*, 25–26). Cf. Exod 30:20–21; Lev 6:10; 10:9; 14:4, 32; 16:10, 25–26; Ezek 24:2021, 40, 42; etc.

[13] See also Peterson, *Hebrews*, 98.

[14] E.g., Heb 5:1: "*Every high priest* is selected from *among the people* . . ."; 7:27: "Unlike *the other high priests*, . . ."; 8:3: "*Every high priest* . . ."; 9:7: "But only *the high priest* entered the inner

sacrificial elements and regulations to be widely known and accepted as common knowledge among them.

Qualifications for High Priesthood

As already mentioned, the allusion to Jesus' high priesthood can be found in Heb 1:3, followed by concise explicit references in 2:14–18; 3:1; and 4:14–15. These passages introduce Jesus as the merciful, faithful, and great high priest. However, it is not until 5:1–10 that the concept of human high priesthood is introduced. Cockerill raises a couple of questions that may have arisen in the minds of readers following the brief references to Jesus' high priesthood prior to ch. 5, where Hebrews finally begins its systematic explanation of Jesus' high priestly role by describing and comparing it to the Levitical high priesthood. He questions as follows:

> If the Son of God is the kind of High Priest intimated in these verses, how does he relate to the God-established Aaronic priesthood? Furthermore, what biblical authority does the pastor have for Christ's priesthood in light of the perpetual character attributed to that earlier priesthood instituted by Moses at God's direction? Thus it is no surprise that the pastor begins his extended discussion of Christ's high priesthood by comparing and contrasting this new High Priest with the old.[15]

In the subunit 5:1–10, the author does not provide a comprehensive list of the characteristics of high priests in general, but rather a selective list that pertains to the presentation of Jesus' high priesthood in order to demonstrate how it qualifies for the high priesthood in general.[16] As Attridge suggests, "The exposition of the significance of

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room, . . ."

[15] Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 229.

[16] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 142; Peterson, *Hebrews and Perfection*, 81. Cf. Parsons, "Son and High Priest," 209–10. Mikeal C. Parsons omits the aim, purification for sins, while recognizing the chiastic structure.

that title now begins in earnest with a list of the qualifications for the office for ordinary human beings (5:1–4). The way in which Jesus fulfilled those qualifications is then suggested (5:1–9 [10]).”[17] Most scholars differentiate paragraphs 5:1–4 from 5:5–10, although the specifics may differ.[18] Paragraph 5:1–4 outlines three qualifications that are characteristic of the high priesthood in general: its offering, condition, and appointment. These qualifications are then shown to be applicable to Jesus in order to establish his qualification as the high priest in 5:5–10.[19] In other words, the general characteristics of the high priesthood in the first paragraph that are already present in the case of Levitical high priests are being applied to Jesus one by one in the second paragraph.

The author begins the first paragraph not with Jesus’ high priesthood but with “every high priest,” which refers to the high priests in the Levitical sacrificial system. He begins by referring to the general requirements for the high priesthood that have existed for the old cultus. All three qualifications of high priests are briefly mentioned in 5:1—having something to offer, being human, and divine appointment, each of which will be explained in greater detail in the following sections—and thus, this verse may be referred to as introductory. The initial phrase in 5:1a, Πᾶς γὰρ ἀρχιερεὺς *ἐξ ἀνθρώπων λαμβανόμενος* ὑπὲρ ἀνθρώπων *καθίσταται* τὰ πρὸς τὸν θεόν (“Every high priest is

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[17] Attridge, “New Covenant Christology,” 290.

[18] Scholars put forth a comparison and contrast between these two paragraphs. See, for example, Attridge, *Hebrews*, 138; Bruce, *Hebrews*, 118; Guthrie, *Hebrews (TNTC)*, 128; Koester, *Hebrews*, 296–98; Westfall, *Discourse Analysis*, 143. Cf. Richardson, “The Passion,” 57. Some detect a chiastic structure throughout the two paragraphs, culminating at the point of intersection, 5:4 and 5:56. However, insisting on the chiasm in 5:1–10 and choosing a single point from each unit or subunit to form symmetrical points may result in oversimplification of what the author is mentioning. For illustrations of scholars who support a chiastic structure in 5:1–10, see Allen, *Hebrews*, 313–14; Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 230–33; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 271; Guthrie, *Hebrews (NIVAC)*, 192; Lane, *Hebrews*, 1:111; Lindars, *Theology of the Letter to the Hebrews*, 61; Mason, *You Are a Priest Forever*, 23–25; Peterson, *Hebrews*, 138; Vanhoye, *Structure and Message*, 55–56, 86.

[19] The first paragraph “*gives way* to a narration of this new [Jesus] High Priest’s saving work” in the second. In this sense, they are a cohesive subunit (Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 237, emphasis added).

selected from *among the people* and *is appointed* to represent the people in matters related to God"), contains the last two qualifications, humanity and divine call.[20] The reason God appointed certain individuals as high priests is then mentioned in 5:1b: ἵνα *προσφέρῃ* δῶρά τε καὶ θυσίας ὑπὲρ ἁμαρτιῶν ("in order to *offer* gifts and sacrifices for sins").

Each of these three qualifications can be found elsewhere in Hebrews to demonstrate that Jesus was truly qualified to be the high priest. Nonetheless, we will examine each condition as part of each of the three criteria, rather than as qualifications for high priesthood, in order to easily identify the similarities and differences between the high priests of the old and new cultuses.

Origin and Identity of the Two High Priests

The Levitical high priests and Jesus, as the high priest, share two significant aspects of their origin and identity, according to the author of Hebrews. First of all, he suggests that the high priests be appointed by God, and he identifies the Levitical high priests and Jesus as having the same divine origins. However, there were differences in their order. While the former belonged to Aaron's order, the latter had its roots in Melchizedek, resulting in clear distinctions. Moreover, both high priests shared a human condition, but the difference lay in whether it was voluntary human weakness or not and whether he

[20] Although the author does not explicitly state it, it was undoubtedly God who appointed them. As Jamieson maintains, "it makes best sense to see Heb 5:5–10 as indicating that God also appointed Christ high priest, with the words of Ps 100:4," given that God said Ps 2:7 and 110:4 to Jesus as cited in Heb 1:5 and 5:5–6 (Jamieson, *Jesus' Death and Heavenly Offering*, 34). I disagree with Jamieson's assertion that God appointed Jesus as high priest upon his physical ascension to heaven following his resurrection. Instead, I contend that Jesus' "entrance to heaven" happened during his crucifixion or death for three days. Nevertheless, Jamieson is not wrong when he says, "At Jesus' entrance to heaven, God appoints Jesus high priest by declaring, 'You are a priest forever' (Ps 110:4; Heb 5:6)" (34).

required a purification ritual. We will discuss how the author presents these similarities and differences in the text before concluding that he respects the Levitical high priests.

Divine Appointment

"Only When Called by God"

The origin of the Levitical high priestly office is God. The author presents divine appointment as one of the three qualifications for high priests in Heb 5:4. He emphasizes it with a negative phrase that "no one takes (λαμβάνω) this honor [high priesthood] on himself." The verb λαμβάνω ("to take") is commonly understood to mean "to take arbitrarily," and the author places the adverb οὐ ("no") at the beginning of the sentence, right next to the conjunction καί ("and") that "adds a new point to the argument" to negate the possibility of the office having human origins.[21] Rather, he confirms its divine origin by stating that the high priests are appointed "when called by God" (5:4).

He was most likely aware of Aaron and his descendants occupying their offices by God's appointment, as well as the disorderly appointments of high priests at his age. Since the death of the last king and high priest of the Hasmonean dynasty, Antigonus II, in 37 BCE, his contemporary Jewish high priesthood was considered defiled due to Herod and the Romans,[22] but he does not mention the current situation. Instead, he placidly explains how the old sacrificial system's high priesthood came to be. Accordingly, it appears that he has no intention of criticizing the old cultic system, even in the context of introducing the new. He is solely focused on the divine origin of the

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[21] Harris, *Hebrews*, 118. Cf. Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 279–80.

[22] Josephus, *Ant*. 4:153–157.; 15:2, 4; 20:9, 224–251. Cf. T. Mos. 7:9–10. Bryan Dyer argues that the author of Hebrews was aware of the defiled reality of his contemporary high priesthood, particularly by Roman officials, and Heb 5 is his indirect response to the reality (Dyer, "One Does Not Presume").

office.[23]

Following that, in 5:5, the author presents the origin of Jesus' high priesthood by beginning with the adverb οὕτως ("in the same way"), which forms consecutive comparative clauses, establishing a parallel between 5:4 and 5:5–6.[24] Just as the divine origin of the Levitical high priests, which resulted in the Levites being appointed as high priests in the past, the origin of Jesus' high priesthood is introduced with a negative phrase, "Christ did not take . . ." The author compares Jesus to Aaron, who was not only the first high priest but also one of the most revered figures in the old cultic system, along with Moses. Both Aaron and Jesus were appointed as high priests by the same God, not by themselves, implying a continuity between them. Koester observes a rhetorical skill here in 5:5, called "amplification" (*auxēsis*), which compares "someone favorably with a person of high repute" as "one of the forms of praise."[25]

The author then moves on in 5:5–6 and 10, as he did for the Levitical high priests in 5:4, to a positive reference to Jesus' divine appointment as high priest, but this time he quotes Old Testament passages, Ps 2:7 in Heb 5:5 and Ps 110:4 in Heb 5:6 and 10. While the first use of Ps 110:4 in Heb 5:6 emphasizes Jesus' glorification as the Son—while still denoting the divine appointment of Jesus' high priesthood—the second use in 5:10 focuses on the divine appointment of Jesus as high priest with the appointment language, προσαγορεύω ("to designate"). Both Pss 2:7 and 110:4 are not merely the author's statements, but God's direct utterances indicating "the Son" in the second person "You

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[23] Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 236n37: "the whole point is that this priest must be appointed by God—he cannot himself assume priesthood."

[24] Lane, *Hebrews*, 1:117: "καθώσπερ καὶ Ἀαρών ... οὕτως καὶ ὁ Χριστός, 'just as Aaron also was … so also the Christ' (vv 4b–5a)." See also Attridge, *Hebrews*, 237.

[25] Koester, *Hebrews*, 298. See Aristotle, *Rhet*. 1:9:36. See also McCormack, "With Loud Cries and Tears," 63–64.

are," so the divine appointment derived from these passages must be emphasized strongly.[26] As such, Heb 5:4 and 5:5–6 establish the parallel as evidence of the divine appointment of both the Levitical high priests and Jesus, with the latter containing the stronger sense.

The Old Testament passages used here highlight the differences in the divine origins of both high priestly offices. Jesus' high priestly office is related to his divine Sonship differently than the Levitical high priesthood (Heb 5:5), and another difference is in their order; the Levites are in line with Aaron, whereas Jesus is in line with Melchizedek (5:6, 10; 7:1–10).

Jesus' Divine Sonship

When discussing how Jesus became a high priest, the author emphasizes the uniqueness of Jesus' divine appointment in comparison to that of the Levitical high priests by quoting Ps 2:7, "You are my Son; today I have become your Father." This quotation from Ps 2 reinforces Jesus' unique filial relationship with God, casting his priesthood in a different light than that of the Levitical high priests. However, the author's use of the terms τιμή ("honor") as what God gave the Levitical high priests in Heb 5:4 and δοξάζω ("glory") as what God gave Jesus in 5:5a confirms that he is not portraying the Levitical high priests

[26] George H. Guthrie emphasizes the author's use of Ps 2:7 which was already cited in Heb 1:5, and remarks, "By reiterating Psalm 2:7 here the author shows that the exalted and incarnate Son (the twin themes of Hebrews 1–2) is the same one who has been appointed by God to a new and unique high priesthood. The writer, therefore, links the concepts of sonship and priesthood in his Christology" (Guthrie, *Hebrews (NIVAC)*, 189). See Attridge, *Hebrews*, 146–47. However, Attridge cautions against equating Jesus' high priesthood with his exaltation. He argues that Jesus' "priestly action, consummated in the 'heavenly sanctuary' (9:23), begins with and, of necessity, includes his death[, and one should add his life as well (5:5)]. Hence, it is unlikely that, in the conception of this text, Christ became High Priest only upon his exaltation" (146). Cf. Moffitt, "If Another Priest Arises," 77; Gäbel, *Die Kulttheologie des Hebräerbriefes*, 283; Grässer, *An die Hebräer*, 2:142.

as inferior to Jesus. As Amy L. B. Peeler points out, this usage reminds us of 3:3, where both terms appear in relation to Moses.[27] As a result, the author distinguishes Jesus' high priesthood by referring to his divine Sonship in comparison to the Levitical high priesthood (Heb 5:5b; Ps 2:7), without disparaging them by placing reminders of Moses (τιμή and δοξάζω), who is highly esteemed in advance (Heb 5:4–5a; cf. 3:1–6).

Moreover, the following verse in Hebrews emphasizes Jesus' divine Sonship with another Psalm citation: "You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek" (Heb 5:6; cf. Ps 110:4). After introducing Ps 2:7 in Heb 5:5,[28] the author makes his main point in 5:6 by citing Ps 110:4, based in the close relationship between Ps 2 and Ps 110 in their references to divine Sonship as a priest forever.[29] In order to highlight his main point about Jesus' high priesthood, the author mentions Melchizedek by quoting the second half of Ps 110:4 (109:4 LXX), "in the order of Melchizedek."

Aaron, Abraham, and Melchizedek

The author of Hebrews cites Ps 110:4 twice, in Heb 5:6 and 5:10, to introduce Melchizedek as the line of Jesus' high priesthood, comparing him to Aaron, who is already mentioned in Heb 5:4. To compare Aaron and Melchizedek, Melchizedek is superior, as the Hebrews author acknowledges in 7:1–10, where he clarifies that he is

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[27] Peeler, *You Are My Son*, 115–16. She understands that Heb 3:1–6 sets the relationship between Moses and Jesus as the majority of scholars, Jesus being superior to Moses. She says that in 3:3, "Jesus' status as Son over the house of God gives him *more glory* (δόξα) *than Moses*, just as the builder of the house has *more honor* (τιμή) than the structure itself" (115–16, emphasis added). As stated in the previous chapter of this study, however, I support Westfall's argument that Moses is a "highly respected individual and leader who functions as a type of Christ, rather than the target of a polemic" in Heb 3:1–6 (Westfall, "Moses and Hebrews 3.1–6," 201). See "Moses and Hebrews 3.1–6."

[28] Peeler refers to Ps 2:7 in Heb 5:5 as a "fitting preface to" Ps 110:4 in Heb 5:6 (Peeler, *You Are My Son*, 118).

[29] Kistemaker, *Psalm Citations*, 27–28, 37.

greater than Abraham. However, the way he refers to Melchizedek as the line of Jesus' high priesthood does not imply that the Aaronic high priesthood is deficient.

In 7:1–3, the author summarizes Gen 14:17–20 and relates Melchizedek to the Son of God by emphasizing Melchizedek's excellence, which is demonstrated by the absence of his forefathers, lineage, and the beginning and end of his existence, thereby establishing his origin in heaven. In addition, identifying him as a "priest of God Most High" (7:1) reveals that his office comes from God. Although he provides several details about Melchizedek from both the Genesis passage and its interpretation, particularly Melchizedek's name and origin,[30] all attention is directed to Melchizedek's priesthood as stated in 7:3.[31] As Mikeal C. Parsons maintains,

> The author uses the figure of Melchizedek *to build the argument for the perpetual priesthood of Christ*. It is very likely that the figure of Melchizedek was suggested to the writer as a result of the rigorous application of Ps. 110:1, 4. The characteristics of the earthly priesthood of this first priest serve to illuminate the nature of the heavenly high priesthood of Christ, and to prepare the way for a discussion of the high priestly work of the Son in 8:1—10:18.[32]

Melchizedek, as the "priest forever," is the one whose greatness must be considered, and his relationship with Abraham is mentioned as the source of his greatness in 7:4. The author continues to demonstrate Melchizedek's greatness, particularly by arguing that

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[30] Hebrews's contemporaries were also aware of Melchizedek's title and its meaning. See, for example, Philo, *Alleg. Interp*. 3:79; Josephus, *J.W*. 6:348; Josephus, *Ant*. 1:180. For more information on Melchizedek of Hebrews's contemporaries, see Attridge, *Hebrews*, 192–95.

[31] Yet the author's ultimate emphasis is on Melchizedek's resemblance to the Son of God. As Bruce remarks, "In all this—in the silences as well as in the statements—he [Melchizedek] is a fitting type of Christ; in fact, the record by the things it says of him and by the things it does not say has assimilated him to the Son of God." Moreover, it should be noted that "Jesus is not portrayed after the pattern of Melchizedek, but Melchizedek is 'made comfortable to the Son of God'" (Bruce, *Hebrews*, 160). See Guthrie, *Hebrews (TNTC)*, 160. Peterson says, "His [the Hebrews author's] real interest is in what we can learn from Psalm 110:4 about *Jesus and his priestly ministry*" (Peterson, *Hebrews*, 170, emphasis added).

[32] Parsons, "Son and High Priest," 214 (emphasis added). See Neyrey, "Without Beginning of Days," 439–55, esp. 440, 454–55. Neyrey insists that Heb 7:3 seems to describe Melchizedek as a true deity because he has no beginning and no end, but the predication "is directed not to Melchizedek, but to Jesus" (440).

"the lesser is blessed by the greater" (7:7),[33] by describing Melchizedek as "who is declared to be living" in contrast to the Levites "who die" (7:8), and by suggesting that Levi was blessed in response to his payment of tithes while in Abraham's body (7:9–10).

The author refers to Abraham as ὁ πατριάρχης ("the patriarch"), indicating his status as the progenitor of Israel (7:4). The title ὁ πατριάρχης is more emphatic due to two reasons, its position at the end of the sentence and its separation from the name Ἀβραάμ. Abraham is "*the* patriarch *par excellence*, whose greatness throws Melchizedek's into even higher relief."[34] While Abraham is sufficiently respected, the author presents Melchizedek as the one who is supreme even over Abraham, thereby emphasizing Melchizedek's greatness without demeaning Abraham. Of course, he avoids directly addressing the insufficiency of both the Levitical sacrificial system and the position of high priest. Some argue that the author emphasizes Melchizedek's superiority over Abraham and Aaron, particularly through the use of the phrase χωρὶς δὲ πάσης ("and without doubt") at the beginning of 7:7,[35] followed by an ad hoc principle that "the lesser is blessed by the greater."[36] However, it is important to note that the author's emphasis is on the excellence of Melchizedek's order of high priesthood, which is the foundation of Jesus' high priesthood, rather than Abraham's lower rank in every respect.

Furthermore, he makes no explicit mention of the previously mentioned cultic high priestly role of sin purification. Melchizedek only performed one priestly act in the

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[33] Cf. Kurianal, *Jesus Our High Priest*, 102n200. James Kurianal, on the other hand, observes two distinct meanings and usages of the verb εὐλογέω, "to bless" and "to praise." The former should be done by the greater for the lesser, whereas the latter should be done in the opposite direction. See also Peterson, *Hebrews*, 174.

[34] Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 361 (emphasis original). See 4 Macc 7:19; 16:23; Acts 7:8–9.

[35] E.g., Guthrie, *Hebrews (TNTC)*, 162; Kistemaker, *Hebrews*, 188–89; Lane, *Hebrews*, 1:169–70.

[36] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 196. Attridge presents contrasting examples where the greater is blessed by the lesser in the Bible: Job 31:20; 2 Sam 14:22; 1 Kgs 1:47 (196n134).

account of Gen 14:17–20 and the quotation from Hebrews, which is his blessing of Abraham in the name of God Most High. The extent or quality of their purifying function and effect is not contrasted in this explicit judgment and discrimination between the two high priests. Instead, only Abraham's payment of tithes and Melchizedek's *blessing* are mentioned as proof of his excellence (Heb 7:4–5), and it alludes to Jesus' excellence as high priest, who will eventually fulfill the high priestly goal of purification for sins, perfection.[37] Hence, the author's silence on purification in 7:1–10 prevents the readers from jumping to the conclusion that the Levitical high priests lacked or had serious deficiencies with the purifying role in contrast to Jesus. At the same time, his reference to the blessing as a means of presenting Melchizedek's greatness reveals the excellence of Jesus' high priesthood,[38] which is given a way to become a fulfillment of the old cultus's high priesthood.

The relationship between Abraham and the Levitical high priests, as well as the relationship between Melchizedek and Jesus, is clarified in 7:9–10, the climax of the argument, in order to establish the relationship between the Levites and Jesus.[39] Also, the author's repetition of Abraham's encounter with Melchizedek at the beginning and end of the discussion (7:1 and 7:10), which may be interpreted as an *inclusio*, sheds light on the

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[37] Regarding the connection between purification and perfection, see Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 67–70; Malina, "Clean and Unclean," 157–59. See also Peterson, *Hebrews and Perfection*.

[38] It should be noted that the real focus is Jesus rather than Melchizedek. According to Attridge, "Ultimately he is concerned not so much with Melchizedek as with Christ, and what he says of the former is influenced heavily by what he firmly believes of the latter" (Attridge, *Hebrews*, 187). Westcott similarly says that Melchizedek's "resemblance [with Jesus] lies in the Biblical representation and not primarily in Melchizedek himself" (Westcott, *Hebrews*, 175). See also Peterson, *Hebrews*, 170–71. D. Guthrie deduces Melchizedek's superiority from God's title, "God Most High" (τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ὑψίστου), because "[a]ny priesthood is evaluated according to the status of the deity who is served." As a result, Melchizedek had to be the greatest high priest (Guthrie, *Hebrews (TNTC)*, 158).

[39] Lane, *Hebrews*, 1:170. The statement made by Attridge that "Levi, the tither, was tithed through Abraham" may serve as the starting point for understanding (Attridge, *Hebrews*, 197).

relationship between the two groups, Abraham with the Levitical high priests and Melchizedek with Jesus.[40] Even though the old high priests did not pay the tithe to Melchizedek or Jesus, and were not directly blessed by Melchizedek or Jesus, their progenitor Abraham's payment may appear to indicate Abraham and his descendants' lower rank.[41] However, we must consider 7:5, which states that the Levite priests "collect[ed] a tenth from the people—that is, from *their fellow Israelites*." Melchizedek and Abraham have no superiority or inferiority in their relationship, just as there is no superiority or inferiority between the Levites and the rest of Israel.[42] Therefore, 7:7 must be understood as emphasizing the greatness of the order of Melchizedek and his function as a high priest rather than some additional kind of superiority in other respects.

In conclusion, the author's use of Melchizedek to introduce Jesus' high priesthood demonstrates his respect for the Levitical high priests in two ways. First, he first mentions Aaron as the line of the Levitical high priests, followed by Melchizedek as Jesus' line to show their similarity in Heb 5:4–6. Since another Old Testament figure, Aaron, is mentioned in the preceding verse, Heb 5:4, mentioning Melchizedek with two Psalm citations should indicate his respect for the Levitical high priests who are descended from Aaron. According to David M. Hay, this "shows Jesus' similarity to the levitical priests."[43] Second, the author cites Old Testament passages when discussing Jesus' high priestly line, Melchizedek, in both Heb 5:4–6 and 7:1–10. Given that he can mention Melchizedek without using the Psalm passage, it is reasonable to observe that he relies on

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[40] See Attridge, *Hebrews*, 197.

[41] "Therefore, Levi's status relative to Melchizedek was affected by Abraham's relationship to that personage" (Lane, *Hebrews*, 1:170). See Peterson, *Hebrews*, 174.

[42] See Nelson, *Raising Up a Faithful Priest*, esp. 1–3, 39–53. In Judaism, priests were highly regarded for their role as "ritual specialists" among the Israelites (2). However, priests were not generally regarded as superior to others.

[43] Hay, *Glory at the Right Hand*, 144.

Old Testament authority.[44]

Human Condition

Another shared characteristic of origin and identity between the Levitical high priests and the high priest Jesus in Hebrews is their humanity. When the author presents three general qualifications for high priests in Heb 5:1–4, humanity comes first because they must "represent the people" (5:1) in relation to cultuses, and only weak humanity can "deal gently with those" who are also weak (5:2). Based on this, he argues for Jesus' qualification as high priest, briefly recounting his earthly life (5:7–8). In other places, Jesus is portrayed as a reliable high priest who shares humanity with us (2:14–18), and 4:14–15 emphasizes Jesus' humanity in the double negative, "we do *not* (οὐ) have a high priest who is *unable* (μὴ δυνάμενον) . . . ,"[45] while distinguishing him from the Levitical high priests by emphasizing his sinlessness.[46]

Humanity: Not a Disadvantage, but a Requirement

To begin, we need to consider the author's understanding of humanity as a general

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[44] Anderson, *King-Priest of Psalm 110*, 207–8.

[45] The author's utilization of the double negative suggests his perception of Jesus as sharing weaknesses with human beings. Also, the term συμπαθῆσαι ("empathize") "extends beyond the sharing of feelings" and "includes the element of active help." All of this is possible for Jesus because of his identification with humans, namely his "full participation in humanity" (Lane, *Hebrews*, 1:114).

[46] Peeler observes the temptation that Jesus experienced πεπειρασμένον δὲ κατὰ πάντα ("in every way") as follows:

> This portrayal of Jesus the high priest evokes his participation in every aspect of humanity (2:17), including the testing experienced in suffering (2:18). Because his testing is related to what he suffered (2:18), and his suffering culminates in his human experience of death (2:9), the range of his testing encompasses the audience's temptations and extends even farther. The difference between his testing and theirs is that he has faced the test of death. His true sympathy for them arises from his total human journey. The great high priest to whom the author and his audience appeal is able to sympathize (συμπαθέω) with their weaknesses, not because he himself is weak, but because he is strong (Peeler, *You Are My Son*, 125).

qualification for high priesthood. Since purifying sacrifices for sins must be offered for those who are impure and sinful, the author argues that the high priest must be able to "deal gently with those who are ignorant and are going astray." The word μετριοπαθέω ("to deal gently with") is closely related to συμπαθέω ("to emphasize"), which appears in 4:15 as one of the characteristics of the high priest Jesus, though they are not synonymous. As Attridge puts it, "The ordinary high priest controls his anger; Christ actively sympathizes."[47] Hebrews suggests that the high priest must be able to control his emotions even when he witnesses the people's weakness and sinfulness, and that he must be human to deal with it. Although the word ἀσθένεια ("weakness") may initially carry negative connotations, it should be interpreted as "simply a function of his humanity,"[48] and even that "enables them [high priests] to be 'compassionate' (Heb 5:2: μετριοπαθέω) with the erring and ignorant ones."[49] Humanity is thus a "positive quality: an awareness of his own frailty and sin causes the high priest to moderate his justifiable displeasure and anger toward the sins of the people."[50]

Given that the high priest's humanity is not a disadvantage, the requirement in 5:3 for "sacrifices for his own sins" does not reveal any deficiency of the Levitical high priests, but rather their dissimilarity to the high priest Jesus.[51] While the fact that they had

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[47] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 144. See also Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 275; Lane, *Hebrews*, 1:116–17. Koester renders μετριοπαθέω as "to curb his emotions" (Koester, *Hebrews*, 286).

[48] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 144.

[49] Gelardini, "Inauguration of Yom Kippur," 241.

[50] Lane, *Hebrews*, 1:116–17. "[T]he fellow-humanity of the high priest is an indispensable and prominent element in Hebrews' understanding of this office, and for the most part its functions are those of representing humanity to God" (Bauckham, "Divinity of Jesus Christ," 27).

[51] It is not necessarily assumed that 5:3 refers to the Day of Atonement. Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 236n32; deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 188; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 277; Guthrie, *Hebrews (TNTC)*, 130; Koester, *Hebrews*, 287; Ribbens, *Levitical Sacrifice and Heavenly Cult*, 152. Cf. Attridge, *Hebrews*, 144; Bruce, *Hebrews*, 92; Kistemaker, *Hebrews*, 131; Lane, *Hebrews*, 1:117; Moffatt, *Hebrews*, 63; Schreiner, *Hebrews*, 159.

to atone for their sins through a separate sacrifice on the Day of Atonement is used later in 7:27 and 9:7 to emphasize the fulfillment of the old cultic system through Jesus' high priesthood,[52] what 5:3 emphasizes is that the high priest must be human in order to be able to act on behalf of the people and deal gently with them. In terms of Jesus' humanity, it has already been stated that he was merciful, faithful, and able to help with sympathy in 2:17–18 and 4:14–15. Also, "the triple use of the preposition περί ('for') in this verse [which] focuses prominence on the purpose of the offering (Gk. '*for* the people *for* himself *for* sins')" reiterates and emphasizes the goal of the high priestly performances, which is purification for sins.[53] Benjamin J. Ribbens notes as follows:

> In 2:17, Christ is made the merciful and faithful high priest (ἀρχιερεύς) who serves concerning the matters pertaining to God (τὰ πρὸς τὸν θεόν) to make atonement for the sins of the people (εἰς τὸ ἱλάσκεσθαι τὰς ἁμαρτίας τοῦ λαοῦ). Similarly, in 5:1 the high priest (ἀρχιερεύς) is appointed to serve concerning the matters pertaining to God (τὰ πρὸς τὸν θεόν) to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins (ἵνα προσφέρῃ δῶρά τε καὶ θυσίας ὑπὲρ ἁμαρτιῶν). The "matters pertaining to God" (τὰ πρὸς τὸν θεόν), therefore, appear to be directly related to atoning sins through sacrifice.[54]

Just like the Levitical high priests, Jesus was also qualified for the position of high priest because he was human. The author illustrates Jesus' humanity with the phrase ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις τῆς σαρκὸς ("during the days of Jesus' life on earth") in 5:7.[55]

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[52] For a distinction between the sacrifices for the high priest himself and those for others, see Lev 9:7–14; 16:6–17. Cf. Philo, *Moses* 2:153; Philo, *Spec. Laws* 1:229. According to Lev 16:6, Aaron was required to offer a sacrifice for his own sin before performing the ritual of purification for the people, and the author of Hebrews was aware of this (Heb 7:27). He mentioned the sacrifices for the high priest later in this verse, 1:3, because his point was not the order of the sacrifice but rather the humanity of the high priest (Bruce, *Hebrews*, 121).

[53] Allen, *Hebrews*, 317 (emphasis added).

[54] Ribbens, *Levitical Sacrifice and Heavenly Cult*, 151. See Ribbens, "Positive Function of Levitical Sacrifice," 102. See also Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 273; Lane, *Hebrews*, 1:116; Westcott, *Hebrews*, 120. For a list of the various duties that the Levitical priest and high priest carried out, see Nelson, *Raising Up a Faithful Priest*, 39–53.

[55] Literally, "in the days of his flesh." Jamieson argues that Jesus' "fervent cries and tears" (κραυγῆς ἰσχυρᾶς καὶ δακρύων, 5:7) is also "truly predicated of him by virtue of his humanity" (Jamieson, *Paradox of Sonship*, 37).

Notably, some scholars interpret 5:7 as a reference to Jesus' prayer in Gethsemane. They view this prayer as an expression of Jesus' deep human anguish and submission, which affirms his role as the compassionate high priest who fully embodies human experiences and struggles.[56] However, the Hebrews author portrays Jesus' prayer as "loud cries and tears," which is not found in Jesus' Gethsemane prayer, implying that Hebrews addresses Jesus' prayer not just as an isolated event but as part of his comprehensive high priestly ministry. According to Christopher A. Richardson, Jesus' suffering and death are emphasized in 5:7–8, beginning in Gethsemane and culminating in Golgotha.[57]

This verse describes what took place while Jesus was on earth, but the fact that Jesus was human should not be overlooked because what he did as a human, as illustrated here, proves and emphasizes his humanity.[58] Given that Jesus' agony, tears, supplication, and suffering serve to qualify him for the high priestly office,[59] as well as to demonstrate his humanity,[60] the significance of Jesus' high priesthood is reinforced by the Levitical

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[56] See Attridge, *Hebrews*, 148–50; Bruce, *Hebrews*, 127–29; Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 244; Koester, *Hebrews*, 288; Lane, *Hebrews*, 1:120; Peterson, *Hebrews*, 140–41. See also McCormack, "With Loud Cries and Tears," 55–56, 64–65. Attridge elsewhere remarks, "The remark continues indirectly the theme of the sympathetic intercessory role of Christ which had been prominent in the preceding transitional verses. This supposed quality of the ordinary high priests immediately prepares for the portrait of Christ, . . . his experience of 'learning obedience through suffering.' As the text already indicated (2:17–18), it is Christ's human experience that makes him the effective priestly intercessor that he is" (Attridge, "New Covenant Christology," 291). According to Moffitt, the depiction of God as "the one who could save him from death" alludes to Abraham and God's test for him. "[J]ust as Abraham's faith led to his receiving Isaac back as a parable of the resurrection, so also the comment about Jesus being heard most naturally implies that the God to whom Jesus cried did not leave him in the realm of death but rather exercised power over death by resurrecting him" (Moffitt, "Blood, Life, and Atonement," 217).

[57] Richardson, "The Passion," 54–55. See Koester, *Hebrews*, 107–8; Peterson, *Hebrews and Perfection*, 86–94.

[58] "The term 'flesh' reinforces the reality of Jesus' humanity (2:14). The 'days of his flesh' encompass Jesus' entire life, but Hebrews focuses on his passion (cf. 'flesh' in 10:19–20)" (Koester, *Hebrews*, 288). Cf. Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 242; Richardson, "The Passion," 56–58.

[59] Bruce, *Hebrews*, 129.

[60] Several scholars aver that this phrase indicates Jesus' high priestly ministry with his suffering in humanity. See, for example, Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 241–42; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 286–89; Koester, *Hebrews*, 298–99; Lane, *Hebrews*, 1:119; Richardson, *Pioneer and Perfecter of Faith*, 74–89; Scholer,

high priesthood illustrated in 5:1. Jesus, as a human, prayed to God for salvation from death, which can only be experienced by humans. As Moffitt remarks, "although Jesus is the royal and divine Son, he nevertheless became the high priest that he is confessed to be. . . . [S]imply being the Son does not qualify Jesus to be a high priest," but being human is needed.[61]

On the other hand, connecting 5:1 and 5:7 highlights the difference in priestly ministry between the Levitical high priests and Jesus as high priest. As the Levitical high priests offered "gifts and sacrifices" for people, Jesus, in 5:7, offered "prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears" in his high priestly role. The juxtaposition of the cultic term προσφέρω with the non-cultic terms *prayers and petitions* (δεήσεις τε καὶ ἱκετηρίας) may initially appear peculiar. However, considering that the author's main focus in unit 5:1–10 is on the high priesthood of both the Levitical sacrificial system and Jesus, and that he specifically references Jesus' high priesthood in the subunit 5:5–10, the use of προσφέρω should be understood as an indication and emphasis of his high priesthood.[62] It becomes clearer at the end of the unit in 5:10, when the author reveals not only Jesus' high priesthood but also the order of his office, "the order of Melchizedek." This emphasis on Jesus' fervent prayer depicts it as more than a simple request; it is an offering in line with his high priestly ministry in humanity, showing his profound empathy for human suffering and weakness.

Proleptic Priests, 194. Some criticize it on the basis of strict temporal sequence, claiming that Jesus was not yet the high priest because he was still in the process of becoming qualified. According to them, Jesus was incapable of ministering as a high priest prior to his appointment as high priest. See Jamieson, *Jesus' Death and Heavenly Offering*, 29–30n20; Kibbe, "Is It Finished?" 39–40. Nevertheless, what matters in this passage—not only in relation to this discussion, but also in terms of the passage itself—is not whether Jesus was the high priest at the time, but rather how Jesus was qualified to be the high priest.

[61] Moffitt, "It Is Not Finished," 160.

[62] See Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 288–89. It should not be interpreted as an implication of Jesus' self-offering, which will be explicitly stated in 7:27.

Moreover, his threefold humanlike behaviors—learning, obeying, and suffering demonstrate his humanity, which is further emphasized by the author's acknowledgment of Jesus' Sonship by beginning with the phrase, "Son though he was" (καίπερ ὢν υἱός), in 5:8. As Peeler answers her own question, "If God is powerful and good, will he not prevent from happening, especially to his Son? Verse 8 is the author's way of redirecting this expectation."[63] Thus, it can be expressed, "Even though Jesus was *God's own Son* who reflected God's glory, was the imprint of God's being, participated with God in creation, and would reign with God forever—even though this was all true—*through what he suffered he learned what it meant to obey his Father*."[64] Among the two seemingly contradictory characteristics of Jesus, his divinity and humanity, the author emphasizes Jesus' humanity.[65] Thus, Jesus' humanity qualifies him as a high priest, thus demonstrating a similarity between the high priest Jesus and the Levitical high priests. There is no room for the author to depict the Levitical high priests negatively.

There is one more different point between the humanity of the Levitical high priests and Jesus that may establish a typological link between them. While the Levitical high priests' humanity was referred to as what enables them to sympathize with the same kind (5:2), Jesus' humanity extends to "reverent submission" that resulted in his prayers and petitions being heard (5:7).[66] As a human high priest, Jesus could sympathize with

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[63] Peeler, *You Are My Son*, 127. She recognizes the question as an ancient one, particularly one posed by Thomas Aquinas, and puts it as follows: "On the contrary, it seems that He was not heard, . . . for himself, since the chalice did not pass from Him which yet he requested" (127n55). See Aquinas, *Hebrews*, 5:1:257.

[64] Peeler, *You Are My Son*, 127 (emphasis added).

[65] Cf. Jamieson, *Paradox of Sonship*, 67–68.

[66] Some argue for the connection of the fact that Jesus' prayers and petitions were heard with his resurrection. Peterson remarks, "Jesus obtained deliverance from death through bodily resurrection (13:20; cf. Acts 2:31–32) because he submitted to the Father's will in dying for the salvation of his people (cf. 2:14–15)" (Peterson, *Hebrews*, 141). See Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 245n75. See also Koester, *Hebrews*, 289–90.

humans, and God heard his prayers and petitions, resulting in him becoming "the source of eternal salvation" (5:9). Jesus' high priestly office, which was qualified by his humanity, fulfilled the human Levitical high priests in a full sense of continuity. The differences seen in 2:14–18 and 4:14–15 lend credence to this idea. While Jesus' humanity qualifies him as a high priest, he was also a human who could help Abraham's descendants by making atonement for their sins while remaining sinless, so he is also qualified to be an antitype as a fulfillment of the Levitical high priesthood. Thus, differences contribute to the typological fulfillment of Jesus' high priestly office.

Hermeneutical Need for Jesus' Humanity

Jesus' humanity was not only a qualification for the high priesthood, but also what he required for his ministry. That is why the Hebrews author mentions it in Heb 2:14–18, even before presenting the qualifications in ch. 5. In this subunit, the hermeneutical reason for the need for Jesus' humanity can be found in two ways: (1) to familiarize readers with Jesus' high priesthood; (2) to connect Jesus' high priestly ministry with atonement for sins.

To Familiarize Readers

The term ἀρχιερεύς ("high priest") in 2:17 emphasizes the significance of Jesus' humanity. Given that the author mentions human high priests and Jesus' role as high priest throughout the book, it appears that the author and readers were already familiar with the priesthood of the old cultus.[67] However, the author's first few utterances about

[67] The Hebrews author and readers' familiarity with the old cultus and its high priesthood does not necessarily indicate their Jewish identity. Because there were undoubtedly Jewish Christians among the

the high priesthood in 2:14–18; 3:1 are more likely to be preludes to full discussions of it in relation to that of Jesus. Unlike 5:1–10, the passages 2:14–18; 3:1; and 4:14–15 do not mention the Levitical high priests and instead focus on Jesus' human condition as the high priest.

The author's use of cultic terms such as τελειόω ("to make perfect," 2:10) and ἁγιάζω ("to make holy," 2:11) in the subunit 2:10–13, followed by an explicit mention through the noun, ἀρχιερεύς ("high priest") in 2:17, imply Jesus' high priestly ministry, just as the phrase "purification for sins" (1:3) implies Jesus' high priestly ministry.[68] Although there are several indications in other New Testament books besides Hebrews that point to Jesus' role as high priest,[69] the Hebrews author's direct link between Jesus and high priesthood here would have been surprising to the readers.[70] Because of their familiarity with the Aaronic priesthood of the Levitical sacrificial system, even Jewish

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believers, it is possible that Gentile Christians in the same faith community were also familiar with the Old Testament and its cultic system. Additionally, a separation between the Christian and Jewish religions should be considered. Scholars disagree as to whether a distinct "Christian" community existed at the time Hebrews was written. As Docherty observes, "There is a growing consensus that the rupture between 'Judaism' and 'Christianity' took place later and more gradually than used to be thought" (Docherty, *Use of the Old Testament*, 1n1). For more detailed debate on the issue of the "parting of the ways" between Christianity and Judaism, see Boyarin, *Dying for God*; Boyarin, *Border Lines*; Dunn, ed., *Jews and Christians*; Dunn, *Partings of the Ways*.

[68] Louw and Nida, *Greek–English Lexicon*, 1:744–46. Both terms are found in the cultus-related semantic domains, respectively "Perfect, Perfection" (LN 88.36–88.38) and "Holy and Pure" (88.24–88.35). Eric F. Mason argues that the verb ἁγιάζω is an evident priestly language, which is "normally used in the LXX to translate verbs from קדשׁ root and refers to a cultic state" (Mason, *You Are a Priest Forever*, 21n43).

[69] While Jesus is not explicitly referred to as a high priest, he is described as a mediator in Rom 8:34 and 1 Tim 2:5, which corresponds to certain aspects of the high priest's function. The book of Revelation, in particular, contains myriads of cultic terminologies and images that allude to Jesus and his followers' high priestly roles. See Winkle, "You Are What You Wear," 327–29.

[70] Peterson, *Hebrews*, 102. Peterson recognizes the word ἀρχιερεύς ("high priest") as a "hook word" that attracts the attention of readers. He seems to understand that Paul's description of Jesus in Rom 8:34 as "interceding for us" may indicate Jesus' high priesthood. Westfall asserts that even Jewish readers were unfamiliar with the connection between Jesus and the high priesthood, making this title "new information." See Westfall, *Discourse Analysis*, 107–8. It is notable that Jesus "is called a 'high priest,' rather than a 'priest' (as in Ps. 110:4), because our author views his redemptive work as the antitypical fulfillment of the sacrificial ritual of the Day of Atonement, where the high priest in person was required to officiate (Heb. 9:7, 11f.)" (Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 87n85).

readers might have been unfamiliar with the connection between Jesus and the high priesthood.[71] Moreover, non-Jewish readers may have interpreted this connection as a confirmation that Jesus served religious rituals as the highest-ranking priest since the title referred to the head of government in Greco-Roman religions.[72] In most, if not all instances, this term refers to humans in Second Temple literature, including other New Testament books and the LXX.[73] Thus, the Hebrews author's attribution of high priesthood to Jesus reveals Jesus' humanity because no high priests in any religion have ever been divine beings.

To Connect with Atonement for Sins

Kistemaker observes that the noun ἀρχιερεύς is introduced by "the introductory clauses [that] reveal his state of humiliation, so that his solidarity with fallen humanity might be established."[74] As such, Jesus' high priestly status is based on his humanity, which had two purposes, which are stated in a long sentence with two main verbs. First, Jesus became human in order to "break the power of him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil" (2:14). Second, he was incarnated to "free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death" (2:15).[75] He needed humanity to accomplish these

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[71] Westfall, *Discourse Analysis*, 107–9. She provides reasonable evidence for why the Hebrews readers were most likely unaware of Jesus' high priesthood. "The designation of Jesus as high priest in 2:17–18 introduces a new doctrine, which the author will define and defend at length in the discourse's long discussion in chapters 5–10," she avers (109).

[72] Johnson, *Hebrews*, 103. See examples provided by Johnson, Herodotus, *Hist*. 2.37.1–5; Plato, *Leg*. 947a. Herodotus lists a number of priestly duties in the contemporary Egyptian religion, and Plato describes how to appoint the high priest in the Athenian religion.

[73] E.g., Matt 2:4; 27:1; Mark 2:26; 14:1; Luke 3:2; 22:2; John 7:32; Acts 4:6; Lev 4:3 (LXX); Josh 22:13; 24:33 (LXX); 1 Macc 10:20; 12:3; 2 Macc 3:4; 4:13; 3 Macc 1:11; 4 Macc 4:13; 16; 1 Esd 9:40, 49. See Johnson, *Hebrews*, 103.

[74] Kistemaker, *Psalm Citations*, 106. It can be depicted that Jesus' high priesthood is derived from "his participation in every aspect of humanity (2:17), including the testing experienced in suffering (2:18)" (Peeler, *You Are My Son*, 125).

[75] Peterson, *Hebrews*, 95. As a marker of a conclusion that focuses on the reason, the conjunction

purposes because the participation in death was the substantive means for them. As Lane remarks, thus, "The primary goal of the incarnation was the Son's participation in death, . . . [which] was the logical consequence of his determination to identify himself so completely with his brothers and sisters that there would be no aspect of human experience which he did not share."[76]

The author establishes a correlation between the humanity of Jesus and his high priesthood, and subsequently links his high priesthood to the act of "mak[ing] atonement for the sins" (2:17). In 2:17, there exist four significant aspects pertaining to Jesus' priesthood: (1) humanity; (2) mercy; (3) faithfulness; and (4) atonement for the sins of the people.[77] Namely, the emphasis of Heb 2:14–18 is on Jesus' humanity and its purpose, which is to become a merciful and faithful high priest for atonement of sins.

In this context, "merciful" and "faithful" that modify "high priest" are significant because they allude to the relationship between Jesus' high priesthood and the Levitical high priesthood. As Ellingworth points out, the combination of "merciful" (ἐλεήμων) and "faithful" (πιστός) used multiple times in the Old Testament when God and his covenant are mentioned, and it should be reflected in the high priesthood as well; therefore, "it is remarkable that Hebrews shows no interest in contrasting Jesus with the unfaithful high priests so vigorously attacked in the Qumran writings."[78] Given that God promised

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ὅθεν ("For this reason") in 2:17 may semantically include not only the current subunit 2:14–18 but also the preceding one 2:10–13. See Westfall, *Discourse Analysis*, 103–4. See also Louw and Nida, *Greek–English Lexicon*, 1:721 (LN 84.11).

[76] Lane, *Hebrews*, 1:61. Nevertheless, what made Jesus "a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God" was not just his death, but the entirety of his human experience, as reflected by the phrase, ὤφειλεν κατὰ πάντα τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς ὁμοιωθῆναι ("he had to be made like them, fully human in every way") (Peterson, *Hebrews*, 98).

[77] Kistemaker argues that each of these four elements is related to the Psalm passages and is necessary to comprehend the entire book. For more detailed discussions, see Kistemaker, *Psalm Citations*, 100–101.

[78] Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 182–83. Ellingworth hypothesizes that Hebrews had no interest in the

Samuel in 1 Sam 2:35 that he would raise up a "faithful priest," and that there were both positive (e.g., 2 Macc 15:12; Sir 50:1–24; 4 Macc 7:6; 17:9) and negative (e.g., 2 Macc 4:7–14; 4 Macc 4:15–20; T. Mos. 6:6; 7:9–10) examples, Hebrews's description of Jesus as a "merciful and faithful high priest" should imply that he is the best exemplar of the Levitical priestly tradition.[79]

Jesus' mercy and faithfulness as a high priest are applied to the phrase "in service to God" (τὰ πρὸς τὸν θεὸν) in Heb 2:17, and it is to "make atonement for sins of the people" (εἰς τὸ ἱλάσκεσθαι τὰς ἁμαρτίας τοῦ λαοῦ).[80] In the following verse, it is again referred to as an action of his help (βοηθέω, "to help"), with the phrase πέπονθεν αὐτὸς πειρασθείς ("he himself suffered when he was tempted"), indicating Jesus' humanity.[81] Thus, Jesus is perfectly qualified to help those who are under temptation because of his suffering in his role as the merciful and faithful high priest who made expiation for the sins of the people. It is significant that his high priestly qualification here is based on his humanity, and it resulted in helping "Abraham's descendants" (2:16) by "mak[ing] atonement for the sins of the people" (2:17). The goal of Jesus' merciful and faithful high priesthood is to purify people's sins,[82] and this theme is to "dominate its [Hebrews's]

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contemporary cultus. In general, it makes sense, but there is no evidence that the author of Hebrews distinguished between the Levitical cultus of his time and the Old Testament period. Regarding the Qumran writings' robust condemnations of the unfaithful high priests, including John Hyrcanus and his successors, see Buchanan, "Present State of Scholarship," 322–25.

[79] Koester, *Hebrews*, 241.

[80] The NIV translates these two phrases as if they are each modified by the conjunction ἵνα, rendering, "in order that . . . and that . . ." Most other English translations, on the other hand, connect them as a causal relationship, which is more likely. For example, the NRSV renders, "*so that* he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, *to* make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the people" (emphasis added).

[81] The causal conjunctive phrase ἐν ᾧ γὰρ ("Because") indicates that Jesus' humanity enabled him to purify people's sins (ἐν, BDAG, 329). According to Ellingworth, the meaning of 2:17 becomes more explicit in 2:18, and it means that "Christ's high-priestly work in dealing with sin is specially related to his death. This is the force of γάρ" (Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 190).

[82] Several scholars argue that ἱλάσκεσθαι ("to atone") is the goal of Jesus' priestly self-offering. For example, Attridge, *Hebrews*,96; Grässer, *An die Hebräer*, 1:153–54; Koester, *Hebrews*, 240–41; Lane,

central expository section (5:1—10:18, with 4:14–16 and 10:19–25)."[83]

The author of Hebrews draws a socio-religious line between purity and impurity through Jesus' purification for sins, who is the human high priest. Notably, his high priestly ministry is based on his complete humanity, which allows him to help other humans by atoning for their sins. The author establishes a key criterion for the readers' collective identity based on Jesus' high priesthood, which is linked to his humanity and purification ministry.

Sinfulness and Sinlessness

The Levitical high priests and the high priest Jesus share humanity, but they differ significantly in terms of sin. While the author of Hebrews is well aware of this distinction, the way he addresses each high priest's sins emphasizes Jesus' sinlessness rather than human high priests' weakness and sinfulness. The author's first mention of the high priest's sin appears in Heb 4:14–15, emphasizing the importance of Jesus' high priesthood as the focal point of our faith, in which we should put our trust.[84] It is suggested that the believers' faith is founded on both Jesus' humanity and his sinlessness. Given that several commentators see 4:14 as the introduction to 5:1–10,[85] which

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Hebrews, 1.65–66; Ribbens, *Levitical Sacrifice and Heavenly Cult*, 206–11; Richardson, *Pioneer and Perfector of Faith*, 28–45. Some others interpret it as Jesus' high priestly intercession, which continues in heaven. For example, Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 186; Gäbel, *Die Kulttheologie des Hebräerbriefes*, 213–27.

[83] Jamieson, *Jesus' Death and Heavenly Offering*, 115. Cf. Peeler, *You Are My Son*, 106.

[84] Westfall argues that the author here "reactivates 2:17—3:1, and explicitly connects it to the command to hold on to the confession" (Westfall, *Discourse Analysis*, 137).

[85] Most, if not all, consider 4:14–16 or 4:14—5:10 to be a subunit. For those who bind 4:14—5:10 as a subunit, see Allen, *Hebrews*, 301; Attridge, *Hebrews*, 137; Hagner, "Hebrews: A Book for Today," 78; Johnson, *Hebrews*, 137; Mason, *You Are a Priest Forever*, 23–25. Those who regard 4:14–16 are Bruce, *Hebrews*, 114; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 265; Guthrie, *Hebrews (TNTC)*, 124; Guthrie, *Hebrews (NIVAC)*, 173; Harris, *Hebrews*, 109. On the other hand, Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 221; Kistemaker, *Hebrews*, 122; Koester, *Hebrews*, 292; Peterson, *Hebrews*, 132, bind 4:14–16 as a paragraph under the subunit 4:14—5:10. Cf. Lane argues that 4:14 forms an "*inclusio* that brackets 3:1—4:14 as an integral unit based on Jesus' faithfulness as high priest," and views 4:15—5:10 as a subunit (Lane, *Hebrews*, 1:96—105). See also

introduces Jesus' high priesthood in general terms, it can be argued that whatever is said about human high priests' sins must serve to emphasize Jesus' sinlessness in relation to his high priestly ministry.

In 4:14, Jesus' high priesthood is modified by an adjective, μέγας ("great"), and it was not totally strange because Simon Thassi was once called by the same expression, "the great high priest" (1 Macc 13:42; 14:27).[86] Some insist that this expression reflects Jesus' total difference from other high priests. For example, Attridge argues that the term *great* denotes "an entirely different order of priesthood from that of the descendants of Aaron," and Cockerill says that it "underscores the unspeakable greatness of this High Priest, who is far superior to the Levitical priests because he is 'powerful to save.'"[87] However, it should be noted that Jesus has the same title and office as other high priests. It is true that the author distinguishes Jesus' high priesthood from that of others, but both offices are still comparable in terms of responsibilities and function, despite differences in order and tribe, especially when 5:1–10 is taken into account. The greatness of Jesus' high priesthood can be attributed to two main factors: The first is that Jesus "ascended into heaven" and is the "Son of God."[88] He is, nonetheless, still a high priest. Even though it is not explicitly stated, Jesus' ascension into heaven can be understood as his presentation before God as a high priest, following the "Levitical pattern of a priest

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Vanhoye, *Structure and Message*, 25–26. Although there are some minor structural differences, it is undeniable that 4:14–15 serves as an introduction to the passage that follows in 5:1–10. See Attridge, *Hebrews*, 138; Koester, *Hebrews*, 291. Attridge argues that the aforementioned Jesus' title, the "merciful" high priest, also applies to the Christological discussion in 4:14—5:9 (Attridge, "New Covenant Christology," 289–90).

[86] Koester, *Hebrews*, 282. See also Philo, *Dreams* 1:219; 2:183.

[87] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 139; Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 223. See also Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 266.

[88] Peeler, *You Are My Son*, 128. The ascension of Jesus will be discussed in relation to the heavenly tabernacle in the following chapter. Amy L. B. Peeler acknowledges the complex and difficult-to-identify relationship between the two identities of Jesus presented in 4:14, Son and high priest (107–8). Cf. Moffitt, *Atonement and the Logic of Resurrection*, 202; Rooke, "Jesus as Royal Priest," 83.

bringing a sacrifice into God's presence" (cf. Heb 9:24).[89]

As Koester claims, the author here "offers the Christian community a focus for its identity that distinguishes it from the dominant Greco-Roman culture while allowing it to develop the tradition of Israel."[90] Jesus is presented as a great high priest, thereby justifying the importance of "hold[ing] firmly to the faith we profess" (4:14).[91] Furthermore, the term ὁμολογία ("profess") reminds us of 3:1 (. . . τὸν ἀπόστολον καὶ ἀρχιερέα τῆς ὁμολογίας ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν, ". . . Jesus, whom we acknowledge as our apostle and high priest"), where Jesus' high priesthood was introduced in a merciful and faithful manner by virtue of his human and divine origins. As Jesus the merciful and faithful high priest is to be acknowledged (ὁμολογία) by us both as a human who was made like Abraham's descendants and as the divine one sent by God (3:1), Jesus the great high priest is to be professed (ὁμολογία) as the one who can sympathize with us as the same human being and who is sinless as the divine being (4:14–15). The author is laying the groundwork for a more detailed presentation and explanation of Jesus' high priesthood in the following chapter, particularly in 5:1–10.[92]

It is worth noting that Jesus is identified in 3:1 as having two offices, "our apostle

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[89] Moffitt, *Rethinking the Atonement*, 162. Moffitt basically views Jesus' ascension (Luke 24:50–51; Acts 1:9) as "his entering into the heavenly tabernacle (see esp. [Heb] 8:1–2; 9:24) and into the heavenly holy of holies in particular" (174). His argument has sparked a number of debates about each stage of Jesus' redemptive ministry from the crucifixion through the death and resurrection to his ascension, especially in terms of the point at which his once for all sacrifice is completed to complete the salvation. For his entire argument, see Moffitt, *Atonement and the Logic of Resurrection*. For a survey of the academic response, see Jamieson, "When and Where Did Jesus Offer Himself?"

[90] Koester, *Hebrews*, 292. For a discussion of whether or not a distinct "Christian" community existed at that time, see above.

[91] Peterson explains Jesus' greatness not only in terms of his Sonship and ascension, but also in terms of his suffering and death in order to "make atonement for the sins of the people" (2:17). When considering 5:1–10 and the entire exposition of Jesus' high priesthood, his argument is convincing (Peterson, *Hebrews*, 133).

[92] See Peterson, *Hebrews and Perfection*, 75–76.

and high priest," as well as being the subject of our contemplation.[93] Jesus is not called ἀπόστολος ("apostle") anywhere else in the New Testament, so the application of this word to Jesus may strike readers as unusual. Nonetheless, it must not have sounded strange because the author repeatedly alludes to Jesus' apostolic role as the divine messenger in the unit 1:1—2:4. Regarding the author's introduction of Jesus in 3:1 as the apostle and high priest, it is worthwhile to listen to Westfall as follows:

> The word 'apostle' is constrained by the preceding co-text, and ἀπόστολος belongs to the same category of divine messenger as προφήτης (prophet) and ἄγγελος (angel). In Christian circles, the term ἀπόστολος referred to both God's messengers and church leaders and is used metaphorically by the author to express the topic in 1:1–2:4: Jesus is God's ultimate messenger. The elaboration of apposition of Jesus as a high priest summarizes the destination and conclusion of 2:5–18. The author presents the functions of apostle and high priest as two separate roles. The role of apostle is associated with the domain of speech and language, and the role of high priest is associated with the semantic domains of religious roles and functions, and also with mercy and help through Jesus' identification with humanity. The author is commanding the readers to think of Jesus in terms of these two key roles.[94]

Considering that Jesus' apostleship is further developed until 4:16 and that his high priesthood begins to be developed, justified, and emphasized after that, therefore, 3:1 marks the beginning of the genuine development of the author's primary focus, Jesus' new cultus exemplified by his high priesthood. As Hagner expresses succinctly, "the objective truth that we profess as Christians has been *delivered by Jesus as apostle* and

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[93] Numerous scholars concur that the introductory inferential conjunction ὅθεν ("therefore") reminds us of what the author has been discussing up to this point: Jesus' apostleship was presented in 1:1—2:4 and his high priesthood was described in 2:5–18. For example, Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 159–60; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 197; Guthrie, *Hebrews (TNTC)*, 100–101; Harris, *Hebrews*, 68; Kistemaker, *Hebrews*, 83; Koester, *Hebrews*, 242; Lane, *Hebrews*, 1:71–72; Schreiner, *Hebrews*, 112. Westfall offers more detailed and persuasive arguments that 3:1 not only summarizes and concludes the two units but also "accomplishes a clear topic shift to the next unit in 3:2" on the basis of ὅθεν, "which, at the beginning of the clause, signals an extension or inference drawn from a fact or facts" (Westfall, *Discourse Analysis*, 111–15).

[94] Westfall, *Discourse Analysis*, 112.

accomplished by Jesus as high priest."[95]

There are a few references to human high priests' sinfulness, which necessitates another purification ritual for them (e.g., 5:3; 7:27; 9:7). However, none of them highlight any flaws of the old high priesthood or cultuses, but rather they supply a neutral description of the Levitical sacrificial system or a hermeneutical basis for justifying Jesus' high priesthood. Overall, the author's primary focus is on highlighting Jesus' humanity in order to establish his qualifications as a high priest and demonstrate his ability to emphasize human believers.[96] As Bruce says, "His [Jesus'] *transcendence* . . . has made no difference to his humanity."[97] The author's presentations of Jesus' humanity in Heb 2:14–18 and 4:14–15 progress to the point where he provides a comprehensive discussion of the high priesthood of both the old and new cultic systems in Heb 5.[98] Right before moving on, in 4:16,[99] the author briefly presents the "implications of the preceding verse[s]," 4:14–15, of what the author and readers can do to obtain help based on faith in the human high priest Jesus.[100]

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[95] Hagner, "Hebrews: A Book for Today," 59 (emphasis added).

[96] Attridge, "New Covenant Christology," 289. See also Gelardini, "Charting 'Outside the Camp,'" 219; Peterson, *Hebrews and Perfection*, 188–90; Peterson, *Hebrews*, 134–35. Cf. Williamson, "Hebrews 4:15 and the Sinlessness of Jesus," 4–8.

[97] Bruce, *Hebrews*, 115 (emphasis added). I understand that "transcendence" refers to *sinlessness*.

[98] For the development of Jesus' humanity as a theme in Hebrews, see Attridge, "Liberating Death's Captives" 258. Attridge elsewhere says, "The accent in this verse is finally on the likeness of the suffering human Jesus to the addressees, an important element, in Hebrews' paraenetic program" (Attridge, *Hebrews*, 141).

[99] God's throne of grace, to which they are exhorted to approach confidently, is also where Jesus the great high priest is present, as stated in 1:3: "he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven." See Gäble, "You Don't Have Permission to Access This Site," 142n27, 172; Moffitt, *Rethinking the Atonement*, 177n23.

[100] Peterson, *Hebrews*, 135. "[B]cause Jesus has been tempted in every way, he is able to sympathize with the weaknesses of his siblings. Jesus' ability to sympathize propels the author to encourage his readers to approach the throne of grace with boldness. Because Jesus sits at God's right hand and can understand their struggles, they have an advocate in heaven who can provide them with grace and help in their times of need" (Peeler, *You Are My Son*, 134).

Descriptions of the Two High Priests

Most ancient religions did not allow laypeople to perform purification rituals alone, but instead appointed sacrificers who were experts in the details of cultic processes and performed rituals for their sake.[101] Although the author of Hebrews does not state that lay believers are not permitted to offer something directly to God, he does recognize the need for sacrificers, specifically high priests. The Levitical high priests and Jesus, as offering agents for the people, share similarities and differences in their offering performances. Identifying their similarities and differences will help determine the author's attitude toward each high priest, particularly whether he is disparaging of the Levitical high priests or not.

Having Something to Offer

As already discussed earlier in this chapter, the author of Hebrews proposes a list of general qualifications for the high priestly office in Heb 5:1–10,[102] with the first mention being that high priests must have something to offer (5:1). The term προσφέρω ("to offer") is used in Hebrews more than in other New Testament books to indicate cultic offerings done by high priests, and demonstrating that the primary task of high priests is to offer.[103] In 5:7, Jesus is described as having "offered up prayers and petitions," with the same verb προσφέρω, indicating his high priesthood.[104] The high priest Jesus, as a

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[101] Steiner, *Taboo*, 36–41; Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 57–58; Hubert and Mauss, *Sacrifice*, 30–37. See also the methodology chapter of this study.

[102] See Attridge, "New Covenant Christology," 290. See also Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 237.

[103] Ellingworth remarks, "This [the use of προσφέρω] is in line with the author's *exclusive interest in the cultic aspects* of Mosaic Law" (Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 273, emphasis added). See Harris, *Hebrews*, 116.

[104] Cf. Attridge is correct when he argued, "The personal sacrifice of the new High Priest illustrates his humanity just as much as did the sin offerings of the priests of old indicated theirs." The point of these verses [Heb 5:1–10] is that both the Levitical high priests and Jesus had the same high priestly

human, performed sacrificial offerings.[105] As Moffitt emphasizes, the author of Hebrews employs the term προσφέρω to focus on the act of offering something to God, specifically the entire process of the sacrificial ritual performed by the high priest.[106] The high priestly *offering* by the Levitical high priests with the same term προσφέρω is mentioned in 5:3 as a general cultic regulation.[107] While the specific objects of their offerings are not specified, their behavior of making offerings is evidently alluded to.

The same requirement for high priests that they must have something to "offer" (προσφέρω) is again mentioned in 8:3, and it is immediately applied to Jesus as the high priest by saying, ὅθεν ἀναγκαῖον ἔχειν τι καὶ τοῦτον ὃ προσενέγκῃ ("this one [Jesus] *also* to *have something to offer*"). The author here emphasizes the similarity of what both high priests were required to do: offer something. There must be some dissimilarities between them, such as what they offered and what the effect was, but the author's purpose in chs. 5 and 8 is to reassure the readers that they have Jesus as high priest, who qualifies the principle that "every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices." To justify Jesus' high priesthood, the author hermeneutically relies on the condition of the Levitical high priest's offering qualification. Inversely, the old cultus's human high priests are valued by applying their condition to Jesus. Thus, Jesus' high priestly qualification is strengthened by presenting it in the context of the Levitical high priests' offering qualification.

In addition, Jesus became the high priest in heaven rather than on earth because

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qualification, humanity. See Attridge, "New Covenant Christology," 292.

[105] Indeed, this characteristic renders it comparable to the offerings of the high priests in 5:1.

[106] Moffitt, *Atonement and the Logic of Resurrection*, 36n103, see 229n30. See also Jamieson, *Jesus' Death and Heavenly Offering*, 17, 39n40.

[107] What they offered—δῶρά ("gifts") and θυσίας ("sacrifices")—will be discussed below.

human high priests already existed on earth and he valued them (8:4). To paraphrase 8:4, Jesus is indeed a high priest, but his ministry must be performed in the heavenly tabernacle because there was no place for him to do so in the earthly tabernacle. The author's focus in high priestly ministry is to offer something. However, Jesus did not need to become a high priest on earth because the Levitical high priests' offering ministry had been successful in fulfilling all of God's intentions. Rather than criticizing the Levitical high priesthood, it thus demonstrates the author's respect for what they accomplished.

Their Ritual Performances

In terms of the relationship between the old and new high priests, the manner in which they offered offerings also helps to identify their similarities and differences. It may include specifics about the ritual procedures that high priests actually carried out during the ritual, such as their behaviors and postures. Unlike the other descriptions of the two high priests discussed above, there is no overlap in how they conducted offering procedures. Nevertheless, it does not reveal the author's respect for one and disrespect for another, but rather his respect for both while emphasizing one on the basis of the other.

Ritual Sequence

Hebrews does not detail what high priests do step by step when performing purification rituals. In 9:6–7, the author contrasts the duties of the Levitical priests and high priests, referring back to what he said in verses 1–5 with the introductory phrase, τοῦτων δὲ

οὕτως κατεσκευασμένων (“When everything had been arranged like this”).[108] The main difference between them is the availability to enter the inner room, the Holy of Holies: only the high priest could enter the Holy of Holies (9:6), whereas priests could only enter the outer room, the Holy Place (9:7).[109] It should be noted that neither priests nor high priests are denigrated by this distinction. Even if access to the inner room determines their dominance relation, neither high priests nor priests are implied to be ineffective or deficient. The author is simply depicting the high priestly ritual sequence of the old cultic system.

Based on this, Jesus’ cultic performance is described, which appears to include both priestly and high priestly roles.[110] In 9:11–12, Jesus is depicted as having gone through the heavenly tabernacle (σκηνή) and arriving at the Holy of Holies (ἅγια). Some scholars insist that the σκηνή refers to Jesus’ resurrected body, but it should be noted that the preposition διά (“through”) emphasizes the local meaning of what it modifies.[111] As Jamieson argues, therefore, “Hebrews’ heavenly sanctuary is bipartite; like its earthly counterpart it has a Holy Place and a Holy of Holies. By reporting Christ’s passage through the heavenly tent into its Holy of Holies, Hebrews underscores this *parallel*

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[108] Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 432.

[109] As Westfall observes, “The activity of the high priest (ὁ ἀρχιερεύς) in v. 7 is both in contrast with and parallel to the activity of the priests in v. 6, providing contrasts of space, time and manner” (Westfall, *Discourse Analysis*, 198). Ellingworth’s table effectively illustrates this parallel with the contrast (Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 432).

[110] Hebrews does not distinguish between Jesus’ priestly and high priestly roles, but both ἱερεύς (“priest,” LN 53.87) and ἀρχιερεύς (“high priest,” 53.89) are used multiple times (Louw and Nida, *Greek–English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 1:543).

[111] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 245–46; Gäbel, *Die Kulttheologie des Hebräerbriefes*, 285; Lane, *Hebrews*, 2:229; Moffatt, *Hebrews*, 121; Ribbens, *Levitical Sacrifice and Heavenly Cult*, 114–15. Others prefer the instrumental meaning, arguing that the tabernacle here symbolizes Jesus’ body, but this cannot be the sole basis for the argument. Despite the instrumental meaning of διά, the tabernacle can still be interpreted literally. For those who prefer the instrumental meaning, see Barnard, *Mysticism of Hebrews*, 112–13; Koester, *Hebrews*, 408; Schenck, *Cosmology and Eschatology*, 164.

between *Christ's Yom Kippur offering* and that of *the Levitical cult*."[112]

The author elsewhere mentions that the Levitical high priests performed sacrifices "first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people" (Heb 7:27). Although not every single movement is described, we recognize that the Levitical high priests took two major steps. It could literally mean that human high priests in the old cultic system were sinners who needed to be purified, revealing their inferiority to the high priest Jesus. In contrast to the human high priests, the author states that Jesus "does not need to" do so. However, we must pay attention to what the author is attempting to convey with this statement in 7:27.

We need to briefly examine 7:26–28 as a subunit to ascertain the author's intent and why he includes verse 27. In 7:26, three adjectives emphasize Jesus' cultic and priestly qualifications, and two participial phrases emphasize "his position in his present high priestly ministry."[113] The word ὅσιος ("holy") is used only here in the entire book of Hebrews, and it belongs to the same semantic domain (LN 88.24) with the more common term ἅγιος.[114] They differ from each other, however, because ὅσιος refers to a "quality of piety or devotion to God," most notably that of Jesus, whereas ἅγιος refers to a "relationship of being set apart from evil and for God."[115] While the adjective ὅσιος implies Jesus' inner disposition, the word ἄκακος ("blameless") indicates his external guiltless life that results in the needlessness of the atonement for his own sins in contrast to the Levitical high priests as described in the following verse, verse 27.[116] Furthermore,

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[112] Jamieson, *Jesus' Death and Heavenly Offering*, 60 (emphasis added).
[113] Westfall, *Discourse Analysis*, 176.
[114] Louw and Nida, *Greek–English Lexicon*, 1:744. See also ὅσιος, ία, ον, BDAG, 728.
[115] Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 393. Nevertheless, the distinction is not absolute. Cf. Attridge, *Hebrews*, 212n89.
[116] Kistemaker, *Hebrews*, 206. Allen, *Hebrews*, 430.

while ἄκακος suggests that Jesus, as high priest, actively avoids evil, the third adjective ἀμίαντος ("pure") describes his default state in a passive manner.[117] These three adjectives collectively characterize him "as separate from sinners."[118]

Some argue that the three adjectives explain the first participial clause κεχωρισμένος ἀπὸ τῶν ἁμαρτωλῶν ("set apart from sinners") in their negative aspects, but Lane contends that the idiom κεχωρισμένος ἀπό (the passive of χωρίζειν followed by ἀπό) should denote "local separation" based on the "comparative study of the linguistic usage of the verb χωρίζειν in the passive" voice and the findings from the later books of the LXX (e.g., 1 Esd 7:13; 9:7; Ezra 9:1; and Neh 9:2), rather than the moral separateness.[119] Nevertheless, all these three adjectives and the first participial clause connote a cultic and ritual sense that must culminate in the fulfillment of sin purification.[120] Finally, the final participial clause ὑψηλότερος τῶν οὐρανῶν ("exalted above the heavens") reveals that Jesus' high priestly role is the fulfillment of the Levitical high priesthood in these cultic aspects, justifying the need of the high priest Jesus.

When the author mentions the first step of the ritual that purifies the Levitical high priests themselves in 7:27, he does not mean to disparage them; rather, he emphasizes Jesus as the ultimate high priest who is sinless, as evidenced by its one-time nature.[121] In verse 28, the author associates the high priesthood with the Sonship by using the term υἱόν ("Son"), revealing his intention to focus on Jesus again while not

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[117] Grundmann, "ἄκακος," 3:482.

[118] Schrenk, "ἀρχιερεύς," 3:280. According to Gottlob Schrenk, Jesus is "ὅσιος (wholly orientated in thought and act to God and His service), ἄκακος (untouched by evil), and ἀμίαντος (unspotted), and therefore as separate from sinners."

[119] Lane, *Hebrews*, 1:192. Cf. Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 393.

[120] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 212–13; Westfall, *Discourse Analysis*, 176.

[121] Koester argues that 7:27 simply "points out characteristics inherent in the institution itself": While the Levitical priests offer daily sacrifices *for themselves* and for others, the high priest Jesus offers a single sacrifice *of himself* for others (Koester, *Hebrews*, 373).

disparaging the Levitical high priesthood.[122] Therefore, the difference between the ritual sequences performed by the two high priests highlights the excellence of Jesus' high priesthood; the seemingly inferior human high priests' double performances serve to highlight Jesus as the high priest.

High Priests' Postures

Another criterion that helps us identify the difference between the Levitical high priests and Jesus is their posture in terms of ritual performances. Hebrews 10:11–12 appears to draw a contrast between the postures of Levitical priests and Jesus. According to the author, "every [Levitical] priest stands and performs his religious duties" that cannot completely remove sin, whereas Jesus "sat down" after offering the final sacrifice for sins. Most commentators argue that this passage contrasts the ability to remove sins between the sacrificial cultuses of the Levitical priests and the high priest Jesus, focusing solely on their sin-removing efficacy.[123] The difference in postures, the Levitical priests standing and Jesus sitting, is frequently interpreted as a demonstration of the dramatic contrast between the ineffective Levitical priests' performance and the effective Jesus' atonement.[124]

It is true that the Levitical priests were unable to sit during the ritual performance, but Jesus' sitting posture occurred after everything had been completed. As a result, the

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[122] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 209–10.

[123] E.g., Allen, *Hebrews*, 501–2; Attridge, *Hebrews*, 279–80; Bruce, *Hebrews*, 244–46; Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 447–50; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 507–10; Johnson, *Hebrews*, 253–54; Kistemaker, *Hebrews*, 280–81; Lane, *Hebrews*, 2:266–67; Peterson, *Hebrews*, 228–29; Schreiner, *Hebrews*, 303–4

[124] For example, Peterson argues that "standing represents the continuing need for sacrificial ministry under the law (Deut. 18:5)," and Jesus' "sitting contrasts with the standing of the levitical priests, expressing the completion and enduring effect of his sacrificial work." He goes on to say, "No levitical priest ever sat in Israel's earthly sanctuary, but Christ is portrayed as having sat down in the heavenly sanctuary" (Peterson, *Hebrews*, 228–29).

standing and sitting postures cannot be compared at the same level, and thus are not in contrast. Rather, Hebrews seems to be illustrating a continuity of purpose between the Levitical priesthood and Jesus's high priestly ministry. The standing posture of the Levitical priests while offering sacrifices demonstrates their active participation in the ongoing process of atonement. Jesus, on the other hand, sits because his work accomplishes the ultimate goal of all previous offerings: the final removal of sin. By juxtaposing standing and sitting, the author of Hebrews depicts a progression rather than rejection, as Jesus completes the work to which the priests' ministry was always oriented. In other words, the author emphasizes the procedure of the purifying sacrifice performed by the Levitical priests in their standing posture, which is completed by the high priest Jesus in his sitting posture. In summary, Jesus' sitting is portrayed as a fulfillment of the Levitical priests' standing.

This interpretation implies that Hebrews does not intend a negative critique of the Levitical high priesthood, but rather a confirmation of its role in pointing to Jesus's completed ministry. The image of Jesus sitting represents the achievement of redemption's goal, allowing him to sit in divine authority. In this way, Heb 10:11–12 emphasizes the continuity between the Levitical priests' cultic practices and Jesus' final, comprehensive high priestly duty, which brings the old cultus to its intended fulfillment.

Purity Obtained through the High Priests

The book of Hebrews presents two distinct yet interrelated roles of high priesthood: The Levitical high priests, who sought purification through continuous offerings, and Jesus Christ, whose single high priestly act resulted in complete purification and perfection.

Both are associated with the purification process, though they operate within different frameworks and with different degrees of efficacy. While their distinction emphasizes the unique efficacy of Jesus' high priestly ministry, the author values the Levitical priests' role as a foundational, God-ordained pursuit of purity that pointed toward Jesus' ultimate, once-for-all achievement. This section investigates the shared and contrasting aspects of purity achieved through their ministries, which go beyond ritual cleanliness to encompass atonement, salvation, perfection, and proximity to God.[125]

Pursuit of Purification for Sins

In terms of sin treatment, the author makes the first mention in Heb 2:17, referring to Jesus' pursuit of atonement for sins. The meaning of the Greek verb ἱλάσκεσθαι ("to make atonement") is controversial because, depending on the context, it can mean either "expiation of sins" or "propitiation of God's wrath."[126] The majority of scholars hold that ἱλάσκεσθαι in Heb 2:17 contains both meanings because the entire book of Hebrews mentions both the expiatory function of Jesus' sacrifice that deals with sin (e.g., Heb 1:3; 2:17; 5:9; 9:14, 26–28; 10:14, 18) and God's wrath (e.g., Heb 3:10–11, 15–17; 6:8; 10:27; 12:26–29).[127] Georg Gäbel claims that the phrase ἱλάσκεσθαι τὰς ἁμαρτίας ("make

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[125] Peterson remarks, "Perfection is not synonymous with cleansing from sin, though it involves the latter as a most significant element. Perfection is also not synonymous with sanctification, though the two concepts are closely related. The terminology of perfection is used to proclaim the fulfilment or consummation of men and women in a permanent, direct and personal relationship with God" (Peterson, *Possessed by God*, 36). Ribbens similarly distinguishes between purification and perfection. He says, "The purification (καθαρίζειν) of the conscience is necessary for the worshiper to have παρρησία, which is essential for access to the divine presence (τελειοῦν)" (Ribbens, *Levitical Sacrifice and Heavenly Cult*, 196).

[126] For a thorough discussion on this issue, see Ribbens, *Levitical Sacrifice and Heavenly Cult*, 206–11.

[127] Bruce, *Hebrews*, 88; Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 150–51; Eberhart, "To Atone or Not to Atone," 227–28n88; Kistemaker, *Hebrews*, 77; Koester, *Hebrews*, 241; Ribbens, *Levitical Sacrifice and Heavenly Cult*, 208. See Attridge, *Hebrews*, 96n192.

atonement for sins") is a unique collocation that does not appear in the LXX in a cultic sense.[128] However, the immediate context has nothing to do with God's wrath, so we may focus solely on its expiatory significance regardless of the possibility of a connection with its propitiatory meaning.[129]

As Richard Bauckham remarks, "Although the text does not propound a systematic doctrine of atonement, it does wrestle implicitly with the issue of how sacrifice works."[130] In 2:19, the author reiterates Jesus' ability to help people based on his own humanity; the help may refer to the purification of people's sins.[131] Furthermore, 5:1 states that the purpose of high priestly ministry is "to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins."[132] Given the shared objectives of both instances, namely the resolution of transgressions, the high priestly function that the author refers to is purification for sins,[133] which was already alluded to in 1:3, even before the term *high priest* (ἀρχιερεύς) appeared.

Hebrews describes the Levitical high priesthood's sacrificial offerings as a dedicated, continual pursuit of purity on behalf of Israel. Passages such as Heb 5:1 and 5:3 portray the high priests as those who "offer gifts and sacrifices for sins" and "offer sacrifices for [their] own sins," emphasizing the repetitive nature of their work (Heb 7:11, 19). It is a matter of debate whether the modifier ὑπὲρ ἁμαρτιῶν ("for sins") modifies

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[128] Gäbel, *Die Kulttheologie des Hebräerbriefes*, 218–27.

[129] Koester also acknowledges that both meanings of ἱλάσκεσθαι are possible, but claims that the "dominant element" is expiation based on the author's earlier statement that Jesus "made purification for sins" (1:3) (Koester, *Hebrews*, 241).

[130] Bauckham, "Divinity of Jesus Christ," 98n10.

[131] The causal conjunctive phrase ἐν ᾧ γὰρ ("Because") establishes the causal relationship between Jesus' humanity and purification for people's sins (ἐν, BDAG, 329).

[132] Hebrews 5:1 initially refers to one of the characteristics of the Levitical high priests, but it should also apply to Jesus because it is a general regulation. See the following paragraph.

[133] See Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 273; Lane, *Hebrews*, 1:116; Ribbens, *Levitical Sacrifice and Heavenly Cult*, 151; Ribbens, "Positive Function of Levitical Sacrifice," 100–101.

both δῶρά (“gifts”) and θυσίας (“sacrifices”) in 5:1 or only the latter.[134] However, it is important to note that the subject of the sentence is the Levitical high priest (ἀρχιερεύς), and they offered something to deal with sins. This pursuit reflects a sincere, divinely instituted means of maintaining covenantal purity, even as it was never intended to achieve a final complete purification.[135]

The pursuit is thus one of obedience and faithfulness, while also acknowledging its divine purpose within the framework of the covenant. Granted, 7:11 appears to indicate that the Levitical high priesthood did not achieve “perfection.” Considering the verse in isolation from the Hebrews author’s whole understanding of the Levitical high priesthood, particularly its divine appointment mentioned in 5:1 and 4, it may appear that he denigrates the Aaronic priesthood due to its inability to attain perfection in comparison to another, Melchizedekian priest.

However, it should be noted that God appointed the Levitical high priests in accordance with his divine purpose, as described in 7:11. Their priesthood’s inability to achieve perfection is not a critique of its worth, but rather an indication that its purpose was to lead to greater fulfillment.[136] The author’s characterization of the “former regulation” on which the Levitical high priests’ duty is based as “weak and useless” so that it must be “set aside” in 7:18 may lead interpreters to conclude that Hebrews

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[134] For an overview of the debate, see Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 273–75.

[135] Peterson, *Hebrews and Perfection*, 126–67. Peterson acknowledges that the purpose of the Law was to define “the requirements of life” as a preparation for believers to reach the ultimate perfection, which will be accomplished by Jesus. He characterizes the goal of the Law as “man’s approach to God in a cultic sense” (130). Peterson cites Westcott, saying, “The aim of a religious system is τελείωσις (7:11), to bring men to their true end, when all the fulness of humanity in power and development is brought into *fellowship with God*” (Westcott, *Hebrews*, 66, emphasis added).

[136] Peterson, *Hebrews and Perfection*, 126–30. Peterson describes this dynamic as a “shadow” that “foreshadowed” the coming, effective purification through Jesus (esp. 130–32).

devalues the old covenant or, at the very least, the Levitical sacrificial system.[137] It is true that the author uses the term ἀθέτησις ("to be set aside"), which means "the process of causing something to be set aside, removal" and indicates here "annulment" as a legal term, thus posing a negative connotation in the sense of its removal or cessation as a prior binding regulation, the "former regulation" (προαγούσης ἐντολῆς).[138] However, the apparent limitations of the Levitical high priest should be viewed in terms of its function in relation to perfection rather than whether it achieves perfection or not. Although the author describes the old cultus's high priests as "weak and useless" in 7:18 in order to emphasize the need for another one, the expression must be understood in terms of the fulfillment of perfection.

The Levitical high priests are ineffective in terms of attaining perfection, but it is God who established the high priesthood in the order of Aaron, most likely as a preparation for perfection. In other words, Hebrews considers the Levitical high priests to be "useful" for preparing for achieving perfection as the type, when viewed typologically. The high priesthood established by God seeks perfection, as prepared by the Levitical high priest and fulfilled by the high priest Jesus. The purity achieved was thus sufficient for its temporal purpose, foreshadowing the deeper, eternal purity to come. As Ribbens points out, Hebrews upholds the Levitical priests' role as foundational yet anticipatory,

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[137] Among numerous scholars, John M. Scholer rejects the possibility of real hope from in old covenant and its sacrificial system. He criticizes Eduard Riggenbach's contention, "Allerdings verlieh auch schon die gesetzliche Ordnung eine Hoffnung; denn die ganze Opferdarbringung war von der Erwartung getragen, dadurch die Vergebung und die Beseitigung aller Storungen im Verhaltnis zu Gott zu erlangen [However, even the legal order gave hope, because the entire sacrificial offering was based on the expectation of obtaining forgiveness and the removal of all disturbances in the relationship with God]," designating it as an "error" (Scholer, *Proleptic Priests*, 116n4). Cf. Riggenbach, *Der brief an die Hebraër*, 203.

[138] ἀθέτησις, BDAG, 24. Peterson contends that the "former regulation" refers to "the system as a whole" and, more specifically, "the ordinance of priesthood" (Peterson, *Hebrews and Perfection*, 111).

designed to bring worshipers into a form of relationship with God while not completely removing sin.[139]

Achievement of Perfection

Unlike the pursuit of the Levitical high priesthood, Jesus' high priestly ministry accomplishes purity permanently. The author emphasizes several times that Jesus obtains all-encompassing and eternal purity through his singular and perfect sacrifice (e.g., Heb 1:3; 4:16; 5:9; 7:25).[140] In particular, Heb 1:3 describes Jesus as having "made purification for sins" and then sitting at God's right hand, indicating that his sacrificial work is complete.[141] This purity goes beyond the ritualistic, penetrating the conscience and providing direct access to God in 7:25, which states that Jesus is able to "save *completely* those who come to God through him," implying that his act is both purifying and perfecting.

This shift from process to fulfillment aligns with Hebrews's overall emphasis on Jesus' high priesthood, particularly in 4:16 and 5:9, where his sacrificial role provides believers with direct, lasting access to God. Moffitt contends that Jesus' achievement of purification is inextricably linked to his resurrection and exaltation, which establish his

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[139] Ribbens, *Levitical Sacrifice and Heavenly Cult*, 236.

[140] For a comprehensive definition of perfection (τελειοῦν), see Ribbens, *Levitical Sacrifice and Heavenly Cult*, 241–47. He concludes, "τελειοῦν is used formally not only in Greco-Roman literature but also in Jewish and Christian literature, and it generally means *to complete, to bring to an end, or to accomplish*" (246, emphasis original).

[141] E.g., Allen, *Hebrews*, 126, 128; Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 97; Harris, *Hebrews*, 16; Kistemaker, *Hebrews*, 31; Peterson, *Hebrews*, 67; Schreiner, *Hebrews*, 58. Donald Guthrie uses the concept and term *fulfillment* in relation to Jesus' sitting position in 1:3 (Guthrie, *Hebrews (TNTC)*, 73). Cf. Koester interprets Jesus' sitting position as connoting authority. He argues, "those who approached the throne normally stood while the ruler remained seated" (Koester, *Hebrews*, 179). Several other scholars consider the cited Psalm passage, Ps 110:1, and focus on Jesus' exaltation rather than the completion of his ministry. See Attridge, *Hebrews*, 46–47; Bruce, *Hebrews*, 49–50; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 102–3; Johnson, *Hebrews*, 71; Lane, *Hebrews*, 1:15–16.

enduring priesthood and ability to offer perfected, eternal access to God for believers.[142] Thus, the purity obtained through Jesus' priesthood is comprehensive, embodying the entirety of salvation and a perfected relationship with God. As Peterson elaborates, Hebrews uses the language of "perfection" (τελείωσις) not only for moral or ritual purity, but also for the ultimate "drawing near to God."[143] This perfection, exclusive to Jesus' high priesthood, achieves what the Levitical high priesthood sought. In this way, Jesus' ministry fulfills the Levitical, bringing out the eschatological hope of direct, unhindered access to God (10:14; 12:23).

The author prominently uses the cultic language προσφέρω ("to offer") to describe Jesus' high priestly duty in 5:7, though he already did the same for human high priests in 5:1, 3. He also introduces the ultimate goal of "sacrifice for sins" (5:1, θυσίας ὑπὲρ ἁμαρτιῶν; cf. "purification for sins" [καθαρισμὸν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν]) as the "eternal salvation" ((σωτηρίας αἰωνίου), which forms a point of difference with the old cultus's high priesthood. When Jesus, the high priest who was made "perfect" (τελειόω),[144]

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[142] His argument is that Hebrews portrays Jesus' resurrection as critical to his high priestly role and the efficacy of his atoning work. According to him, Jesus' resurrection gives him "indestructible life," allowing him to serve as the eternal high priest, providing believers with perfected access to God. This perspective challenges traditional interpretations that focus primarily on Jesus' death, emphasizing the significance of his resurrection and exaltation in the process of atonement (Moffitt, *Atonement and the Logic of Resurrection*, 198–208). Cf. Erich Grässer does not include Jesus' resurrection in the Hebrews author's assumption or consideration. He says, "Abgesehen vom Kontext, der eine andere Interpretation nahelegt, nämlich die Deutung des Karfreitagsgeschehens als des wahren Jom Kippur, braucht man sich mit der Suche nach versteckten oder offenen Anspielungen auf das Herrenmahl nicht aufzuhalten [Apart from the context, which suggests a different interpretation, namely the interpretation of the Good Friday event as the true Yom Kippur, there is no need to spend time searching for hidden or overt allusions to the Lord's Supper]" (Grässer, *An die Hebräer*, 3:379, my translation).

[143] Peterson, *Hebrews and Perfection*, 144–56.

[144] Jesus' perfection is another indicator of his humanity, as it alludes to the temptation and suffering he overcame in order to attain perfection. Marshall says, "His perfection is what qualifies him to be priest, and therefore it is appropriate to find the element of appointment to priesthood here. Since perfecting is what God does through the discipline imposed, the thought is more of appointment, although the element of self-dedication and consecration can be seen in the obedient response of Jesus. Perfecting is thus the process that brings the human Jesus (even though he is a Son) through temptation and suffering to the position of glory where he is able to intercede for his people" (Marshall, "Soteriology in Hebrews," 263). For a comprehensive discussion of Jesus' perfection, see Peterson, *Hebrews and Perfection*. See also

brought it, the eternal salvation that is the ultimate purpose of the high priestly ministry, including the purification for sins, could have been realized.[145] The term τελειόω is cultic in this context, and it represents the pinnacle of purification, culminating in eternal salvation,[146] which distinguishes Jesus' high priestly ministry from the Levitical high priest's roles. Thus, we see both the pursuit of purification by human high priests and Jesus' fulfillment through perfection.

Moreover, after briefly introducing Melchizedek in relation to Abraham, a familiar ancestor, in 7:1–10,[147] the author focuses on Melchizedek as a means of achieving perfection, stating that "perfection could [not] have been attained through the Levitical priesthood (ἱερωσύνη)" (7:11)[148] It is expressed as the "unreal condition" with the conditional conjunction "if" (εἰ), which makes it "semantically equivalent to a strong negative statement" along with the rhetorical question that follows, thus demonstrating

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Moffitt, "If Another Priest Arises," 74–76; Peeler, *You Are My Son*, 127. In agreement with Moffitt, Jamieson argues that Jesus' perfection was a prerequisite for his appointment as high priest, and that he became the high priest upon his ascension to heaven following his resurrection (Jamieson, *Jesus' Death and Heavenly Offering*, 23–35). See also Moffitt, *Atonement and the Logic of Resurrection*. While I disagree with Moffitt and Jamieson that Jesus' offering himself occurred after his resurrection, it is still convincing that his perfection occurred in the wake of his appointment as high priest.

[145] Jesus is described as the "source (αἴτιος) of eternal salvation," which means he is the one who brings, pioneers, and bestows salvation. See Bruce, *Hebrews*, 132; Koester, *Hebrews*, 290; Peterson, *Hebrews*, 135; Westcott, *Hebrews*, 131. See also Josephus, *Ant*. 14:136; Philo, *Husbandry* 96; Philo, *Spec. Laws* 1:252; Philo, *Virtues* 202.

[146] "It is used frequently in cultic contexts (pagan and Jewish) to express 'cleanness' or 'wholeness' (e.g., 'unblemished,' of sacrificial animals)" (deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 195). It has nothing to do with morality or ethics (Ribbens, *Levitical Sacrifice and Heavenly Cult*, 169–74). See Scholer, *Proleptic Priests*, 188; cf. Moffitt, *Rethinking the Atonement*, 113.

[147] Peterson considers 7:4–10 to be a preparation for the "argument that the priesthood of Jesus is superior to the priesthood of the tribe of Levi (vv. 11–19)" (Peterson, *Hebrews*, 173). See McCruden, *Solidarity Perfected*, 17–18, 42–44. I do not perceive the passage 7:11–19 as illustrating Jesus' superiority over the Levites. Rather, the passage emphasizes the possibility of Jesus' high priesthood achieving perfection as a fulfillment of the office. Nonetheless, it is indeed true to say that 7:4–10 serves as a foundation for the argument in 7:11–19.

[148] Kurianal notes that the author's use of ἱερωσύνη rather than ἱερατεία indicates the Levitical high priesthood in a broader sense, as ἱερατεία tends to refer to priestly services in a narrower sense. By using ἱερωσύνη in this context, Hebrews emphasizes the Levitical high priests' limitations (Kurianal, *Jesus Our High Priest*, 107n333).

the need for Jesus as high priest.[149] Thus, the author argues in 7:11 that another high priest of the order of Melchizedek, instead of Aaron's, is required because the Levitical priests could not achieve perfection. It denotes the transition of the high priest's order from that of Aaron to Melchizedek, which also results in a change of the law, as stated in 7:12.[150] It should be observed that the transition here represents more than a simple change from insufficiency to sufficiency, but rather the antitype fulfilling the type. The Levitical priesthood's inability to achieve perfection should be viewed as the pursuit and preparation for perfection, awaiting fulfillment by "another priest to come, one in the order of Melchizedek" (7:11).

There are two explanations for the high priest Jesus. As Lane observes, "how he [Jesus the high priest] is 'not like Aaron'" is explained in 7:13–14, while "the superior quality of the new priest" is pointed out "by explaining how he is 'like Melchizedek'" in 7:15–17.[151] The need for "another priest" (7:11, 15) arises due to the old high priests' inability to achieve perfection, and the need fulfilled by Jesus' distinct origin from the Levitical high priests, namely, not from Aaron but from Melchizedek. The author's use of the verb ἀνίστημι ("to cause to stand") in 7:11 to refer to the "another priest to come

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[149] Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 370.

[150] Ribbens understands Hebrews's references to the law (νόμος) as referring to the Levitical cultic regulations, which is correct. However, I disagree with his observation that the Mosaic covenant and the old cultus were insufficient. Despite his efforts to determine the efficacy of the old cultus throughout his monograph, he still misses the most important point, purification for sins as the purpose of all ritual performances, arguing for the inadequacy of the old cultus in Hebrews's presentation (Ribbens, "Positive Function of Levitical Sacrifice," esp. 186). With respect to his assertion that the Law is deficient in terms of perfection, see the subsequent discourse. The pursuit of perfection, which represents the pinnacle of sin purification, establishes a continuity between the old and new cultuses.

[151] Lane, *Hebrews*, 1:182. The opening clause of 7:15, καὶ περισσότερον ἔτι κατάδηλόν ἐστιν ("And what we have said is"), indicates that "a new argument has begun." While various suggestions exist regarding the subject of the clause, and each of them has its own grounds and possibilities, it is evident that the author is emphasizing "the fact that there is no perfection through the Levitical priesthood" (Kurianal, *Jesus Our High Priest*, 116–18). See also Attridge, *Hebrews*, 201–2; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 377.

(ἀνίστημι)" denotes "messianic associations" of Jesus,[152] explicitly indicating the possibility of perfection. The verb rendered as "descended" (ἀνατέλλω) in 7:14 also indicates that "Jesus was descended from Judah may convey the hint of a royal messianic reference."[153] It reveals the high priest Jesus's ability to fulfill the high priesthood through perfection, as his office is comparable to Melchizedek.

Given that Jesus attained perfection and that it is related to ritual aspects in some way, purification for sins as the goal of his high priestly role can also be mentioned as the attainment of perfection. Accordingly, the failure of the Levitical high priest to achieve perfection denotes not the failure of the office as a whole, but rather its status as a preparation along the way to perfection. Thus, the office of the high priesthood itself is not denigrated, and in fact it remains valid. To emphasize the necessity of Jesus as high priest, Hebrews mentions a limitation of the earlier cultic high priests, but there is no reason to interpret his understanding of the entire old cultic system as a denigration of it. In contrast, when we interpret the passage in light of his purity concerns, we can see that the author provides ways to acknowledge its own value as the preparation of the final fulfillment.

Finally, the book of Hebrews makes a profound comparison between the Levitical high priests and Jesus' high priesthood, revealing the progression from ongoing, ritualistic purification to complete, eternal purification through Jesus' sacrificial ministry. The Levitical priests, though unable to attain full perfection, laid the groundwork for

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[152] Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 373. The word ἀνίστημι is rendered as "come" (NIV), "arise" (ESV, NET, REB, NRSV), and "raise up" (CEB). See Harris, Hebrews, 170. See also ἀνίστημι, BDAG, 83.

[153] Lane, *Hebrews*, 1:182. Lane continues, "There is no evidence in classical Greek, the LXX, or the papyri for the use of ἀνατέλλειν to denote descent from a certain family. The verb is used in the LXX, however, for the rising of a star or the sprouting of a branch in contexts that have been traditionally recognized as messianic (e.g., Num 24:17; cf. Jer 23:5)" See also Buchanan, *Hebrews*, 123–24.

covenantal purity and foreshadowed Jesus' ultimate redemption. Through his perfect sacrifice, Jesus fulfilled the Levitical high priesthood's purification efforts, providing believers with direct, eternal access to God. The Levitical high priestly role of purification for sin is fulfilled by the high priest Jesus, bringing eternal salvation to all believers (cf. Heb 7). This shift from ritual to realization emphasizes the transformative nature of Jesus' high priestly role, which marks a pivotal move toward complete salvation and an unmediated relationship with God.

Relationship between the Levitical High Priests and Jesus

In this chapter, I have explored the relationship between the high priesthoods of the old and new cultuses in Hebrews. Their similarities and differences were identified and analyzed using three criteria: their origin and identity, performance description, and purity obtained through their cultic ministries. After investigating their relationship, it was discovered that the author recognizes their continuity, valuing the Levitical high priests as the foundation of the ultimate high priest, Jesus. Since Jesus, as the main focus of the book of Hebrews, is emphasized as the high priest, the author establishes his relationship with the Levitical high priests in a typological sense, even though it has already been mentioned when necessary. Before the following section concludes this chapter, this section will explain Hebrews's understanding of the typological relationship between the two sacrificers of old and new cultuses in terms of purity concerns.

Qualification and Preparation

As seen above, the author emphasizes sin purification throughout the comparison of the

Levitical high priests and the high priest Jesus in Heb 5:1–10, and it becomes more explicit in 9:13–14, particularly noting that both are divinely ordained. Hooker observes it as follows:

> Every high priest is *chosen from men*, and is *called by God*, as was *Aaron*: so, too, *Jesus*. Because he shares our humanity, he can sympathize with our weakness, having been tested as we are (4:15); but though subject to weakness (5:2), he is nevertheless without sin (4:15), and through suffering he has learned obedience and been perfected (5:8–9). He has been appointed high priest by God, who not only designated him as his Son, but made him a priest according to the order of Melchizedek (5:5–6). In his earthly life, he offered up prayers and supplications with cries and tears; *now he is the source of salvation* to those who obey him.[154]

He claims that Jesus, as high priest, is now the "source of salvation," which has a direct connection to the purification of sins.

It should be noted that the author neither fully identifies nor fully differentiates the two priesthoods in view. While he elaborates on them in each 5:1–4 and 5:5–10, he draws clear parallels and contrasts between them, leading to the conclusion that Jesus' high priestly office is a fulfillment of the Levitical one. First, whereas human high priests merely offered sacrifices for sin purification (5:1), Jesus became the source of eternal salvation as a result of his perfection (5:9–10).[155] The objective of both high priests, the purification for sins, is identical, but their qualities are clearly distinct. Similarly, the author's description of the human high priests' ability to deal with sins reveals a subtle distinction from the standard description of the sin offering. In spite of his familiarity with the technical term περὶ ἁμαρτίας for the sin offering, which he uses elsewhere in the

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[154] Hooker, "Christ, the 'End of the Cult,'" 201 (emphasis added).

[155] His perfection also distinguishes him from the Levitical high priesthood, but it is "not something inclusive of Jesus' priestly ministry and heavenly exaltation to the throne at God's right hand." This is why there are no in-depth discussions or explanations of its connection to the relationship between the two high priesthoods here (Moffitt, *Rethinking the Atonement*, 79). There is no scholarly agreement on the topic of perfection in Hebrews. See McCruden, "Christ's Perfection in Hebrews"; McCruden, *Solidarity perfected*; Scholer, *Proleptic Priests*, 185–200.

book (e.g., 10:6, 8; 13:11) and which the LXX also employs (e.g., Lev [LXX] 16:27; Ps 40:6 [LXX 39:7]), he uses the phrase περὶ ἁμαρτιῶν in Heb 5:3. This is most likely because the point of the paragraph is not the purification of sin itself, and there is no mention of the sin-related issues in the parallel passage, 5:7–8. In addition, the non-technical term of sin purification can indicate the efficacy of the old high priestly role in a limited way while not denying its effect or demeaning the office,[156] alluding to the old one's preparatory characteristics that anticipate the new's fulfillment.

Second, the Levitical high priests are introduced as weak (5:2–3),[157] whereas Jesus is referred to as perfect (5:9). Likewise, they were simply chosen people from God (5:1, 4), whereas Jesus was God's Son (5:5–6). Both priestly offices are designated by God, but only Jesus is called on the basis of the paternal and filial relationship with God the Father, as the author demonstrates by citing Ps 110:4 in Heb 5:5. The following presentation of Jesus' high priestly order after Melchizedek is based on Jesus' Sonship. The author later clarifies the relationship between Jesus' Sonship and his high priestly order after Melchizedek in 7:1–3. Melchizedek is described as "without father or mother, without genealogy, without beginning of days or end of life, resembling the Son of God, he remains a priest forever" (7:3). This description is consistent with Jesus' eternal priesthood, which is rooted in his divine Sonship. Unlike the Levitical priests, who inherited their office through lineage, Jesus' priesthood, like Melchizedek's, is defined by his eternal relationship with the Father. Accordingly, the author's citation of Ps 110:4 in

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[156] Ribbens, *Levitical Sacrifice and Heavenly Cult*, 151–52. Ribbens correctly argues that "περὶ ἁμαρτιῶν is more likely used as an equivalent construction to ὑπὲρ ἁμαρτιῶν in 5:1 (cf. 7:27; 10:12, 26). The high priest offers sacrifices for sins" (152, emphasis original). See also Ribbens, "Positive Function of Levitical Sacrifice," 101–2.

[157] The weakness of human high priests is not pejorative in this context because it is not contrasted with anyone else's strength. Rather, the high priests' weakness can be viewed as an ability: they can "deal gently with those who are ignorant and are going astray" (Heb 5:2).

Heb 5:5 connects Jesus' Sonship with his divine appointment to an eternal high priesthood. This highlights the divine origin of the high priesthood and the fact that Jesus is no exception; thus, the fulfillment of the high priestly office is ready for demonstration.[158]

Ultimately, there is no necessity to divide the high priesthood between the Levites and Jesus. Alternatively, we can infer that the Levitical high priests carried out their duties as a type, whereas Jesus fulfilled them as an antitype. The distinction between the type and antitype is discerned by their different order: Aaron (5:4) and Melchizedek (5:5–6),[159] with the latter being more mysterious. Besides, the author's use of Pss 2:7 and 110:4 in Heb 5:5–6 to suggest Jesus' divine appointment reveals his willingness to emphasize Jesus' high priesthood and its importance (cf. Ps 2:7 in Heb 1:5; Ps 110:1 in Heb 1:13).[160] And yet, the author never explicitly contrasts each of these qualities in order to differentiate between them. Even though the author ultimately emphasizes the necessity of Jesus' high priesthood later in the book, his focus in this passage is to demonstrate Jesus' high priestly office by presenting qualifications derived from the Levitical high priests.

Throughout Hebrews, the Levitical high priests are not undervalued; rather, their duty to offer purifying sacrifices for sins is positively acknowledged, upon which Jesus'

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[158] Therefore, "God's speech to Jesus in Heb 5:6 continues to be what God's conversation with Jesus has been in Hebrews up to this point—the speech of a Father to his Son." Peeler, *You Are My Son*, 118. Therefore, "our Lord is said to have been 'named of God a high-priest after the order of Melchizedek.' His Divine calling rests upon His unique relationship to God, and in a very real way, . . . upon this unique relationship being that of Sonship" (Lidgett, *Sonship and Salvation*, 34. Recited from Peeler, *You Are My Son*, 137).

[159] Moffitt associates Jesus' perfection with the Melchizedekian order of his high priestly office (Moffitt, *Rethinking the Atonement*, 81).

[160] See Anderson, *King-Priest of Psalm 110 in Hebrews*, 137–47; Hay, *Glory at the Right Hand*, 144.

priestly duty is explained. There are dissimilarities between the two offices, and it may sound like an attack or a denigration of Judaism when the author mentions what Jesus did that the Levitical high priests did not or could not do (e.g., Heb 9:12: "he [Jesus] entered the Most Holy Place once for all"; 10:11: "every priest . . . can never take away sins"). Differences, on the other hand, are frequently used as typological allusions. For example, the Levitical high priests' daily sacrifices were preparing for Jesus' ultimate fulfillment, which would result in the forgiveness of sins (10:11–12). Consequently, the author of Hebrews envisioned a close and ongoing relationship between the Levites and Jesus as high priests in a single high priesthood, especially in terms of their purifying functions.

Preparation and Fulfillment

Even though Jesus indeed is better than the Levitical high priests, the author of Hebrews never explicitly mentions it. Instead, he provides the basis for Jesus' excellence by introducing Melchizedek (Heb 7:1–3, 4–10), and then presents the evidence for fulfillment of the Levitical high priesthood by suggesting two reasons: its ability of perfection (7:11–19) and complete salvation (7:20–25). The author, on the other hand, does not denigrate the Levitical high priests even while demonstrating their inability as regards those two elements, perfection and complete salvation. He continues to reveal that the function of both high priests is purification for sins. Although the Levitical high priests were in charge of carrying out the sacrificial rituals intended sin purification, they were unable to achieve perfection because their role under the old covenant was to prepare for it. Nonetheless, they had value just as they were. The high priest Jesus is now required to complete sin purification in order for believers to achieve perfection and

complete salvation, but this does not necessarily mean that the high priesthood has been denigrated, nor even that it has necessarily been removed or replaced. Rather, Jesus fulfills the high priesthood in the same way that the antitype fulfills the type.

It is particularly noteworthy that the author repeatedly employs the ritual concept of purification for sins. Even when he emphasizes the distinction between the Levitical high priest and Jesus, his point is whether each of them completes it or not, with the assumption that they both have the same goal: purification for sins. Their relationship needs to be defined in accordance with the fact that they share the same objective and that the only difference between them is their role and state in the process of achieving it. In the author's view, both the Levitical and Jesus high priests belong to the same group boundary, which has a single high priesthood.

As far as can be determined, the author does not use any derogatory or critical language about the high priesthood of the Levitical sacrificial system. He admits that the Levitical high priests, as sacrificers, offered sin offerings in order for sin purifications of sacrifiers. Most Hebrews passages that mention high priesthood assume or explain that all sin offerings performed by priests aimed at purification for sins, and the Levitical high priests' ministry was no exception. However, it is significant that both Jesus and the Levitical high priests are always mentioned together. While they both sought purification for sins, the extent to which they attained this objective is treated as vastly different. It is insisted that the Levitical high priests' ministry could not completely remove sins, whereas Jesus perfectly completed it. And this reflects their respective roles in the fulfillment of the high priestly office; Jesus, as the antitype, was expected to fulfill the Levitical high priest, the type, within the same team.

Again, the high priest Jesus is always explained in terms of the Levitical high priests and the high priesthood in general. In Heb 5:1–10, Jesus' role as high priest is introduced in accordance with the three high priestly qualifications of the high priesthood in general. Even when attempting to justify Jesus as the high priest and its necessity in 7:4–28 and 8:1–6, the author appreciates the value of the old cultus and its high priests. The relationship between Jesus and the Levitical high priests is not "bad and good," but "good and better" in terms of divine initiative and authorization of the high priestly office of Jesus and the old cultus. Although the author acknowledges that the ministry of the Levitical high priests could not completely remove sins, he does not use this limitation as a basis for criticism but rather as an opportunity to position it as a foundation for the high priest Jesus. The old cultus's high priests are treated as the type that prepares for the antitype's fulfillment, which can be characterized by Jesus' perfection and eternal salvation. When the author reaffirms the need for Jesus as high priest in 9:1–14, 23–28, and 10:11–14, it becomes clear that Jesus finalized the complete salvation by perfecting the removal of sins in continuation of the Levitical high priests' repeated ministries in pursuit of purification for sins.

Given that the author's conception of Jesus' high priestly office is focused on purification for sins (1:1–4), the relationship between Jesus and the Levitical high priests in Hebrews should also be established by the author's conception of purity. Although he does not explicitly consider any religious boundaries, such as boundaries between those who believe in Jesus and those who do not, the way he describes the high priest Jesus and the Levitical high priests leads us to assume that he is attempting to establish a single boundary that includes both of them. The author establishes a boundary line rooted in the

notion of purity, which both Jesus and the Levitical high priests have strived for. This boundary encompasses both sacrificial systems, ultimately resulting in the fulfillment of the old by the new.

Jesus is the qualified high priest according to the standards for the high priesthood in general, according to which the Levitical high priests were appointed as well. Existential continuity exists between the high priest Jesus and the Levitical high priests. In addition, the Levitical high priests are necessary for the author to not only describe Jesus' high priestly ministry but also to propose the high priest Jesus as the fulfillment of the high priesthood. In this sense, there is a *symbiotic* relationship between the two high priests: the Levitical high priests are required to properly describe the high priest Jesus, which is also required to complete the Levitical high priests' final mission, purification for sins.

Concluding Remarks

This chapter explored the sacrificial roles of the Levitical high priests and Jesus in the book of Hebrews, focusing on both continuity and fulfillment. Throughout, the Levitical high priesthood is portrayed as an essential, divinely ordained system aimed at achieving ritual purity for believers. Although Hebrews appears to present the limitations of the Levitical priestly ministries, this is not a devaluation in any way. Instead, the Levitical high priesthood serves as a typological foundation, paving the way for Jesus' perfected priestly ministry.

The author of Hebrews regards the Levitical high priesthood as a legitimate means of purification. The Levitical high priests' faithful service is reflected in their

repeated acts of offering gifts and sacrifices for sins, as seen in Heb 5:1, 3, and 7:11. The author acknowledges that God established this sacrificial system, and its purpose was meaningful and effective within God's original intent and plan. The single mention of the Levitical high priestly role's limitation in 7:11—its inability to achieve "perfection"—is not a critique, but rather a foreshadowing of the eschatological hope it represents.

When discussing Jesus' high priestly role, however, the author emphasizes results over process, shifting focus from ongoing sacrifices to Jesus' singular, effective act of purification (1:3; 4:16; 5:19). Jesus accomplishes what the Levitical system envisioned: complete and eternal purification that grants believers direct access to God (7:25).[161] Moffitt's interpretation that Jesus' resurrection and exaltation inaugurate his eternal priesthood further emphasizes this fulfillment by affirming Jesus' unique role as the high priest who provides perfected access to God.

Most importantly, when we consider purity as the ultimate goal of the cultus and purification rituals were performed by both the old and new cultic system's high priests from a cultural-anthropological perspective, we see that the ministries of both high priests drew the same socio-religious boundary, focusing on the same concept of purity. Thus, the Levitical high priests served to prepare for the ultimate purification, perfection, which was fulfilled by the high priest Jesus.

The typological approach to the author's presentation of the Levitical high

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[161] It is also worthwhile to note that the author's explanation of the Levitical high priests outnumbers Jesus' ministry. According to the NA28, Heb 9:1–10 contains 180 Greek words, whereas 9:11–14 contains only 86. Given that the author's introducing conjunctional clause ("now") "marks a resumption of the theme of the old covenant" which began in 8:7, the length assigned to the old sacrificial system is much longer than Jesus' cultus (Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 420). It is significant that the author devotes more space to the Levitical high priests than to his genuine focus and goal, the high priest Jesus. See Allen, *Hebrews*, 458; Attridge, *Hebrews*, 231; Harris, *Hebrews*, 209; Peterson, *Hebrews*, 200; Westfall, *Discourse Analysis*, 197n22.

priesthood confirms its purpose in salvation history. The old cultic priesthood serves as a foundation, divinely designed to lead to Jesus' ultimate fulfillment of purification. When Jesus' sinlessness is emphasized in 4:14–15, it may appear as if the Levitical high priests are deficient. However, Jesus' sinlessness described here serves as the foundation for his high priesthood as an antitype that fulfills the Levitical high priesthood later, where both cultuses' high priestly offices are discussed (5:1–10). This typological structure underscores the continuity of the high priests of old and new cultic systems. Using the Levitical high priesthood as a hermeneutical foundation, Hebrews demonstrates how Jesus, as the ultimate high priest, brings its purposes to their divine culmination.

Thus, in Hebrews, both the Levitical and Jesus' high priesthoods coexist within a purposeful, redemptive framework. The old priesthood sought purity within the constraints of human limitation, whereas Jesus, as the antitype, fulfills and perfects this goal. Jesus' high priestly ministry fulfills the Levitical priesthood's expectations of atonement, salvation, and perfected access to God, achieving "perfection."

In conclusion, Hebrews does not have a pejorative view of the Levitical high priesthood; rather, the author upholds it as a necessary and respected foundation for Jesus' high priestly ministry. This typological relationship between the two high priests confirms God's continuous redemptive work across the covenants, with the old cultus's high priesthood pointing forward to its consummation in Jesus. This chapter's analysis reinforces the Levitical high priesthood as an honored and foundational aspect of God's salvation history, which is ultimately fulfilled by Jesus Christ, the eternal high priest.

CHAPTER 5: SACRIFICES OF CULTUS IN HEBREWS

The previous chapter examined the relationship between the two sacrifices of old and new cultuses, the Levitical high priests and the high priest Jesus, highlighting fulfillment within God's redemptive plan. The Levitical high priesthood, rather than being devalued, is presented as a foundational, divinely ordained system aimed at achieving purity, with apparent limitations that foreshadow Jesus' ultimate purification, perfection. Jesus' high priesthood achieves and perfects the Levitical system's goal of purity, granting believers direct access to God. Through a typological lens, the Levitical high priesthood is seen as a respected and necessary foundation, establishing a socio-religious boundary centered on purity that Jesus fulfills as the ultimate high priest. This typological connection validates the Levitical high priesthood's revered place in salvation history, which was eventually fulfilled by Jesus Christ, the eternal high priest. In this chapter, I will look at another ritual element, the sacrifices of the old and new cultuses, and their relationships.

Each old and new cultic system had its own set of sacrifices. Various animals were designated for the Levitical sacrifices to be offered according to the types of cultus and the identities of the sacrifiers (worshipers) in the book of Leviticus. However, Hebrews focuses on animal blood as gifts and sacrifices for the old cultus and Jesus' blood for the new cultus (e.g., Heb 5:1–3; 9:12–13, 19; 10:4). The term προσφορά ("offering," "sacrifice") and related terms belong to the same semantic domain as the

English index "offering, sacrifice" (LN 53.16–27).[1] The units or subunits in Hebrews that refer to the sacrifice and its topic are Heb 9:1–14; 9:15–28; 10:1–4; and 10:5–10.

These passages show the similarities and differences between the sacrifices of the Levitical sacrifices and Jesus' sacrifice. This chapter, like the previous ones, will employ three criteria: the identity of both sacrifices, descriptions of how they were offered, and their efficacy in relation to purity. As a result, the relationship between the sacrificial offerings of the old and new cultuses will become clearer. Their similarities form the basis for the author's admiration for the old cultus's sacrificial offerings, regardless of their identity, efficacy, or function. If he wanted to reveal his disdain for the old cultus, he would not insist on referring to its similarities with Jesus as the new cultus's sacrifice. Their differences, in addition, demonstrate the author's appreciation for the old cultic sacrifices, particularly as the hermeneutical foundation, which emphasizes the ultimate fulfillment of the sacrifice Jesus, establishing a typological continuity between the two cultuses in Hebrews.

Origin and Identity of the Two Sacrifices

As discussed in the previous chapter, all worshipers in both old and new sacrificial systems were required to have something to offer. While the high priests of both cultic systems were expected to have something to offer, there were similarities and differences in the sacrificial offerings made to God in each cultus. There were various types of sacrifices offered during rituals, and some of them had distinguishing characteristics that helped to establish the relationship between the two sacrifices and the sacrificial systems

[1] Louw and Nida, *Greek–English Lexicon*, 1:533.

described by the author of Hebrews.

Types of Sacrifices

While both the Levitical high priests and the high priest Jesus were required to have something to offer, their offerings may differ. Hebrews mentions two types of high priestly offerings: gifts and sacrifices (Heb 5:1; 8:3) and blood and body (9:7, 12, 13–14; 10:10). There are similarities and differences that help to determine the author's assessment of the Levitical and Jesus' sacrificial offerings.

Gifts and Sacrifices

It is clearly stated twice that every high priest is to offer "gifts and sacrifices" in 5:1 and 8:3. It is debatable whether δῶρα ("gifts") and θυσίας ("sacrifices") are synonyms. Those who argue for a distinction consider "gifts" to be peace and cereal offerings and "sacrifices" to be animal sacrifices.[2] Some argue that the conjunctions τε καί between δῶρα and θυσίας should be rendered as "both and," so that it must be "both gifts and sacrifices for sins," completely differentiating "gifts" and "sacrifices for sins."[3] Others, however, argue that the terms overlap to some extent and function as a hendiadys or as synonyms, emphasizing the comprehensive nature of the high priest's sacrificial duties. In this view, the pairing of "gifts and sacrifices" in both passages could represent a literary device to underscore the completeness of the high priestly role in the sacrificial

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[2] David L. Allen and Lane distinguish between the two. See Allen, *Hebrews*, 315n74; Lane, *Hebrews*, 1:108. Cf. Westcott, *Hebrews*, 120. For those who do not make a distinction, see Attridge, *Hebrews*, 143; Bruce, *Hebrews*, 119; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 274–75; Kistemaker, *Hebrews*, 285; Koester, *Hebrews*, 285; Peterson, *Hebrews and Perfection*, 81. Cf. Ribbens argues that they are "equivalents." Ribbens, *Levitical Sacrifice and Heavenly Cult*, 104; see also Ribbens, "Positive Function of Levitical Sacrifice," 99–100.

[3] Harris, *Hebrews*, 116; Lane, *Hebrews*, 1:108; Peterson, *Hebrews and Perfection*, 81.

system.[4] It should be noted that the author refers to them in both 5:1 and 8:3 as part of general cultic regulations about sacrificial offerings.

Additionally, the author mentions "gifts and sacrifices" again in 9:9, but he does not present them as a general cultic regulation. The author does not explain what the gifts and sacrifices were. Nonetheless, his mention of these as cultic offerings reveals that high priests of both cultic systems, the Levitical high priests and the high priest Jesus, were required to bring something to offer when performing purification rituals in accordance with the basic cultus regulations specified in 5:1 and 8:3.

Blood and What Else

Another offering that Hebrews mentions as necessary is blood, which initially appears in 9:7. The author suggests that the blood is required for the Levitical high priests to perform their purification rituals in the earthly tabernacle after meticulously describing the arrangement of its inside in 9:2–5. When the author distinguishes between high priestly roles and priestly roles, referring to the availability to enter the inner room of the tabernacle, the blood is emphasized as something the high priests must have brought into the inner room.

He could have criticized each element he explained if he had a negative view of the Levitical sacrifices, but instead, he uses it as the foundation for his explanation of the excellence of Jesus' sacrificial ritual presented in the second paragraph 9:11–14, especially in regard to the necessity of the sacrificial blood in order to enter the sanctuary

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[4] E.g., Attridge, *Hebrews*, 143n85; Bruce, *Hebrews*, 119; Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 233n18; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 273–74; Kistemaker, *Hebrews*, 130; Koester, *Hebrews*, 285. Bruce observes that the phrase "gifts and sacrifices" was most likely a "generic term" in Hebrews's contemporary Alexandrian Judaism (Bruce, *Hebrews*, 119n6).

as described in 9:7 and 9:12. So, as high priest, Jesus offered his own blood (9:12), just as the Levitical high priest entered the inner room once a year, "never without blood" (9:7).[5] As Ellingworth observes, the phrase "οὐ χωρὶς αἵματος is a rhetorical double negative typical of the author, equivalent to a strong positive statement. It is taken up and developed in v. 18, and apparently stated as a general principle in v. 22."[6] According to Gäbel, the author of Hebrews explains Jesus' blood and its role when it was sprinkled in the heavenly sanctuary using the same principle and regulation that made animal blood sprinkled during Levitical sacrificial rituals.[7]

Several scholars argue that the sprinkling of blood in the heavenly sanctuary should not be taken literally but rather metaphorically, representing Jesus' death on the cross.[8] Furthermore, Gäbel rejects the link between Jesus' ministry in the heavenly tabernacle and his death on earth, even denying the cultic sense of atonement for death.[9] However, as Ribbens contends, there are two reasons why Jesus' blood should be viewed as having been brought into the heavenly sanctuary: (1) Jesus' sacrifice parallels the Day of Atonement ritual, especially in 9:11–14; (2) Hebrews mentions both the application of

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[5] The phrase "never without blood" in 9:7 expresses the author's anticipation that Jesus would offer his own blood upon entering the heavenly tabernacle (Gäbel, *Die Kulttheologie des Hebräerbriefes*, 289).

[6] Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 434. Attridge argues that this double negative indicates that "blood is an essential part of the atonement ritual" (Attridge, *Hebrews*, 239).

[7] Gäbel, *Die Kulttheologie des Hebräerbriefes*, 384.

[8] For example, Johnson remarks, "When Hebrews speaks of Christ entering the sanctuary with his own blood, it means that Christ's entry into God's presence was through the violent and bloody death on the cross" (Johnson, *Hebrews*, 237). See Attridge, *Hebrews*, 248. Jamieson presents a taxonomy of five views on the relationship between Jesus' death on the cross and his entrance into the heavenly sanctuary (Jamieson, *Jesus' Death and Heavenly Offering*, 4–12).

[9] Gäbel, *Die Kulttheologie des Hebräerbriefes*, 3–4: "Wird sein Sterben auf Erden als sühnender Opfertod verstanden, wie verhält sich dann sein hohepriesterliches Wirken im Himmel dazu? Mit der Verhältnisbestimmung von Leben und Sterben Christi auf Erden und seinem himmlischen Wirken erfolgt die entscheidende Weichenstellung für jede Hebr-Interpretation [If his death on earth is understood as an atoning sacrificial death, how does his high priestly work in heaven relate to this? Determining the relationship between Christ's life and death on earth and his heavenly work sets the decisive course for every interpretation of Hebrews]" (My translation). Cf. Jamieson argues against this (Jamieson, *Jesus' Death and Heavenly Offering*, 97–179).

Jesus' blood in ch. 9 and its sprinkling (αἵματι ῥαντισμοῦ) in 12:24.[10] Furthermore, the heavenly tabernacle as Firstspace, which identifies it as a physical place according to spatial theory, enables us to comprehend that the blood of Jesus can be physically brought into the heavenly sanctuary and sprinkled.[11] Therefore, the use and sprinkling of blood in both old and new cultic rituals show that the author never devalues animal blood from Levitical sacrifices, but rather views it as a justifying and explaining tool for Jesus' blood of the new cultus.

In addition to the "gifts and sacrifices" and "blood" mentioned so far, which are commonly applied to both the old and new cultuses' sacrifices, Hebrews refers to the body (10:10), ashes (9:13), and Jesus himself (7:27; 9:7, 14) as sacrificial offerings offered by Jesus. Although Jesus' sacrificial offerings are described in a variety of ways in comparison to Levitical sacrifices, the distinction among the mentioned types of sacrifices has no bearing on the relationship between the old and new cultuses in Hebrews. Rather, the author's presentation of blood as a type of "gifts and sacrifices for sins" for both cultuses indicates that he has no pejorative view of animal blood, which is used as the Levitical sacrificial offering.

Divine Origins

In Hebrews, the sacrificial blood used in both the Levitical and Jesus' offerings share a divine origin, underscoring the sanctity and importance of each. Although the author does not specify the divine source of animal blood in Levitical sacrifices, God's establishment

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[10] Ribbens, *Levitical Sacrifice and Heavenly Cult*, 130–32. He concludes, "Christ enters the heavenly sanctuary with blood, presents it as an offering, and sprinkles it on the mercy seat" (132).

[11] See Ribbens, *Levitical Sacrifice and Heavenly Cult*, 130n214.

of the Levitical sacrificial system implies its origin.[12] Just as God commanded the use of animal blood for the remission of sins (Heb 9:22),[13] Levitical sacrifices can be viewed as divinely ordained and thus carrying divine significance. Moffitt also acknowledges the divine origin of animal blood as a sacrifice in the old cultus, focusing on a different aspect: "Because the blood (i.e., the life) of the victim belongs to God, it is to be given back to God on the altar (cf. Lev. 17:11), and none of it can be withheld."[14] This foundation allows for continuity between the old and new sacrificial systems, both grounded in God's mandate and authority.

The divine origin of Jesus' sacrifice is further intensified by the author in Heb 9:14, where it is described as being offered "through the eternal Spirit," connecting Jesus' blood directly to the power and presence of the Holy Spirit.[15] Here, the reference to "the blood of Christ" is uniquely enriched by the Spirit's involvement, suggesting that the divine origin of this sacrifice fulfills all the goals of the earlier, animal-based sacrifices. This "eternal Spirit" conveys the idea of a timeless, transcendent offering with divine permanence that goes far beyond the atonement provided by animal sacrifices.

This difference in the divine origins of the two sacrifices reveals an underlying continuity rather than a devaluation of the Levitical offerings. The author of Hebrews treats both sacrificial systems as necessary to God's redemptive plan. Rather than dismissing animal sacrifices, the text suggests that they were preparatory, ordained by

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[12] As discussed in the preceding chapters, Heb 5:1–4 shows that God established the Levitical sacrificial system. Like Aaron (5:4), the Levitical high priests were chosen from among the people by God (5:1).

[13] The divine authority of the blood of the covenant established through blood shedding will be discussed in depth in the following section.

[14] Moffitt, *Rethinking the Atonement*, 35.

[15] According to Ribbens, "Heb 9:14 closely associates Christ's blood and heavenly offering and complements this association by ascribing a salvific good to Christ's blood. The blood of Christ, then, must be seen as part of the heavenly sacrifice" (Ribbens, *Levitical Sacrifice and Heavenly Cult*, 131).

God to foreshadow Jesus' ultimate sacrifice. Hebrews' frequent references to the sacrificial blood (e.g., 9:13, 10:4) affirm that the Levitical blood offerings were respected as effective within their covenantal context, laying the groundwork for the ultimate high priest's sacrifice.

The author does not reject the Levitical sacrifices outright. Instead, I contend that the difference highlights Jesus as the ultimate sacrifice, which fulfills and perfects what the Levitical sacrifices had begun. The continuity lies in the divine origin of both sacrifices; both serve the same ultimate purpose of purification, pointing to the same perfection rather than a strict dichotomy. Thus, in Hebrews, the divine origin of blood—whether of animals in the old sacrificial system or of Jesus in the new—honors both systems as part of God's redemptive plan. This progression from divinely commanded Levitical sacrifices to the divinely empowered sacrifice of Jesus implies not only the validity of each system, but also the purposeful fulfillment across both covenants.

Distinction between Sacrificers and Sacrifices

Concerning the identity of sacrificial offerings of the old and new cultuses, we must consider whether there is a distinction between sacrificers and sacrifices in each cultus. It is highly unlikely that any sacrificers in ancient religions willingly sacrificed themselves as sacrificial offerings.[16] As shown above, the Levitical sacrificial system required human Levitical high priests to bring something that was *obviously not* themselves, such as animal blood and ashes. For example, Heb 9:25 emphasizes that the Levitical high priests bring "other" sacrifices year after year, establishing a clear distinction between priest and

[16] Cf. Hubert and Mauss, *Sacrifice*, 19–49; Klingbeil, *Bridging the Gap*, 147–204; Grimes, *Craft of Ritual Studies*, 231–93.

sacrificial offering. This distinction is reinforced in 5:1, where every high priest is described as appointed to offer "gifts and sacrifices for sins," highlighting his role as a mediator rather than a part of the sacrifice.

On the other hand, the new cultic system represented by Jesus shares almost all of the ritual elements, particularly sacrifices, with the exception that the high priest Jesus offered himself as a sacrifice voluntarily. Hebrews 7:27 states that unlike the Levitical priests who offer sacrifices "first for their own sins, and then for the sins of the people," Jesus' sacrifice is singular and entirely encompassing. More obviously, the book of Hebrews begins with a clear indication of Jesus' dual roles as high priest and sacrifice. When Jesus is first introduced in Heb 1:1–3, it is stated that he "provided purification for sins" (1:3). It appears that what he offered was purification for sins, but the author's use of the verb contains an important element. It is noteworthy that the verb ποιέω ("to provide") is used in a middle voice. Although the exact meaning of the middle voice should "come out of the context or from the significance of the verb itself," it is well established that "in the middle the subject is acting in relation to himself somehow."[17] Despite the difficulty of confirming the meaning due to the ambiguity of the middle voice,[18] it is clear later in Hebrews that he offered *himself* with *his own blood* (Heb 9:12–14).[19]

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[17] Robertson, *Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, 804. The difference between the active and middle voices, according to Archibald Thomas Robertson, is that the middle voice draws special attention to the subject. Aaron Michael Jensen claims that the Greek middle voice consists soley of active and middle voices distinguished by *subject-affectedness*. He presents a taxonomy of middle voice functions and emphasizes their exegetical significance in New Testament contexts (Jensen, "The Greek Middle," esp. 108).

[18] Lane, *Hebrews*, 1:5. Later, Lane contends that the middle voice of the verb explains its meaning as "in himself, clearly relating the act of purification to his [Jesus'] sacrifice" (1:15).

[19] The textual variation in Heb 1:3, whether to include δι εαυτου ("through himself") or δι αυτου ("through him") or neither, reinforces the idea that the middle voice leads us to regard Jesus as the sacrifice. Each of the readings has a solid foundation in some respects. First, the addition of "through himself" dates

Consequently, the participial clause, "he [Jesus] had provided purification for sins" signifies Jesus' dual identities. As the subject and the focal point of Heb 1:3, Jesus is the high priest who actively provided purifying sacrificial ritual for sins. At the same time, Jesus performed it through himself.[20] In other words, he offered himself as a sacrifice for the purification of sins. Therefore, Jesus is "both the Day of Atonement *sacrifice* and the *high priest* administering it."[21] While the mortal Levitical high priests brought distinguished animal sacrifices to the altar, the high priest Jesus offered himself as the sacrifice. The resurrected Jesus is still there "at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven" (1:3) and "always lives to intercede for" the believers (7:25), fulfilling all the old sacrificial system's intended goals and purposes regarding purification in a continuous relationship.

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back to an early and somewhat various text type: Western (D^2, 5th century), Byzantine (L, 8th century), and Caesarean (K, 9th century). This variant is also supported by the Majority text. Second, the addition of "through him" has the earliest papyri (P^{46}, ca. 200) and the original edition of Codex Bezae (D^*, 5th century). Finally, the earliest Greek manuscripts, Codex Sinaticus (א, 4th century) and Codex Vaticanus (B, 4th century), omitted both "through himself" and "through him." It is also supported by the Western text-type's relatively early first edition of Codex Bezea (D^1, 5th century). As a result, making a final decision based solely on external evidence is difficult, and it implies that the two possible additional phrases, "through himself" and "through him," may affect the genuine meaning of the sentence, regardless of whether either was originally included in the text.

Two of the internal evidence criteria proposed by Bruce M. Metzger, "the more difficult reading" and "the shorter reading," may have been applied to the selection of the text in 1:3 (Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, xxvi–xxvii). He claims that in Heb 1:3 "δι᾽ αὐτοῦ or δι᾽ ἑαυτοῦ was added in order to enhance the force of the middle voice of ποιησάμενος" (592). Koester also believes that the phrase "through himself" highlights the nuance of the middle voice of the verb, thereby emphasizing that "purification is made only through Jesus' self-offering" (Koester, *Hebrews*, 179). Harris remarks, "The gradual loss of the middle in biblical Greek likely explains the variant readings (δι᾽ ἑαυτοῦ in D^2 H^c K L 0243 and numerous minuscules or δι᾽ αὐτοῦ in P^{46} D^* and a few other manuscripts), which appear to clarify that Jesus made purification '*through* himself' for us (e.g., ἡμῶν in א ^{2} D^1 and numerous early manuscripts). In these variants, the shorter reading is better attested and best explains the variant readings" (Harris, *Hebrews*, 16, emphasis original). Thus, the middle voice of ποιησάμενος coheres with the notion that this text speaks about Jesus' identity as a sacrifice in the ritual of purification for sins.

[20] Roy A. Stewart also recognizes Jesus' "double figure" as "sinless High-priest" and "spotless Calvary victim" that "permeate[s] virtually every chapter" (Stewart, "Sinless High-Priest," 134–35). See also Mason, *You Are a Priest Forever*, 16n29.

[21] Mason, *You Are a Priest Forever*, 17 (emphasis added).

Descriptions of the Two Sacrifices

Hebrews describes how sacrifices for both the old and new cultuses are offered in a variety of ways. Although there are several types of sacrifices, as discussed in the previous section, the blood of animals for Levitical sacrifices and Jesus' blood for the new cultus are primarily used to pursue and achieve purification. There are two ways to apply blood during rituals in Hebrews: shedding (Heb 9:22; 13:20) and sprinkling (9:19–21; 12:24), and it is debated whether the blood represents death or life. This section discusses the issues surrounding sacrificial blood in the old and new cultuses, identifying similarities and differences, and finally demonstrating that the author establishes continuity and typological relationships between them.

Blood Represents Life and/or Death

Life or Death

Moffitt contends that blood is primarily used as a symbol of life rather than death within the sacrificial framework (e.g., Lev 17:11). His argument centers on the use of blood in Levitical sacrifices, especially on Yom Kippur. He emphasizes that the focus of the old cultic rituals was not the act of killing the animal, but rather the ritual manipulation and presentation of the blood to God, particularly in the holy of holies. This manipulation, which represents life, facilitates purification and atonement, allowing God's presence to dwell among the people without the impurity of death invading sacred space.[22]

Moffitt argues that in Hebrews, Jesus' blood serves a similar purpose: it symbolizes his life, particularly his resurrection life. According to him, when Jesus

[22] Moffitt, *Atonement and the Logic of Resurrection*, 271–78.

ascends and presents his blood in the heavenly sanctuary, he offers God his indestructible, resurrected life. Thus, Hebrews's portrayal is consistent with the Levitical concept, in which blood represents life, purging sin and allowing reconciliation with God, rather than simply representing death.[23]

Jamieson, on the other hand, avers that blood in Hebrews primarily symbolizes death rather than life, and thus serves as a metonym for Jesus' sacrificial death. He claims that Jesus' blood functions as "life-given-in-death" and embodies a "life-for-life exchange" that is essential to the atonement process. He interprets Heb 9:22 in particular as emphasizing that blood's atoning significance stems from death, with bloodshed representing the necessity of giving up life.[24] This viewpoint contradicts Moffitt's argument, asserting that Hebrews presents blood's power through the death it represents, rather than as an ongoing force of life in Jesus' resurrection.

Jamieson criticizes Moffitt's view, suggesting that it takes the metaphor of blood representing "resurrection life" too far, making blood represent both a deathly and life-giving power. He points out that Moffitt's interpretation risks disconnecting Jesus' death from its soteriological consequences, as Moffitt contends that atonement does not directly arise from Jesus' death itself but rather from his resurrected presence.[25] According to Jamieson, Hebrews does not support this division, instead portraying Jesus' death as a foundational aspect of his heavenly offering, with blood consistently symbolizing the life that was given up in death, implying no ongoing life. He interprets blood in Hebrews as

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[23] Moffitt, *Atonement and the Logic of Resurrection*, 278–85.

[24] Jamieson, *Jesus' Death and Heavenly Offering*, 153–56. Cf. Gäbel, *Die Kulttheologie des Hebräerbriefes*, 418.

[25] Jamieson, *Jesus' Death and Heavenly Offering*, 182–87.

Jesus' "life given in death."[26]

Life and Death

The blood of Jesus, which represents his death, marks the beginning of the new covenant (9:15–17). The conceptual parallel between wills and covenants is evident here, explaining the significance of Jesus' sacrificial death in initiating the new covenant. Just as a will becomes effective only after the death of the maker, the new covenant and its promised blessings come into effect through Jesus' death. The author of Hebrews understands this principle, which must have been applied to the animal sacrifices of the Levitical sacrificial system and the old covenant. In this sense, blood represents not only death in the ritual context, but also life when used and placed correctly according to the principle stated in 9:16–17.[27]

Douglas asserts that blood, as a potent symbol, is often associated with life and vitality, yet paradoxically, it primarily represents death in sacrificial contexts, especially when it is "out of place."[28] According to her, the symbolic significance of blood is shaped by culture and varies depending on the context. When blood is connected to death, for example in sacrificial rituals or violent acts, it may be seen as a powerful symbol of impurity or a violation of social norms.[29] Considering the context of the old and new

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[26] Jamieson, *Jesus' Death and Heavenly Offering*, 187. Although he concurs with Gäbel that "the character of Christ's death as willing self-giving is crucial to the quality of his heavenly offering," he regards blood as "his life given in death" rather than "his whole life lived." Cf. Gäbel, *Die Kulttheologie des Hebräerbriefes*, 213, 279, 290, 315, 464.

[27] Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 149.

[28] Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 72–140.

[29] Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 74–76. Klawans further extends this discussion by exploring the ancient religious rituals, affirming that blood serves as a mediator between the human and the divine dimensions. The sacrificial act, which entails the shedding of blood, represents a deep bond with the divine and also emphasizes the inescapable nature of death as a crucial element of religious transactions (Klawans, *Impurity and Sin*, 21–60).

cultuses mentioned in Hebrews, whether blood represents life or death may vary depending on the focus. Focusing on atonement will lead to death, represented by blood, whereas focusing on salvation will result in life. As a result, we need to combine both Jamieson's and Moffitt's views rather than relying solely on one.

Synthesizing the views of Jamieson and Moffitt, blood in Hebrews embodies a duality of death and life, conveying a concept of life present within death. In this blended symbolistic view, blood is not confined to a singular representation; rather, it embodies both the life-giving presence of Jesus and the death that he endured. The blood signifies death in the sense that Jesus' offering requires the giving up of life, fulfilling the sacrificial requirement for a life-for-life exchange. At the same time, Hebrews presents blood as entering the heavenly sanctuary, symbolizing Jesus' indestructible, resurrected life that now mediates on behalf of humanity in God's presence. Hebrews 13:20, for instance, portrays blood as symbolizing the effectiveness of the new covenant, suggesting that blood is not merely about death but also about the exchange of life within death.

This dual symbolism reinforces the continuity and typological fulfillment of the Levitical sacrifices. Given that the sacrifice's blood represents death, it is not surprising that the author associates the beginning of the new covenant with Jesus' death (9:18–20).[30] At the same time, it should be noted that the old and new covenants were established through sacrificial blood and resulted in eternal life.[31] The earthly sacrifices

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[30] It can also be deduced from the connection between 9:16–17 and 9:18. The conjunction ὅθεν ("For this reason") makes it possible to connect the deaths of sacrifices with their blood, including the connection between Jesus' death and his blood. As Ellingworth argues, "its links are, directly, with the discussion of the old covenant in vv. 19–22; and, indirectly, with the discussion of the new covenant in vv. 15 and 23–28" (Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 465–66). See also Cockerill, "Structure and Interpretation in Hebrews 8:1—10:18," 407n24; Dunnill, *Covenant and Sacrifice*, 126–27; Harris, *Hebrews*, 234; Lane, *Hebrews*, 2:243.

[31] Cockerill, "Structure and Interpretation in Hebrews 8:1—10:18," 407.

foreshadowed Jesus' death as the ultimate act of atonement, yet his resurrection confirms that his blood also represents ongoing life. Through this blended perspective, Hebrews presents Jesus' blood as uniquely effective, fulfilling the ultimate goal of Levitical blood offerings by achieving eternal redemption and unbroken access to God.

Blood Application

Blood (αἷμα) is mentioned 22 times in Hebrews, with 18 references to its cultic usage (Heb 9:7, 12–14, 18–22, 25; 10:4, 19; 11:28; 12:24; 13:11–12, 20). While most references refer to it as a simple ritual application, the author occasionally specifies it in two ways: blood sprinkling (9:13, 19, 21; 12:24) and blood shedding (9:22). It is worth noting that the author uses each of these with different implications for the outcome of their application.

Blood Sprinkling

In Hebrews, the concept of "blood sprinkling" is consistently associated with purification rituals of the old sacrificial system, as seen in 9:13, 19, and 21. These passages describe the ritual sprinkling of animal blood to cleanse both the people and the sacred objects of the tabernacle. According to 9:13, external purification agents include the blood of goats and bulls as well as the ashes of a heifer as agents, and their efficacy is stated unequivocally: "so that they are outwardly clean," with no negative connotations.[32] Besides, the use of the verb ῥαντίζω ("to sprinkle") underlines the effectiveness of animal

[32] Several English translations, with the exception of the NIV, render the initial word εἰ in 9:13 as "if" and recognize the conditional clause that connects and emphasizes the following main clause in 9:14.

sacrifices themselves.[33] The conditional clause further establishes the purifying function of animal blood as an accomplished fact,[34] and in 9:14, the *a fortiori* ("how much more") argument then presents the blood of Jesus and its efficacy.[35] Thus, we can assume that the author envisioned Jesus' blood being sprinkled in the same way that animal blood is, despite the fact that he does not explicitly state so. Jesus' blood is believed to have at least the same efficacy as animal blood.

Similarly, 9:19–21 describes Moses' role in establishing the covenant, which included sprinkling blood on both the people and the tabernacle furniture, symbolizing their collective purification and consecration. According to the first and old covenant established by the blood, the blood must have been continually sprinkled on "the scroll and all the people" (9:19) and "the tabernacle and everything used in its ceremonies" (9:21). In these cases, blood sprinkling is portrayed as a necessary act that sanctifies through the ritualistic application of animal blood—a procedure that foreshadows the need for its fulfillment.

The author's citation of Exod 24:8 in Heb 9:20 confers the principle of blood sprinkling divine authority in relation to the case of Jesus in three ways: "*This* (τοῦτο) is the blood of the covenant, which *God* (ὁ θεός) has *commanded* (ἐνετείλατο) you to keep" (9:20).[36] First, the author's use of the demonstrative pronoun τοῦτο ("this") instead of

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[33] Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 454–55.

[34] According to Ellingworth, "The argument presupposes that the conditional clause be true" (Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 453). "God grants the people the same threefold effects as described in the Torah, namely, 'cleansing or purification' (Heb 9:13: καθαρότης; Heb 9:22, 23; 10:2: καθαρίζω), 'atonement or forgiveness' (Heb 9:22: ἄφεσις), and the 'hallowing or sanctification' (Heb 9:13: ἁγιάζω) of humans and cultic infrastructure" (Gelardini, "The Inauguration of Yom Kippur," 251).

[35] Bruce, *Hebrews*, 216n91. See also Westfall, *Discourse Analysis*, 199n27.

[36] For a detailed discussion of the use of Exod 24:8 in Heb 9:20, see Attridge, *Hebrews*, 257–58; Bruce, *Hebrews*, 224–25; Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 408–9; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 469–70; Johnson, *Hebrews*, 241; Lane, *Hebrews*, 2:245.

ἰδοῦ (“behold”) evokes Jesus’ words at the Lord’s Supper in Mark 14:24: “This (τοῦτο) is my blood of the covenant.” The fact that Jesus cited the Exodus passage to indicate his own blood, and that Hebrews cited it, regardless of whether the author had the Lord’s Supper in mind or not, demonstrates that there is continuity between the blood of Jesus and that of the Levitical sacrifices. The blood of animals of the old cultus is used to explain Jesus’ blood. Second, the subject is changed from κύριος (“the Lord”) in the LXX to ὁ θεός (“God”), ensuring that it is God, not Jesus, who referred to the animal blood as the blood of the covenant. Third, instead of διέθετο (“has made”), the verb ἐντέλλω (“commanded”) is used to provide the “authority of God in declaring the obligation” to this covenant.[37] As a result, the general principle of blood-shedding that follows is confirmed as divine authority, leaving no room for the author to criticize or disrespect the old cultus’s sacrifices.

On the other hand, Heb 12:24 presents a unique application of “blood sprinkling” in relation to Jesus, shifting from Abel’s blood to Jesus’ blood. Given that the author already mentioned Abel as one of the highly esteemed ancestors in 11:4, the reference to “the sprinkled blood” of Jesus as speaking “a better word” should indicate that Jesus fulfilled the promise.[38] The author does not directly compare Jesus’ blood to Levitical sacrificial blood, but rather with the blood offered by Abel for the first time in the Old Testament.[39] By framing Jesus’ blood as a fulfillment of the old cultus’s purification

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[37] Peterson, *Hebrews*, 215.

[38] John Dunnill provides the following insightful remarks: “What matters about the past is being gathered up into the present. Hence Abel still ‘speaks’ (11:4; 12:24), and God’s past speaking through the prophets is *fulfilled* in speaking now *through the Son* (l:1f)” (Dunnill, *Covenant and Sacrifice*, 135–36, emphasis added).

[39] Ellingworth suggests that Abel is mentioned here most likely because he was “the first man said in scripture to offer an acceptable sacrifice (Gn. 4:4),” similar to Melchizedek, who was “the first man called a priest in scripture” (Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 682).

rituals performed with animal blood, Hebrews highlights the preparatory nature of the old cultus's sacrifices, which are followed and fulfilled by Jesus' blood.[40]

Blood Shedding

The purifying purpose of sacrificial blood is summarized in 9:22a, and the general principle about blood and purification is briefly reiterated in 9:22b: "without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness of sins."[41] From a perspective of purity concerns, forgiveness can be understood as a means of atonement for moral sins. Forgiveness can be viewed as a ritual that purifies the sinner and restores a sense of moral purity to society. Thus, forgiveness can be conceptualized as a purification ritual.[42] In certain cultural contexts, sacrificial rituals were seen as mechanisms for cleansing impurities, whereas forgiveness rituals purify the social or moral landscape. Forgiveness may be symbolically linked to the removal of moral stains or impurities. As a result, the shedding of blood brings forgiveness, which leads to the ultimate purification of sins.

Thus, "blood shedding" is highlighted as essential for atonement, encapsulating a fundamental principle of the Levitical sacrificial system. When referring to the purifying efficacy in 9:22, the author makes no mention of the new covenant or Jesus' blood at

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[40] Gäbel remarks as follows: "Dem Hebr genügt es daher, zu sagen, dass Christus mit seinem eigenen Blut in das himmlische Allerheligste eingetreten ist. Typologisch entspricht das der Darbringung des Blutes durch den Hohenpriester im irdischen Allerheiligsten [It is thus sufficient for Hebrews to say that Christ entered the heavenly Holy of Holies with his own blood. Typologically, this corresponds to the offering of the blood by the high priest in the earthly Holy of Holies]" (Gäbel, *Die Kulttheologie des Hebräerbriefes*, 290, my translation).

[41] Johnsson calls this principle the "blood rule" (Johnsson, *Defilement and Purgation*, 30, 43, 104–5, 150–53). For the extensive list of scholars who argue for the meaning of αἱματεκχυσία ("bloodshed"), particularly whether it indicates "ritual manipulation or blood" or "ritual slaughter," see Jamieson, *Jesus' Death and Heavenly Offering*, 141n49.

[42] See Klawans, *Impurity and Sin*, 34–35.

first. Rather, he initially refers to the old sacrificial system and its animal blood,[43] and then concludes by discussing the ritual principle in general. Almost everything is purified, and forgiveness is given through the blood.[44] It emphasizes the necessity of blood shedding, not only in the act of sacrifice, but also in its ability to purify and provide atonement. Animal bloodshed was used in the old cultic system to purify, achieve ritual cleanliness, and allow the community to approach God. However, while this bloodshed served its purpose within the framework of the old covenant, it also pointed forward the ultimate atonement, paving the way for Jesus' sacrifice.

The new covenant is established through Jesus' blood, and it reflects the cultural understanding of a will that takes effect following his death. The shedding of Jesus' blood is essential for the ratification of this new covenant.[45] The suggestion in 9:22b that the anticipation of animal blood as type is fulfilled by Jesus' blood, which is antitype, is supported by the fact that it serves as a bridge to the discussion of the heavenly sanctuary in the following paragraph, 9:23–28.[46] The inferential conjunction οὖν ("then") "indicates that the author is about to make further *typological* connections between the rituals of the first covenant and the work of Christ."[47] As the earthly things required purification

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[43] The statement in 9:22 that there must be bloodshed for forgiveness certainly applies to both the old and new cultuses. In the words of Marshall, "At the very least the old system took away the outward defilement of sin (9:13) by rites of purification" (Marshall, "Soteriology in Hebrews," 266–67).

[44] Brooke Foss Westcott argues that ἄφεσις in 9:22b means "release" in a cultic sense (Westcott, *Hebrews*, 271). Some argue for cultic cleansing as its meaning (e.g., Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 474; Johnsson, *Defilement and Purgation*, 148–49; Lane, *Hebrews*, 1.232–33). Others interpret it as "forgiveness" (e.g., Attridge, *Hebrews*, 259; Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 410–11; Gäbel, *Die Kulttheologie des Hebräerbriefes*, 418; Grässer, *Erich. An die Hebräer*, 3:185; Johnson, *Hebrews*, 242; Koester, *Hebrews*, 420; Moffatt, *Hebrews*, 130; Moffitt, *Atonement and the Logic of Resurrection*, 269; Ribbens, *Levitical Sacrifice and Heavenly Cult*, 210–12).

[45] The symbolic use of a will helps to convey the new covenant's irreversible and solemn nature. It emphasizes the finality and authority of Jesus' sacrificial death, which leads to believers' perfection.

[46] Johnsson, *Defilement and Purgation*, 145.

[47] Peterson, *Hebrews*, 216 (emphasis added). Lane defines the range of presuppositions made by the conjunction οὖν as 9:15–22, and adds that the first word ἀνάγκη ("it was necessary") is explained by the "axiomatic character" of 9:22a, which is the general principle (Lane, *Hebrews*, 2:247). See Johnsson,

through animal blood, and the heavenly things required the better method, which is Jesus' blood (9:26). Specifically, the purifying function of the blood is central to both the old and new sacrificial systems, according to the general principle presented by the author's references to blood shedding. The typological continuity is established in the relationship between the sacrifices of the two cultuses.

Incorporating the concept of blood sprinkling further underscores this continuity between the two sacrificial systems. As mentioned above, blood sprinkling served a ritual function in the old covenant, consecrated people and objects, and provided purification for sanctification (9:13, 19, 21). However, 12:24 redefines this act through the blood of Jesus, "that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel," indicating its fulfillment as an enduring purification that the old system foreshadowed. Thus, the author not only supports animal blood as a Levitical sacrifice, but also demonstrates its fulfillment in Jesus. Through both the shedding and sprinkling of blood, the Levitical sacrifices and Jesus' sacrifice exist in a relationship of preparation and fulfillment, presenting a coherent narrative of atonement and purification that culminates in Jesus' blood as the ultimate sacrifice, inaugurating the new covenant.

How Many Times Were Offered at Once

In the book of Hebrews, the number of times blood was presented in a single ritual differed significantly between old and new cultuses. The author's first mention of blood in a cultic context occurs in Heb 9:7,[48] which states that the Levitical sacrificial system

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Defilement and Purgation, 150.

[48] According to the regulation, blood was required for the high priest to enter the inner room because it was regarded as a purification medium (Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 436). See Lane, *Hebrews*, 2:240; Peterson, *Hebrews and Perfection*, 138.

required high priests to offer sacrifices twice on the Day of Atonement: once for their own sins and then again for the sins of the people.[49] This twofold offering reflects the weakness and sinfulness of human high priests, as discussed in the previous chapter.

Although it was said that everything mentioned about human high priests' sins was to emphasize Jesus' sinlessness in relation to his high priestly ministry, sinfulness inevitably resulted in the need for treatment through sacrificial offerings (cf. 5:1–10). Meanwhile, the blood here in 9:7 is a necessary component of purifying sacrifices, and it comes to be associated with Jesus' new cultus and its cultic medium, the blood of Jesus.[50] Thus, in 9:12, Jesus, as a sinless high priest, made a single, all-encompassing sacrifice. However, while the sinless nature of Jesus is frequently cited as a reason for the singularity of his offering, this focus on the priest's character invites a closer look at the role of the offering itself, specifically the blood.

The blood offered as the sacrifice of the Levitical cultus was derived from animal sacrifices, and the author of Hebrews notes that this blood was effective for external purification (9:13), providing a type of cleansing. While the author does not use language that suggests the limitations of animal blood, Jesus' blood is characterized as "eternal" and "perfect" (9:14), shedding divine power. This distinctive quality of Jesus' blood as God's own life underpins the sufficiency of his single offering.

The author's point is the greatness of Jesus' blood, and its foundation is the function of animal blood, that is, purification. Instead of criticizing animal blood itself as

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[49] The double negative phrase οὐ χωρὶς αἵματος ("never without blood") emphasizes the necessity of blood as a component of ritual, which is subsequently applied to the new sacrifice as the blood of Jesus (Attridge, *Hebrews*, 239). Attridge notes that Hebrews subsequently contrasts the animal blood of the Levitical sacrificial system with the blood of Jesus, but he overlooks the fact that both sacrificial systems share the same medium, sacrifice's blood, as well as the same goal, purification for sins.

[50] Contra deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 302.

deficient or flawed, the author portrays animal sacrifices as preparatory, intended to foreshadow and pave the way for Jesus' ultimate offering. The blood of animals served a divine purpose in maintaining covenantal purity and pointing forward to the fullness of atonement that would come through Jesus. In this typological framework, the author honors the role of animal blood while not implying any intrinsic inadequacy, instead pointing to Jesus' blood as the ultimate fulfillment. Thus, the use of animal blood twice was a critical component of God's redemptive plan, laying the groundwork for Jesus' singular offering.

Through this typology, Hebrews affirms the Levitical sacrifices as an essential part of the preparation for Jesus' sacrifice. While Levitical blood sacrifices required a double presentation, they established a ritual foundation that Jesus' blood would fulfill. Jesus' sacrifice, with its divine efficacy and eternal scope, only needed to be offered once, just for the believers. By comparing the number of blood presentations in each system, the author subtly underscores the unique power of Jesus' blood as divine and eternally effective, while also acknowledging the indispensable role of animal blood as a preparatory and prophetic element in God's redemptive narrative.

Purity Obtained through Blood

The sacrificial blood of both old and new cultuses was offered to God in anticipation of purification. The author of Hebrews describes offerings of each cultus's blood as having varying degrees of purity. While he mentions blood several times in reference to purification, sin treatments, holiness, and access to God, the difference between animal blood and Jesus' blood is clear, establishing their relationship.

Purification and Sanctification

The author makes a nuanced comparison between the purification effects of animal blood and Jesus' blood in Heb 9:13–14, recognizing their efficacies in different contexts. He acknowledges the effectiveness of animal blood in the Levitical sacrificial system, stating that the blood of goats and bulls, as well as heifer ashes, "sanctify for the purification of the flesh" (9:13). The author affirms that animal blood provides a valid, God-ordained purification for the physical, external aspects of the sacrifier.[51] This ritual cleansing enables people to approach God within the framework of the old covenant. By establishing this point, the author does not criticize the old cultus's sacrificial blood, but rather uses its recognized efficacy as a foundation for *a fortiori* reasoning—if animal blood can purify the flesh, then Jesus' blood must undoubtedly provide an even more profound purification.[52]

The comparison, however, reveals a significant difference in scope and effect. The author contends that, while animal blood purifies the "flesh," Jesus' blood purifies the "conscience," addressing the worshiper's internal and spiritual state. This shift from flesh to conscience indicates a deeper, more transformative effect of Jesus' sacrifice. Whereas the Levitical sacrifices enabled external sanctification, Jesus' blood is portrayed as purifying the inner life, allowing believers to serve God with a cleansed conscience, free from the guilt of sin.[53] Although we as readers can infer that this difference implies a

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[51] As Ribbens remarks, "The argument [Heb 9:13–14] begins by ascribing to the old covenant sacrifices a modest efficacy—they sanctify so that there is a purification of the flesh" (Ribbens, *Levitical Sacrifice and Heavenly Cult*, 191).

[52] See Bruce, *Hebrews*, 216n91; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 453; Westfall, *Discourse Analysis*, 199n27. See also the discussion in the preceding section.

[53] In terms of the cleansing of the worshippers' conscience, Peterson finds an undeniable contrast between Heb 9:14 and 9:9. However, 9:14 should be interpreted in light of the more adjacent statement in

greater scope and depth in Jesus' blood through its ability to reach the conscience, which aligns with Hebrews's broader theme of Jesus' sacrifice as a fulfillment and completion of the old covenant sacrifices, it should also be noted that the text does not overtly claim one type of purification to be "better."

When we further read Heb 10:29 and 13:12, it becomes more evident that Jesus' blood is valuable as an antitype for fulfillment. Although the context is not cultic, the author in 10:29 implies that some people have already been sanctified by Jesus' blood.[54] Once again, the reason for Jesus' suffering is referred to as "mak[ing] people holy through his own blood" (13:12).[55] In this way, Hebrews respects the preparatory role of animal blood in bodily cleansing while presenting Jesus' blood as the ultimate purification, with the power to sanctify both body and conscience. The distinction implies a progression rather than a stark contrast, portraying the old covenant as effective for its intended purpose while presenting the new covenant as the ultimate means of sanctification. This approach preserves the value of the old cultus while encouraging readers to recognize the ultimate purification and direct access to God through sin atonement, which is now available through Jesus' sacrificial blood.

Sin Treatments

Hebrews describes both animal blood and Jesus' blood as having specific roles in relation

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the preceding verse, 9:13, stating the possibility of using old cultic blood for external purification. Cf. Peterson, *Hebrews*, 210.

[54] In 10:29, the author makes the point that apostates who betrayed their faith will face punishment. He refers to the apostates as those who have been sanctified by "the blood of covenant," which is Jesus' blood. The prepositional phrase ἐν ᾧ ("that" in NIV; "by which" in NRSV) is instrumental and clearly indicates that Jesus' blood resulted in the sanctification (BDF §195; Lane, *Hebrews*, 2:277). God has sanctified his people through the new covenant sacrifice, which the apostate rejects as profane.

[55] It reminds us of the author's statement in 9:13: "The *blood* of goats and bulls . . . sprinkled on those who are ceremonially unclean *sanctify* them" (emphasis added).

to sin, underscoring the typological relationship between the old and new cultuses. In Heb 9:12, the author emphasizes that Jesus achieved "eternal redemption,"[56] a unique, once-for-all act that fully addresses the problem of sin by entering the heavenly sanctuary with his own blood. Although the author explicitly denies that the blood of goats and calves serves as a means of eternal redemption, this does not imply that he had any negative or pejorative views toward animal blood. we must also consider the author's subsequent comment about the sanctifying function of animal blood, as discussed above (9:13).

In summarizing the Levitical law, Heb 9:22 asserts the general principle that "without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness." The principle applies to both animal and Jesus' sacrifices, confirming that blood is essential in the process of forgiveness. However, while both are related to forgiveness, the author appears to be more concerned with the efficacy of Jesus' blood, especially when referring to comprehensive forgiveness, which results in an "eternal redemption" based on conscience purification, as seen in 9:14.[57] Thus, while forgiveness is a common effect, the extent of forgiveness varies, leading us to conclude that Jesus blood fulfilled eternal forgiveness as a result of the provision of animal blood.

The author directly addresses the limitations of animal blood in terms of sin removal, stating that the blood of bulls and goats does not "take away sins" (10:4).[58] The

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[56] As Ribbens observes, "This redemption is eternal (αἰωνίαν; 9:12), covering both the sins committed prior to Christ under the first covenant (9:15) and the sins committed after Christ" (Ribbens, *Levitical Sacrifice and Heavenly Cult*, 220).

[57] According to deSilva, animal blood provided only *temporary* redemption, whereas Jesus' blood provided *eternal* redemption, emphasizing the distinction between their temporary and eternal nature (deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 305–6). However, the temporary nature of animal blood is not explicitly mentioned; rather, Heb 9:22 mentions the possibility of forgiveness. As a result, we do not need to emphasize anything that the author of Hebrews does not do.

[58] According to Koester, sin is considered to be completely removed "only when the conscience is

inability of animal blood to completely remove sins was already alluded to in 9:15, when the author said that Jesus died "to set them *free from the sins* committed under the first covenant." Again, however, the author does not bring it up as a topic or issue, but rather emphasizes the effectiveness of Jesus' blood. The author is concerned about the efficacy of animal blood in terms of the forgiveness of sins.

Rather than dismissing animal sacrifices as ineffective, Hebrews explains their intended purpose under the old covenant—to remind worshipers of sin. According to Hebrews, animal sacrifices served as a "reminder of sins" year after year, raising awareness of sin but not removing itself (10:3). Some scholars contend that in the "reminder of sins" in 10:3 contrasts with God's promise that he would no longer remember the sins of his people (8:12; 10:17; cf. Jer 31:34).[59] If this is the case, there should be a scarcity of the Levitical sacrifices because God's forgetting of sins indicates forgiveness, whereas being remembered indicates the opposite. However, the author does not specify whether God or the people are being reminded of sins. It is highly likely to refer to the people's remembrance of their own sins rather than God's remembrance because the word ἀνάμνησις ("reminder") means "means for causing someone to remember," but God does not require any means to be reminded of something (LN 29.11).[60] When referring to God's remembrance in Heb 8:12 and 10:17, the author employs the verb μιμνήσκομαι, which means "to recall information from memory, but *without necessarily the implication that persons have actually forgotten,*" thereby

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purged," and the "partial [and/or temporal] cleansing provided by animal sacrifice is not considered a removal of sin (9:13)" (Koester, *Hebrews*, 236–37).

[59] For example, among others, Attridge, *Hebrews*, 272; Bruce, *Hebrews*, 236–37.

[60] Louw and Nida, *Greek–English Lexicon*, 1:347. Even if we use anthropomorphisms, the fact that God does not require reminders to remember something does not change.

revealing God's willingness to recall something (LN 29.7).[61]

As a result, 10:3 needs to be understood as describing what the Levitical sacrifices were capable of doing, namely, allowing the worshipers to remember their sins in order to be led to repentance in pursuit of sin purification.[62] This annual "remembrance" served as a type, directing worshipers toward the ultimate sacrifice that can bring true and lasting redemption. Thus, the animal blood offerings were not intended to completely remove sin, but rather to establish a sacrificial pattern that foreshadows and anticipates Jesus' complete sacrifice.

Because both sacrifices, animals of the old cultus and Jesus of the new cultus, share the goal of sin purification, they must be seen as being valued in continuity. Johnsson maintains as follows:

> We notice how the exegesis turns on the connect balancing of *continuity [similarity]* and *discontinuity [difference]* of the old and new cultuses. The author's point here is obviously to accent the discontinuity [difference]; but that accent must not be allowed to obscure the *underlying basis of continuity* (namely, the "*blood rule*") on which he is able to frame his argument.[63]

In this way, Hebrews frames animal sacrifices not as failed atonement attempts, but as a purposeful type that leads to the antitype, Jesus' blood. The animal sacrifices, through the "remembrance of sins," directed worshipers' attention to the ongoing need for a more

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[61] Louw and Nida, *Greek–English Lexicon*, 1:346 (emphasis added). Precisely, it is God's willingness not to recall the people's sins in Heb 8:12 and 10:17.

[62] As Bruce remarks, "The remembrance of sins may involve repentance for them, or it may involve persistence in them" (Bruce, *Hebrews*, 237). Gelardini draws attention to the reality of "the remaining of sins on earth" and "the absence of undefiled space on earth" from 10:3, but the author's point is not the sinful reality of earthly things, but rather what animal blood could and could not do (Gelardini, "Inauguration of Yom Kippur," 251).

[63] Johnsson, *Defilement and Purgation*, 155 (emphasis added). Still, Johnsson uses the term "inadequacy" when referring to animal blood, which I disagree with because it casts the old cultus in a negative light as being denigrated by the author of Hebrews. At the very least, one ought to indicate which aspect is inadequate and how. For example, it could be argued that animal blood was insufficient for completely cleansing one's conscience of sins. This does not preclude that the animal blood was adequate for the goal of the Levitical sacrifices.

profound solution, which Jesus fulfilled by offering his own blood. His blood completes what animal blood has been preparing for through the annual reminder of sins—an "eternal redemption" that finally addresses the reality of sins. Thus, Hebrews understands that animal blood dealt with sins as an essential preparatory type, while presenting Jesus' blood as the antitype that brings the sacrificial system to its intended fulfillment, providing the complete, eternal forgiveness that the Levitical offerings anticipate.

Holiness

There is Hebrews's statement that God was dissatisfied with the Levitical sacrifices in contrast to the offering of Jesus' body. The author cites Ps 40:6–8 to argue that God did not desire sacrifices and offerings (Heb 10:5) and was not pleased with burnt offerings and sin offerings (10:6). God did not want any of the sacrifices offered in accordance with the Law, including sacrifices, offerings, burnt offerings, and sin offerings (10:8), and so he abolished "the first to establish the second" (10:9). As such, the author may appear to criticize the entire Levitical sacrificial system, especially its sacrifices, in order to highlight the significance of Jesus as the only legitimate sacrifice (10:10).

Wedderburn, focusing on Heb 10:5–9, contends that the author of Hebrews's treatment of cultic imagery is self-contradictory. He first discovers five elements that Hebrews respects the old cultus as the foundation of Jesus' new cultus, and claims that the author values the old cultus:

> (1) Just as men are called by God and appointed as high priests to act (on behalf of humankind) in relation to God (5:1, 4), so too is Christ (5:5–6).
> (2) High priests must have something to offer (8:3).
> (3) The high priest cannot enter the 'holy of holies' without blood, i.e., a bloody sacrifice (9:7; cf. 9:12).
> (4) The blood of animals purifies the flesh (9:13), but not conscience (9:9; cf.

> 9:14; 10:2); nearly everything is purified by blood and forgiveness is only possible through shedding of blood (9:22; but cf. on 10:4).
> (5) The making of a διαθήκη presupposes the death of the one making it (9:16) and the first διαθήκη could only be inaugurated through blood (9:18). So, too, the heavenly sanctuary needs to be purified through still greater sacrifices (9:23).[64]

However, in light of God's dislike for all types of sacrifices under the Law, Wedderburn later points out a problem, saying, "it becomes harder to treat Jesus' offering of his body as in continuity with, and analogous to, those offerings, if indeed God wants nothing of the sort."[65]

Although Wedderbun's argument is not universally accepted in Hebrews scholarship, numerous scholars admit the existence of cult criticism in Hebrews.[66] Nonetheless, two factors must be considered when interpreting the passage 10:5–10: (1) The meaning of the phrase εἰσερχόμενος εἰς τὸν κόσμον ("when Christ came into the world") in 10:5a; and (2) relevant contextual information, especially the immediate context, 10:1–4. First, God's refusal of sacrifices and offerings is specified as "when Christ came into the world" (10:5a). While it may refer to a simple birth in Jewish tradition,[67] the author here explicitly refers to Christ's incarnation.[68] According to Attridge, "Although the incarnation is clearly in view, the introductory verse is important not because it stresses a particular moment when Christ's act of obedience to the divine

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[64] Wedderburn, "Sawing Off the Branches," 404. He adds, "To a point, then, one gets the impression that the earthly cult of the Old Testament is along the right lines and follows the right principles and valid ones, as indeed one might expect if it was ordained by God."

[65] Wedderburn, "Sawing Off the Branches," 406.

[66] See Ribbens, *Levitical Sacrifice and Heavenly Cult*, 3n3.

[67] See, for example, m. Roš Haš. 1:2: "At four seasons of the year the world is judged: at Passover for grain; at Pentecost for fruit of the tree; at the New Year *all who enter the world* pass before Him like troops, since it is said, He who fashions the hearts of them all, who considers all their works (Ps. 33:15); and on the Festival [of Tabernacles] they are judged in regard to water" (emphasis added).

[68] See Attridge, *Hebrews*, 273; Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 433–34; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 500–501; Kistemaker, *Hebrews*, 274; Koester, *Hebrews*, 432; Peterson, *Hebrews*, 225. Cf. Guthrie, *Hebrews (TNTC)*, 205. D. Guthrie argues that it does not exclusively refer to the "event of the incarnation, but to the continuous awareness of Jesus that he was doing his Father's will."

will was made, but because it indicates that the cosmos is the sphere of the decisive sacrifice of Christ."[69] Granted, the moment Jesus entered the world should not be overlooked. Regardless of when God first began to dislike sacrifices and offerings offered in accordance with the Law, he was already in a state of disliking them at the time of Jesus' incarnation.[70]

Secondly, the assumption that God became unwilling to receive the old cultus and its sacrifices at the time of or after the incarnation of Jesus can be bolstered by contextual evidence. From the previous subunit, 10:1–4, which forms a unit 10:1–18 together with the current one, we examined that animal blood was effective in causing people to recall their sins. Also, the general principle stated in 9:22 that the blood of sacrifices could purify objects came from the old cultus. The author states that all sacrifices "were offered in accordance with the law" (10:8), and the blood of animals shed in accordance with the Law was referred to as the "blood of covenant, which God has commanded you to keep" (9:19–20).[71] Although it is difficult to pinpoint the exact moment when God began to dislike the old cultus's sacrifices and offerings, which has led to a heated debate,[72] God's dislike must not be due to the inherent defectiveness of the old cultus or its sacrifices and offerings.

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[69] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 273. Thus, he argues that it is unnecessary to attempt to "specify more exactly when the author conceives such a statement to have been made" (273n64). See also Snell, *New and Living Way*, 123; Westcott, *Hebrews*, 311.

[70] The four types of sacrificial rituals mentioned in 10:5–6, namely "sacrifice," "offering," "burnt offerings," and "sin offerings," are very likely to include "all the main types of offering prescribed in the levitical ritual" (Bruce, *Hebrews*, 240–41). See also Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 502.

[71] See Ribbens, "Positive Function of Levitical Sacrifice," 108–9. Ribbens cites Lindars, which is also worth mentioning here: "The point then is that, whether or not the blood-ritual has any value in itself, it is what is prescribed in the Law for atonement and thus has divine sanction for the period of operation of the old covenant" (Lindars, *Theology of the Letter to the Hebrews*, 94).

[72] See, for example, Attridge, *Hebrews*, 432–33, 438–40; Bruce, *Hebrews*, 239–42; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 499–503; Johnsson, *Defilement and Purgation*, 155–57; Lane, *Hebrews*, 2:262–63; Peterson, *Hebrews*, 224–26.

Some suggest that the author of Hebrews cites the Psalm passage here to contrast the old cultus's ritual performance with Jesus' obedience.[73] For example, Gert Steyn proposes that Hebrews interprets Psalm 40 as saying, "the Lord does not desire sacrifices and offerings, but purity of heart, whereas the Pentateuch requires sacrifices to be offered."[74] According to this view, Jesus' "offering of his body" is not a cultic sacrifice, but rather a sublime act of obedience unto death. However, Ribbens points out that this reading misunderstands the prophetic critique of sacrifices in the Psalms and Prophets.[75] Thus, Hebrews does not advocate the eradication of the old cultic sacrifices or their substitution with obedience. Rather, according to Justin Harrison Duff, Hebrews "compares hypocritically offered blood of bulls and goats with the blood of a better and more obedient high priest."[76]

Given that God was the one who established and implemented the old covenant and the old cultus, it is reasonable to surmise that God disliked them not because of the old cultic system's flaws, but because of the worshipers' attitudes, particularly their disobedience. As a result of Jesus' obedient offering of himself, we now "have been made holy," in accordance with God's salvific will (10:10). Considering that the author acknowledges the efficacy of reminding people of sin as divinely appointed (10:1–4) and that his critique seems to target possibly the worshipers' disobedience rather than the old cultus itself, the achievement mentioned here must be understood as being in continuity with the Levitical old cultus.[77]

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[73] Ribbens, "Sacrifice God Desired," 290. See Attridge, *Hebrews*, 275–76; Gäbel, *Die Kulttheologie des Hebräerbriefes*, 191; Kistemaker, *Psalm Citations*, 43.

[74] Steyn, *Quest for the Assumed LXX Volage*, 296.

[75] Ribbens, "Sacrifice God Desired," 290–93.

[76] Duff, "Blood of Goats and Calves," 782.

[77] *Pace* Ribbens, "Sacrifice God Desired," 296. He interprets Heb 10:1–4 as the "most critical statements about Levitical sacrifices, arguing that they did not achieve salvific realities," but I contend that

Perfection and Access to God

The connection between "perfection" and "access to God" in Hebrews highlights the transformative effect of Jesus' new cultus.[78] According to Peterson, Hebrews describes perfection not as an abstract concept but as a direct access to God, achieved through Jesus' sacrificial ministry.[79] In Hebrews, the first mention of perfection or access to God in direct relation to blood as sacrifice appears in 9:9, where the author states that the Levitical sacrificial offerings cannot perfect the worshiper's conscience. It means that the old sacrificial blood was unable to draw people to God. However, this limitation is not portrayed as a flaw in animal sacrifices themselves; rather, Hebrews implies that they were intended to be provisional, awaiting the ultimate sacrifice of Jesus. The author clarifies this in 9:10, noting that the sacrificial system was implemented "until the time of the new order." In other words, the Levitical high priests and their duties in the earthly tabernacle served as an illustration for the "present time" (9:9) and were intended to be applied "until the time of the new order" (9:10) brought by Jesus.[80]

In contrast, Jesus' blood uniquely provides the perfection that allows believers to approach God without hindrance. The author explains in Heb 9:14 that Jesus' sacrifice

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the passage is the author's acknowledgment of the old cultus's efficacy as an annual reminder of people's sins.

[78] Ribbens reads the τελειοῦν of the worshipers in 10:1 as "access to God" (Ribbens, *Levitical Sacrifice and Heavenly Cult*, 177).

[79] Peterson, *Hebrews and Perfection*, 128–30. He also suggests that perfection in Hebrews is both an eschatological promise and a present reality, allowing believers to enter the heavenly sanctuary (154–56).

[80] As Bruce argues, the Levitical high priesthood must be understood as preparation for "giv[ing] way to the new" (Bruce, *Hebrews*, 211). According to him, the old covenant and the law are a "shadow to the substance, the outward and earthly copy to the inward and heavenly reality," as well as a "pattern or preliminary blueprint of the redemptive order introduced by Christ." It is correct if we understand the terms "shadow," "pattern," and "blueprint" apart from the Platonic concept.

"cleanses our consciences," allowing us to fully serve God. This concept is expanded in 10:19, where believers are encouraged to enter the heavenly sanctuary with confidence. This access is based on the once-for-all nature of Jesus' sacrifice, which, according to 10:14, "has perfected for all time those who are sanctified." Thus, France recognizes both the preparatory Levitical high priesthood and the fulfilling Jesus' high priesthood, stating,

> It is the *beginning of the typology* which the Epistle to the Hebrews develops so fully, in which the Old Testament cultic institution and its officers are seen as 'symbolic for the present age,' a shadow of the good things to come.' The principles of mediation and reconciliation with God demonstrated in the Old Testament cult find their *antitype* and *fulfillment* in Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant.[81]

Given that Hebrews presents the purifying efficacy of both animal blood and Jesus' blood, the fact that Jesus' blood resulted in eternal redemption and once-and-for-all entry into the heavenly tabernacle lends itself to its ability to fulfill the cultic system as a whole.[82] Importantly, the text does not criticize animal sacrifices for their lack of internal cleansing, but rather frames them as types that prefigure Jesus' offering. Hebrews does not imply that animal blood prevented access to God; rather, it emphasizes that only Jesus' blood could achieve the eternal redemption required for such access. This typological structure recognizes the role of animal sacrifices as preparatory within the covenant, viewing them as necessary steps in a divine plan that leads to Jesus' ultimate fulfillment. Through this framework, Hebrews presents a unified narrative in which the limitations of animal sacrifices are intentional typological elements that are fulfilled in Jesus, who perfects and grants direct access to God.

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[81] France, *Jesus and the Old Testament*, 47 (emphasis added).

[82] For a discussion of the significance of Jesus' blood and the extent of his heavenly high priesthood, see Hughes, *Hebrews*, 329–62. See also Hughes, "Blood of Jesus and His Heavenly Priesthood 1"; Hughes, "Blood of Jesus and His Heavenly Priesthood 2."

Concluding Remarks

This chapter investigated the similarities and differences between animal sacrifices in the old cultus and Jesus as the sacrifice in the new cultus. First and foremost, both sacrificial systems required high priests to bring offerings, which were described as "gifts and sacrifices" and emphasized blood as a critical component. While Levitical priests offered animal blood and sacrifices that were distinct from themselves, Jesus, as high priest, offered himself and his own blood, uniquely fulfilling the old system's requirements. Both sacrificial systems are depicted as divinely ordained, with Levitical sacrifices foreshadowing Jesus' ultimate sacrifice, which was offered "through the eternal Spirit." This continuity emphasizes the divine purpose of both systems, with Levitical sacrifices preparing for the perfection achieved through Jesus' offering. Unlike mortal Levitial priests, Jesus' dual role as sacrificer and sacrifice, combined with his resurrection, ensures an eternal, comprehensive purification that completes and fulfills the goals of the old covenant without negating its divine significance.

Furthermore, it was discovered that blood in these rituals represents both death, as it is shed, and life, as it is served to purify and establish covenants. Blood was offered in the Levitical system through rituals such as sprinkling for external purification and was presented twice during the Day of Atonement, based on the human high priest's sinfulness. On the other hand, Jesus' single, all-encompassing offering reflects his sinlessness and divine nature, with his blood representing eternal and perfect atonement. While Levitical sacrifices were effective within their covenantal context, Hebrews portrays them as preparatory, foreshadowing Jesus' ultimate sacrifice. Jesus' blood,

offered once, fulfills and perfects the aims of the old system, inaugurating the new covenant and providing eternal redemption.

It is noteworthy that the author uses the verb προσφέρω ("to offer") instead of the typical LXX verbs ῥαίνειν ("to sprinkle") or ἐπιτιθέναι ("to apply") when referring to blood in 9:7, and he continues to use the same verb to indicate Jesus' death (9:14, 25, 28; 10:12). As Lane remarks, it "suggests that the writer has described the annual sprinkling of blood in the inner sanctuary in this way in order to prepare his readers to recognize the typological parallel between the high point of the atonement ritual under the old covenant and the self-offering of Christ on the cross."[83] This typological relationship between the two systems acknowledges the Levitical sacrifices as part of God's redemptive plan while elevating Jesus' blood as the ultimate and eternal fulfillment.

The author compares the purification achieved through the sacrificial blood of the old and new covenants, emphasizing their preparatory and ultimate roles in God's redemptive plan. Levitical sacrifices effectively provided external purification and a reminder of sin, allowing worshipers to approach God within the old covenant framework. These sacrifices were provisional, foreshadowing the deeper and eternal purification brought about by Jesus' blood, which cleanses the conscience and achieves "eternal redemption." Animal sacrifices, while limited in their ability to address sin comprehensively, served as purposeful types, pointing to Jesus' ultimate atonement. Jesus' single, once-for-all sacrifice fulfills the sacrificial system by providing complete forgiveness, sanctification, and direct access to God, all of which the Levitical offerings anticipated and partially fulfilled in accordance with the old covenant. Hebrews values

[83] Lane, *Hebrews*, 2:223.

the old cultus as necessary for preparing for the perfection found in Jesus, whose blood provides transformative, eternal redemption and unrestricted access to God.

Ultimately, Hebrews's portrayal of Jesus' sacrifice as fulfilling and perfecting the Levitical system can be viewed through a typological lens. The animal sacrifices were never meant to be the final solution; rather, they were divinely instituted as types, pointing to a future, eventual sacrifice. Jesus' offering serves as the antitype, the ultimate reality that fulfills the old system's redemptive intentions. This typological structure affirms that both the old and new sacrificial offerings are part of a unified divine plan, with the former laying the groundwork for the latter's full realization.

To summarize, Hebrews treats the old covenant sacrifices not as deficient but as essential components in God's unfolding plan. The relative limitations of the animal sacrifices are presented as intentional signs that anticipate Jesus' all-sufficient sacrifice, rather than flaws. The blood of animals served an important preparatory function, guiding the people toward an understanding of the gravity of sin and the need for redemption. Jesus' blood finally fulfills these aspirations, achieving perfection and granting direct access to God. Ribbens insightfully expresses this relationship as follows:

> Hebrews clearly develops the notion of the heavenly sanctuary in distinctive ways. Rather than describing a perpetual heavenly cult that matched the perpetual earthly sacrifice, Hebrews argues for a once-for-all heavenly sacrifice. The singular sacrifice of Christ is efficacious for all time. *The result is that the efficacy that emanates from Christ's sacrifice to the earthly sacrifices must be proleptically applied to old covenant believers*. They were accessing salvific goods that were dependent on a future act or development, but for the time being those efficacies were sealed with the promise of God that, when sacrifice was made, there would be atonement and forgiveness.[84]

Thus, the typological relationship in Hebrews underscores the continuity and

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[84] Ribbens, *Levitical Sacrifice and Heavenly Cult*, 238 (emphasis added).

progression from the Levitical sacrifices to the sacrifice of Jesus. The animal sacrifices form the foundation for Jesus' eternal sacrifice stands. In this way, Hebrews offers a cohesive narrative in which the Levitical sacrifices serve as honored types, and Jesus' sacrifice is the fulfillment that brings ultimate, eternal redemption and unmediated access to God.

CHAPTER 6: TIME OF CULTUS IN HEBREWS

In the earlier chapter, we explored the relationship between the old and new cultuses, focusing on what each system required as sacrifices. While Levitical sacrifices involved animal blood for external purification and were preparatory, foreshadowing ultimate atonement, Jesus' single self-offering provided eternal redemption and conscience purification, fulfilling the goals of the old cultus. Animal sacrifices, according to Hebrews, are divinely ordained types that prepare for Jesus' ultimate sacrifice, which perfects and completes their redemptive intentions. This typological structure highlights the continuity between the old and new covenants, with the Levitical sacrificial system laying the groundwork for Jesus' all-sufficient, eternal offering, which grants free access to God. This chapter will then focus on the final ritual element, ritual time, in both old and new cultuses, specifically the frequency with which each cultic ritual occurs.

There may be various aspects of time of rituals, such as the time of day, its duration, or its cycle.[1] There were daily, yearly, and irregular rituals performed according to the reason, aim, or method of the Levitical sacrifices.[2] The cultus of Jesus took place on a certain day, but it is debatable as to when his sacrificial ritual began and finished, particularly since the 2011 publication of Moffitt's dissertation, *Atonement and the Logic*

[1] For more information on various aspects of "ritual time," see Grimes, *Craft of Ritual Studies*, 262–67.

[2] The burnt offerings (Lev 1:3–17), meal offerings (2:1–16), peace offerings (3:1–17; 7:11–21), sin offerings (4:1–35; 5:1–13), and guilt offerings (5:14—6:7) are the Levitical sacrificial offerings.

of Resurrection in the Epistle to the Hebrews.[3] Nevertheless, the book of Hebrews is not concerned with the date, duration, or cycle of either cultus. Instead, the author compares and contrasts the number of times each sacrifice had to be performed, known as its frequency. The author is especially intrigued by the notion that Jesus' sacrifice was only required once, whereas the Levitical offerings were offered repeatedly.

As such, Hebrews recognizes different timings of the two cultic systems. The Levitical cultus was performed on a daily or annual basis, whereas Jesus' cultus was a "once-for-all" sacrifice. Unlike the other ritual elements discussed thus far, the timing of Jesus' sacrifice is described by two different words, ἐφάπαξ and ἅπαξ, both of which are rendered as "once for all," in contrast to the repetition of the Levitical sacrifices. They are mentioned in Heb 7:27; 9:12; 10:10 (ἐφάπαξ) and 9:26, 28; 10:2 (ἅπαξ).[4] In addition, in 10:12 and 14, the author uses the words εἷς ("one") and διηνεκής ("always," "forever") together to suggest the onceness and eternity of Jesus' sacrifice.[5]

The perpetual nature of the Levitical sacrifices is frequently understood as a sign of their deficiency, which may be true when compared to the onceness that occurs just once and endures forever. However, it does not necessarily reflect an author's criticism or negative tone. This may simply indicate fulfillment, which, typologically speaking, does not necessarily indicate elimination.[6] As a result, this chapter will attempt to establish the

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[3] Moffitt, *Atonement and the Logic of Resurrection*, esp. 1–43, 297–303. For a range of viewpoints about the beginning and end times of Jesus' sacrifice, see Jamieson, "When and Where Did Jesus Offer Himself?"

[4] The word ἅπαξ also appears in 6:4, but it is not the ritual context. It refers to the past experience of being enlightened in this passage. Regarding the discussion of what "be enlightened" (φωτίζω) indicates, see Attridge, *Hebrews*, 169–70; Bruce, *Hebrews*, 145–49; Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 269–73; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 319–20; Lane, *Hebrews*, 1:141–42.

[5] See Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 509–11.

[6] Someone may bring up Heb 8:13, in which the author refers to the first covenant, which "will soon disappear" (ἀφανισμός) because it is "obsolete" (παλαιόω) and "outdated" (γηράσκω). This verse should be understood as the author's objective recounting of the old covenant, which is old and seemingly

relationship between the repetition of the old cultus and the onceness of Jesus' new cultus by identifying their similarities and differences using three criteria: their identity and origin, description, and the extent of purity as a result of their frequency.

Identity and Origin of the Two Sacrifices' Repetition and Onceness

Before directly comparing the repetitive and once-for-all natures of the old and new sacrificial systems, we must first investigate the true meaning of the two cultuses' frequencies and who determined them. It is easy to conclude that repetition results from deficiency or vice versa, as opposed to onceness, which represents perfection. It could be true if the author alluded to any pejorative attitude about the repetitive nature of something in the book. However, the author makes reference to the divine designation of the frequency of both the old and new sacrificial systems.

Ἅπαξ, Ἐφάπαξ, and Repetition

According to Louw and Nida, both ἐφάπαξ and ἅπαξ are linked semantically, both in LN 60.67 and 60.68, and have the same meaning, "a single occurrence to the exclusion of any other similar occurrence," and are therefore typically translated as "once and for all, once and never again."[7] In Heb 7:27; 9:12; and 10:10, the author uses ἐφάπαξ three times

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disappearing, rather than as an issue of a command to separate the new from the old. From the author's perspective, the first covenant undoubtedly fulfilled its purpose of laying the groundwork for the new one. It becomes more evident when we read Heb 9:1–10, as discussed so far.

[7] Louw and Nida, *Greek–English Lexicon*, 1:608. See also ἐφάπαξ, BDAG, 417; ἅπαξ, BDAG, 97. The BDAG indicates the possibility of similarity or concurrence between ἐφάπαξ and ἅπαξ at the beginning of the ἐφάπαξ entry (417). Cf. Some say that ἐφάπαξ is a combination of the preposition ἐπὶ and the adverb ἅπαξ suggests the they may have the same meaning and can therefore be used interchangeably because "Prepositions before adverbs may be written separately if the combination is still analogous to that of prepositions with their case, otherwise together, especially if the combination corresponds to a compound verb or adj[ective]" (BDF §12[3]). See also ἐφᾰ́παξ, GE.

to emphasize the uniqueness and permanence of Jesus' sacrifice, namely Jesus' once for all sacrifice.[8] This meaning is determined by its context, especially the repeating nature of the Levitical sacrifices under the old cultic system. It is the same in 9:26 and 10:2 where ἅπαξ is used, and all other occurrences of ἅπαξ in Hebrews (6:4; 9:7, 27, 28; 12:26, 27) mean "once" based on their contexts.

Repetition, on the other hand, could potentially be derived from the Greek word δευτερόω, which primarily conveys the meanings of second, renew, or repeat,[9] as well as δευτέρωσις, second line, second position, or repetition.[10] However, the concept of ritual repetition can only be found in Hebrews, as the author does not use any terms that can be rendered as "repetition" or the like. Instead, he refers to repeated rituals as opposed to the once for all sacrifice,[11] particularly in three ways: (1) καθ' ἡμέραν in 7:27; 10:11 ("day after day"), (2) κατ' ἐνιαυτόν in 9:25 ("every year"); 10:1 ("year after year"); 10:3 ("annual"), and (3) πολλάκις in 9:25 ("again and again"); 9:26 ("many times"); 10:11 ("again and again").

Onceness and repetition have no value as terms or concepts in and of themselves. The terms ἐφάπαξ and ἅπαξ do not represent something valuable or perfect as they are. Although they are used positively in Hebrews to indicate the greatness of Jesus' sacrifice, they can also be used negatively depending on the context. For example, Philo uses the word ἅπαξ to describe an athlete's failure: "For there the athletes' bodies are brought low

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[8] Other New Testament books, including Pauline and non-Pauline epistles, use both ἐφάπαξ and ἅπαξ to mean either or both "at once" and "once for all" depending on the context. It is the same with the Greek authors. See, for example, Rom 6:10; 1 Cor 15:6; 2 Cor 11:25; Phil 4:16; 1 Thess 2:18; Jude 3; 5; 1 Pet 3:18. See also, for example, Eusebius, *Hist. eccl*. 1:12:3; Cassius, *Hist. Rom*. 69:8; 66:17; Lucian, *[Encom. Demosth.]* 18; Philo, *Drunkenness* 198.

[9] δευτερόω, BDAG, 221; δευτερόω, GE.

[10] δευτέρωσις, GE.

[11] Regarding the concept of repetition in Hebrews, see Moore, *Repetition in Hebrews*, esp. 148–205.

but can easily stand once more erect. Here it is whole lives that fall, which *once* (ἅπαξ) overthrown can hardly be raised up again."[12] On the contrary, repetition is not always described negatively in the Bible, such as in prayer (e.g., Matt 26:44; Luke 18:1–7), teaching (e.g., Phil 3:1; 2 Pet 1:12–15), and worship (e.g., Rev 4:8). In Heb 6:7, the term πολλάκις is used positively, emphasizing the recurring blessings of rain on the land. Thus, both onceness and repetition should not be interpreted negatively or positively unless there is contextual support.[13]

Divine Appointment

In Hebrews, the "once for all" nature of Jesus' sacrifice is inextricably linked to God's will. Although it is obvious that Hebrews declares Jesus' divine nature (e.g., Heb 1:3; 7:3; 13:8), direct references to the onceness of Jesus' sacrifice as divinely appointed appear in only a few passages. In Heb 10:10, the author states that Jesus sacrificed his body once and for all "by that will." The "will" referred to here is already mentioned directly by Jesus in 10:9 as the reason for his coming.[14] Additionally, 9:27–28 draws a parallel between human mortality, which is described as "appointed" by God, and Jesus' singular sacrificial death, which was similarly ordained. As the author of Hebrews points out, the singularity of Jesus' sacrifice is not only a significant event but also the fulfillment of God's eternal purpose.

The old cultus, with its repetitive nature, is frequently described as a "shadow"

[12] Philo, *Rewards* 6 (emphasis added).
[13] See Moore, *Repetition in Hebrews*, 144–45.
[14] The content of God's will, referred to as "set[ting] aside the first to establish the second," will be discussed in the following section.

(e.g., 10:1) of the good things to come, pointing forward to Jesus' ultimate offering.[15] This description clearly demonstrates God's intention to maintain the old cultic system, including its repetition. Furthermore, in 9:7–10, the author refers to the Holy Spirit as the agent who demonstrated that God has established the annual performance of sacrifices to prepare for the worshipers' full approach to him in the Most Holy Place until the appearance of its fulfillment.[16] It implies that the repetition of the old cultic rituals was divinely intended as a provisional arrangement, designed to foreshadow and prepare for the ultimate revelation in Jesus. Thus, the repetition of sacrifices can be viewed as a pedagogical tool that teaches us about their fulfillment through Jesus' final single one.

Therefore, the repetition of Levitical sacrifices does not indicate their limitations with negative connotations, but rather emphasizes the importance of Jesus' singular sacrifice. In other words, the divine will behind the old cultus's repetition is manifested not in the sacrifices' effectiveness as ends in themselves, but in their function as anticipatory signs. In this way, the repetition, far from being arbitrary, is consistent with the overarching divine purpose, as evidenced by Hebrews's assertion that God commanded them (10:8). In conclusion, while repetition and onceness are diametrically opposed in terms of frequency, the Hebrews author's use of them in both old and new cultuses' frequencies is part of an *a fortiori* comparison that necessitates respect for divinely appointed frequencies as the preparation and fulfillment, respectively.

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[15] The meaning of the expression "shadow and copy" with and without Platonic influence is discussed in Chapter 3 of this study. See Calaway, *Sabbath and the Sanctuary*, 108.

[16] It goes beyond the importance of the role of the Holy Spirit in determining the efficacy of the annual repetition. The author's reference to the Holy Spirit in 9:8 clarifies the significance and purpose of the repeated provisions of the old cultus in light of their fulfillment in Jesus (Peterson, *Hebrews and Perfection*, 133). See Lane, *Hebrews*, 2:223.

Description of Repetition and Onceness

Unlike other ritual elements discussed previously, there is no similarity in the frequency of old and new cultic rituals in Hebrews. The author describes the frequency of each cultus in several different ways. To illustrate, the author uses the terms ἐφάπαξ (Heb 7:27; 9:12; 10:10) and ἅπαξ (9:26; 10:2) when mentioning the one-time nature of Jesus' sacrifice. The meanings of these terms are not significantly different because they belong to the same semantic domains (LN 60.67 and 60.68).[17] The combination of the two words εἷς ("one") and διηνεκής ("always," "forever") is unique, but its meaning remains the same as others. The repetition of the old cultus is depicted in two different ways, καθ' ἡμέραν (Heb 7:27; 10:11) and κατ' ἐνιαυτόν (9:25; 10:1, 3), each denoting a daily and yearly sense, respectively.

Repetition of the Old Cultus

The author makes the first mention of the frequency of sacrifices as καθ' ἡμέραν in Heb 7:27, when he contrasts the daily offering of the Levitical high priests with the one-time offering of the high priest Jesus. However, his initial description of the high priest having to make an atonement first for his own sins and then for the sins of the people (cf. Lev 16:6–10) raises concerns because it refers to the annual Day of Atonement ritual. According to the majority of scholars, the author of Hebrews in 7:27 and 10:11 may have combined the Day of Atonement ritual with other sacrifices as a generalization of the old cultic rituals, despite being well aware of the distinction between the high priest's annual Day of Atonement sacrifices and the ordinary priests' daily sacrifices.[18] Additionally, it is

[17] Louw and Nida, *Greek–English Lexicon*, 1:608.

[18] Koester argues that the author here is generalizing the Day of Atonement sacrifice, saying, "The

possible that ἐφάπαξ indicates repetition in general.[19] Using these two solutions, the daily repetition of the old cultus can be interpreted as emphatically emphasizing its repetitiveness in contrast to the oneness of Jesus' sacrifice.

In 7:27, the author simply contrasts Jesus' single sacrifice with the Levitical high priests' repetitive sacrifices, highlighting that Jesus did not have to do the same as them. The purpose of this contrast is to emphasize Jesus as the ultimate high priest and the perfect Son. Given that the author does not disparage the Levitical high priesthood, as previously discussed, his reference to the repetition of their ritual performance is merely part of the presentation about Jesus. In 10:11, the author appears to demonstrate the inefficacy of the repetitive Levitical rituals by saying that they "can never take away sins." In addition, the term πολλάκις ("again and again") underscores the repetitive nature of the old cultus. However, it should be interpreted as the author's description of the different functions of the repeated sacrifices versus the once-for-all sacrifice in terms of sin treatment. It should be noted that the author mentioned the annual sacrifices' function as a reminder of sins in 10:3, which will be discussed below.

Another phrase that reveals the repetitive nature of the Levitical sacrifices is κατ' ἐνιαυτόν, which appears in 9:25; 10:1; and 10:3. In 9:25, the author mentions the annual sacrifice of the Day of Atonement to note that Jesus does not require such repetition,

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author apparently fuses the Day of Atonement sacrifices with other sacrifices" (Koester, *Hebrews*, 368). According to Ribbens, "The sacrifice depicted in Heb 9:1–28 actually blends the offerings of the Day of Atonement, red heifer, and covenant sacrifice" (Ribbens, "Typology of Types," 87n31). For various proposals on this issue, see Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 395. Ellingworth says, "It seems more likely that the author was interested in the theology of sacrifice, and specifically in the significance of the Day of Atonement, rather than in details of the temple liturgy." See also Allen, *Hebrews*, 431; Bruce, *Hebrews*, 177; Harris, *Hebrews*, 185; Lane, *Hebrews*, 1:194; Moore, *Repetition in Hebrews*, 167; Riggenbach, *Der Brief an die Hebraër*, 212–17.

[19] Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 342–43; Kistemaker, *Hebrews*, 207; Schreiner, *Hebrews*, 238. Cf. Attridge, *Hebrews*, 214.

particularly entering the Most Holy Place with animal blood. After briefly illustrating the Levitical high priest's every-year (κατ᾽ ἐνιαυτόν) entrance to the Most Holy Place, the author explains that Jesus did not enter heaven again and again (πολλάκις). The term πολλάκις is used again in the following verse (9:26), indicating that he did not have to offer himself many times (πολλάκις) due to what is mentioned in 9:25.

The author in 10:1 states that "the same sacrifices repeated endlessly year after year" (κατ᾽ ἐνιαυτόν) can never "make perfect" the worshipers. It may may appear to be a reference to the limitations of the old cultic ritual because of the indications of what they cannot do: making perfect (10:1) and removing sins (10:2). However, we should not disregard its two abilities: a "shadow" (σκιά) of the good things (10:1) and an annual reminder of sins (10:3). Several English translations of 10:1 use the adjective "only" as a modifier for "shadow," giving it a pejorative connotation. However, the Greek text contains no corresponding word. Furthermore, as Koester explains, the earthly tabernacle was a "copy and shadow" of the heavenly one, so the fact that it represented "would have been reason to revere it."[20]

In most cases, the repetitive nature of the old cultus is interpreted as a result of its defect, or vice versa, the inadequacy of the old cultus is interpreted as a result of its repetition.[21] Koester argues that the Levitical sacrifices "were ineffective and were repeated because they failed to complete God's purpose (cf. 8:7)."[22] This does not, however, make sense because it would imply that the sacrificial system instituted by God

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[20] Koester, *Hebrews*, 383. Cf. Philo, *Spec. Laws* 1:66, 68; Mackie, *Eschatology and Exhortation*, 105–20.

[21] See, for example, Bruce, *Hebrews*, 176–79. A notable illustration of the resolute contrast between the definitive and repetitive tendencies is James W. Thompson. He posits that the words and concept of ἐφάπαξ and ἅπαξ signify superiority over repetition in every sense, on the basis of Platonic dualism (Thompson, "*EPHAPAX*").

[22] Koester, *Hebrews*, 437.

failed to fulfill his own needs. As discussed in the previous section, God established the Levitical sacrificial system, including its repetitive nature. Therefore, as Moore contends,

> To read Hebrews as uniformly opposing repetition is problematic. The apparent intimation that repetition entails inefficacy is *a priori* possible but by no means necessary. This thought receives additional force when we consider Hebrews in its first-century context, where repeated sacrifice is an inherent and basic part of the way that religion operates, for Gentile as much as for Jew.[23]

The author of Hebrews does not perceive the repetition as a defect, nor does he contend that the repeated Levitical sacrifices were inadequate.

Onceness of the New Cultus

Simple Distinction between the Two Cultuses

After the first use of the word "sacrifice" (θυσία) in Heb 5:1, where the purpose of high priestly performance is explained in order to apply it to Jesus' high priesthood, the author uses it again in 7:27, along with the word ἐφάπαξ ("once for all").[24] As previously stated, the author uses the term ἐφάπαξ to focus on the onceness nature of Jesus' sacrifice. Despite his high regard for Jesus and his singular offering, there is no allusion to regarding the opposite (καθ' ἡμέραν) as being inferior with the sense of being bad.

The same logic can be applied to 9:25–28, where the author emphasizes the greatness of Jesus' sacrifice based on its singularity and eternity, distinguishing it by referring to its inverse concept, repetition. Hebrews 9:23 states that a better sacrifice is required for the heavenly tabernacle, and the following verses contrast the number of sacrifices of the old cultus and that of Jesus' cultus. The high priest Jesus did not enter the

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[23] Moore, *Repetition in Hebrews*, 4–5.

[24] Marshall claims that Jesus' intercession for sinners in his seated position also denotes "the ongoing efficacy of his sacrifice," which "avails 'for all time,' 'to the uttermost'" (Marshall, "Soteriology in Hebrews," 271).

earthly tabernacle and did not offer himself as a sacrifice repeatedly every year (9:25). These denials are punctuated by his entry into the heavenly tabernacle, where he once and for all offered himself (9:26).

In relation to the quantity of ritual performances, the author's three consecutive uses of the word ἅπαξ in verses 26, 27, and 28 are significant. The initial ἅπαξ found in 9:26 qualifies Jesus' appearance as the consummation of all sacrifices; it signifies that the repeated Levitical sacrifices reached their culmination in Jesus' sacrifice, fulfilling their purpose in a typological sense. His sacrifice, therefore, does not stand in opposition to the Levitical ones; on the contrary, it includes, encompasses, and entails them. Following a series of iterative sacrifices mandated by the Levitical system, Jesus fulfilled and completed everything. In this sense, the ἅπαξ of Jesus' offering occurred at the end of the ages in order "to do away with sin."

In 9:28, the author emphasizes it by repeating the word ἅπαξ and the following words.[25] The second use of ἅπαξ in 9:27 indicates the human destination of death, emphasizing the link between human death and sin because, as both 9:26 and 9:28 emphasize, Jesus' ἅπαξ sacrifice took away sins. According to Attridge, "The fact that human beings die but 'once' (ἅπαξ) reinforces the *reductio ad absurdum* of vs. 26. Christ's sacrifice, too, can take place but once. At the same time, the parallel between human death and Christ's offering in the next clause solidifies further the unity of Christ's atoning act."[26] As Lane argues, therefore, "The repetition of the term ἅπαξ ties vv 27–28

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[25] Ellingworth observes that 9:26a is a main clause and 9:28a is a subordinate clause, implying a contrast between 9:25 and 9:26–28 due to the strong νυνὶ δέ in 9:26. Thus, he insists that, while the immediate context of 9:28 focuses on the future, the wider context emphasizes the death of Jesus (Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 482). However, it is crucial to note that the reiterated statement is Jesus' once for all sacrifice, not his return, which is exclusively alluded to in 9:28. Jesus' incarnation is mentioned in 9:26b.

[26] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 265. See Westcott, *Hebrews*, 280.

to v 26b and underscores the perfection of the sacrifice of Christ. By his single offering he dealt decisively with sin and secured final salvation."[27] While the singularity underscores the greatness of Jesus' new cultus, the author does not imply that multiplicity denotes inferiority. Thus, it can also be said that the onceness serves as an indicator of Jesus' sacrifice.

The subunit Heb 9:23–28, which includes 9:25–28, contains all four ritual elements of the old and new cultuses: sacrificer, sacrifice, time, and place. Among them, the obvious difference between the two cultuses is the frequency of rituals: the old one required yearly repetition, whereas the new was ἅπαξ (once for all). Thus, the ritual time is the most obvious indicator in this paragraph that distinguishes Jesus' sacrifice from the Levitical sacrifices, while the other two, high priesthood and sacrifices, are in continuity, as the following chart shows:

	Continuity	**Difference**	
		Ritual Time	**Ritual Place**
Jesus' Sacrifice	High priests, Sacrifices: Enter the tabernacle; Offer sacrifices; Have purifying function	Once for all	Heavenly tabernacle
Levitical Sacrifice		Repetition	Earthly tabernacle

Table 3: Relationship between the Old and New Cultuses in Heb 9:23–28[28]

It is also worth noting that "people are destined to die once (ἅπαξ)" (9:27), yet Jesus accepted humanity as a qualification for high priesthood, which is fulfilled through the onceness (ἅπαξ) of the sacrifice. Accordingly, the ἅπαξ becomes a decisive indicator of Jesus' sacrifice.

[27] Lane, *Hebrews*, 2:249.

[28] As has been demonstrated in this study, even the differences in ritual elements between the old and new cultuses contribute to the continuity of the two cultuses.

Reminder of Jesus' New Cultus

The ἅπαξ in 10:2 does not directly indicate Jesus' cultus, but appears as part of the rhetorical question: If the repetitive Levitical sacrifices were capable of perfecting people, would they not have ceased to be offered? They would stop if they could provide once for all (ἅπαξ) purification. By answering this question, readers would be reminded of Jesus' ἅπαξ sacrifice, even if it was not explicitly stated.[29] Nonetheless, the author does not yet mention Jesus' sacrifice, opting instead to focus on the repetitive Levitical sacrifices that were effective in reminding people of their sins, despite the fact that total sin removal was impossible.[30]

Completion

The one-time nature of Jesus' sacrifice is described by the prepositional phrase εἰς τὸ διηνεκές in Heb 10:12 and 10:14. First of all, the phrase εἰς τὸ διηνεκές ("for all time") in 10:12 may modify either the "preceding reference to Christ's sacrifice" or "what follows, where the perpetuity of Christ's exaltation is stressed."[31] Regardless of which one it

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[29] Koester observes, "Such questions help persuade listeners, because in answering the question, they themselves pass judgment on the matter" (Koester, *Hebrews*, 437). See also Quintilian, *Inst*. 9:2:7.

[30] Notably, the repetition of the old cultus was intended from the outset. If the rituals had to be repeated due to an essential inadequacy, the inadequacy would have to be supplemented at some point after any amount of repetition. If not, we should state that God commanded the Israelites to make inadequate sacrifices. However, no such reference appears in any of the Old or New Testament books. The Levitical sacrifices were designed to be repeated with their own adequacy. DeSilva acknowledges it as well, stating that "[t]he annual repetition of sacrifices [was] indeed, the legislated repetition." Nevertheless, he maintains his position that the repetition "demonstrates the inefficacy of that system" (deSilva, *Perseverance in Gratitude*, 317–18).

[31] Attridge, *Hebrews*, 279–80. It is controversial among scholars which one makes more sense. For a discussion of which one the phrase modifies, see Bruce, *Hebrews*, 244n57, 245–46; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 509–10; Ribbens, *Levitical Sacrifice and Heavenly Cult*, 127–28n207. Bruce (244n57) cites Westcott's explanation in favor of the former one as follows: "The connexion of εἰς τὸ διηνεκές with the following ἐκάθισεν (for ever sat down) is contrary to the usage of the Epistle; it obscures the idea of the perpetual efficacy of Christ's one sacrifice; it weakens the contrast with ἕστηκεν; and it imports a foreign

directly modifies in a precise grammatical aspect, the significance of Jesus' ministry as the ultimate fulfillment of the old cultus is emphasized by the phrase εἰς τὸ διηνεκές nature of Jesus' cultus, as described in 10:12, culminating in his seating at the right hand of God (cf. 1:3; 8:1).[32]

This emphasis is further strengthened by a stark contrast found in 10:11 and 10:12 and established by the μέν . . . δέ structure, particularly in regard to the characteristics of καθ' ἡμέραν ("day after day") and εἰς τὸ διηνεκές ("in perpetuity"), which emphasizes the need for the new cultus of Jesus. Ribbens listed the contrast, as shown in the chart below:

Heb 10:11	**Heb 10:12**
μέν	δέ
πᾶς ἱερεύς	οὗτος
ἕστηκεν	ἐκάθισεν
καθ' ἡμέραν	εἰς τὸ διηνεκές
καὶ τὰς αὐτὰς πολλάκις	μίαν
προσφέρων θυσίας	προσενέγκας θυσίαν
αἵτινες οὐδεποτε δύνανται περιελεῖν ἁμαρτίας	ὑπὲρ ἁμαρτιῶν

Table 4: Hebrews 10:11–12[33]

Besides, not only 10:12, but also 10:13 and 14 are contrasted to 10:11, and 10:14 concludes 10:11–13,[34] "noting that by a single offering (μιᾷ προσφορᾷ) Christ 'has

idea into the image of the assumption (ἐκάθισεν) of royal dignity by Christ" (Westcott, *Hebrews*, 316). On the other hand, Ellingworth argues as follows:

> If this construction is chosen, it has wider implications. First, Ps. 110:1, in Heb. 10:13 and elsewhere, is understood in terms of a permanent session at God's right hand, not a period of sitting and waiting, followed by a final battle in which Christ will be active. . . . Second, the order of events becomes clearer: Christ offers his one self-sacrifice; he is raised to God's right hand; and there follows an endless session in which Christ exercises his high priesthood (Ps. 110:4), especially in intercession (7:26–28)" (Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 510).

[32] See Hooker, "Christ, the 'End of the Cult,'" 202–3, 211.

[33] Ribbens, *Levitical Sacrifice and Heavenly Cult*, 128.

[34] Westfall, *Discourse Analysis*, 222–23. The conjunction γάρ is important in connecting 10:14 with 10:12–13. See Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 511; Harris, *Hebrews*, 266.

perfected for all time those who are sanctified.'"[35] The onceness of Jesus' sacrifice is mentioned here to remind readers that Jesus' one-time sacrifice completed everything forever. Although the repetition of old cultic rituals is depicted in contrast to Jesus' once-for-all sacrifice, however, this does not necessarily imply limitations. Rather, the repetition can be understood as an anticipation of the fulfillment by the onceness, which will be discussed in the following section.

In conclusion, the two seemingly opposing concepts of ritual numbers, repetition and once-for-all do not contradict each other. They represent the old and new cultuses, respectively, emphasizing the onceness of Jesus' new cultus. When viewed objectively, the concept of repetition itself does not convey any negative meanings, and the contexts in which it is used in Hebrews do not imply any pejorative attitude on the author's part. The author makes no mention of the repetition of sacrificial ritual as a result of its deficiency, or vice versa. As a result, the author does not hold a negative view of the Levitical repetitive cultus.

Purity Obtained according to the Ritual Frequency

The author of Hebrews refers to the outcome of sacrificial rituals in a variety of ways in terms of purification. Both the repetitive old cultus and the one-time new cultus serve the same purpose of sin treatment. Regardless of the result or the extent to which each of them met their objectives, both repeated and one-time sacrificial rituals were performed for sins (Heb 7:27). However, the extent of their purification varies. With the notion that

[35] Ribbens, *Levitical Sacrifice and Heavenly Cult*, 128. According to Ellingworth, Jesus' high priesthood is "more prominent than the sacrifice itself," but the singularity of his offering is also crucial as it serves as the fulfilling mechanism (Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 511).

both the repetitive and one-time natures of cultuses were divinely appointed, and that frequency itself does not denote either superiority or inferiority, the relationship between the two seemingly opposing frequencies, repetition and onceness, is established as continuous rather than contradictory.

Repetition Process

The author's direct link between the repetition of a sacrificial ritual and its outcome first appears in Heb 10:1–4. According to 10:1, repeated sacrifices cannot "make perfect" (τελειόω) worshipers, as "the law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming."[36] The term *good things* (ἀγαθῶν) refers to the perfection that Jesus' once-for-all sacrifice can bring about. Thus, "the same sacrifices repeated endlessly year after year" led worshipers to anticipate perfection "from the standpoint of the law."[37] The Levitical sacrificial system was a shadow that made people anticipate the reality, which is "good things," and it kept reminding people of their sins every year until the complete removal of sins became possible. In the past, worshipers were reminded of their sins through the repeated offering of sacrifices; they hoped that the once-for-all sacrifice that appears as the fulfillment of the repetition would result in the ultimate removal of sins. The term ἀνάμνησις ("reminder") is related to the bread of the Presence (Lev 24:7, LXX), which reminds worshipers of their sins, and the Lord's Supper, which reminds participants of forgiveness (Luke 22:19).[38]

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[36] As discussed in the preceding section, there is no corresponding word for the adverb "only" in the Greek text.

[37] Peterson, *Hebrews*, 222. See Bruce, *Hebrews*, 234–35.

[38] Cf. Ellingworth remarks, "A substantive reference to the Lord's Supper would hopelessly confuse an argument which depends on the contrast between the repeated celebration of the Day of Atonement and the one sacrifice of Christ" (Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 495–96, emphasis added).

To put it another way, the old cultus was designed to foreshadow perfection by reminding people of their sins rather than removing them. The old cultus's inability to make perfect and completely remove sins is presented as an anticipatory nature rather than a deficiency. The repetitive character represents the anticipation of the ultimate completion by the final one, which will last forever. While annually repeated sacrifices reminded people of their sins instead of removing them, worshipers could expect one final sacrifice to fulfill the ongoing repeated practices, the old cultus, resulting in perfection. In this passage, therefore, the author alludes to the succession of the Levitical repetitive sacrifices by the once-for-all sacrifice in pursuit of completion.[39] Repetition is a process that looks forward to its fulfillment through comprehensive sin treatment, holiness, and eternal perfection, which can be attained through onceness.

Repetition Outcome

From the Hebrews author's perspective, the repetition of the Old Testament sacrifices and the onceness of Jesus' sacrifice are in a complementary relationship. According to him, Jesus' once-for-all sacrifice is the result of repeating the old cultus. This is why he refers to sin treatment and perfection as the efficacy of both repeated and one-time sacrifices, though they differ in details.

Sin Treatment

The onceness of Jesus' sacrifice resulted in his people's "obtaining eternal redemption" (Heb 9:12). While the term λύτρωσις (and ἀπολύτρωσις) means liberation and

[39] See France, *Jesus and the Old Testament*, 47.

deliverance from something in general (LN 37.128),[40] Hebrews uses it twice in 9:12 and 9:15, specifically for setting free from sins (Cf. Col 1:14). Because 9:15 expressly mentions sins in regard to redemption, the redemption in 9:12 may be interpreted as forgiveness or removal of sins. It is obviously obtained as a result of the new cultus's single sacrifice.

The phrase ἅπαξ τοῦ ἐνιαυτοῦ ("once a year") in 9:7 illustrates the regulation for the old cultus and the earthly tabernacle, while ἐφάπαξ ("once for all") in 9:12 illustrates the new cultus and the heavenly sanctuary. Given that the old cultic system was intended to be active "until the time of the new order" (9:10),[41] the Levitical high priests' repetitive entrance into the inner room serves as a type to represent Jesus' once-for-all entrance to the heavenly sanctuary, resulting in the eternal redemption. It is debatable whether obtaining eternal redemption comes before, coincides with, or follows the entry into the heavenly sanctuary, but their close relationship is undeniable in any case.[42] The once-for-all nature of Jesus' entrance indicates the culmination of sin removals, referred to as "eternal redemption," and vice versa.

The more comprehensive sin treatment can be found in Heb 9:26 and 9:28. Gäbel and Ellingworth observe the correspondence between these two verses in form and content, and it becomes more obvious when we try to figure out the relationship between ἅπαξ ("once for all") and ἁμαρτία ("sin"):

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[40] Louw and Nida, *Greek–English Lexicon*, 1:487. The Old Testament has several uses, including a purchase of something for a price (e.g., Lev 25:24, 26, 29, 48; Exod 21:30) and a deliverance from someone or something (e.g., Deut 7:8; 9:26; 13:5; 15:15). Several New Testament passages use the same term to describe salvation, whether or not it is directly related to sin (e.g., Matt 20:28; Rom 3:24; Gal 3:13; Eph 1:7).

[41] "Jesus' succession of the high priestly office" was already discussed in Chapter 4 of this study. The old cultus's regulation was a preparation to "give the way to the new" (Bruce, *Hebrews*, 211).

[42] See Lane, *Hebrews*, 2:230.

9:26	(1) ἅπαξ […]	(2) εἰς ἀθέτησιν ἁμαρτίας	(3) διὰ τῆς θυσίας αὐτοῦ
9:28	(1) ἅπαξ […]	(2) εἰς τὸ πολλῶν ἀνενεγκεῖν ἁμαρτίας	(3) προσενεχθείς

Table 5: Correspondence between Heb 9:26 and 9:28[43]

Based on Gäbel, Ribbens connects 9:26 and 9:28 through the thematic interaction of Isa 53's suffering servant and cultic sacrifice language.[44] The phrase in Heb 9:28, specifically "to bear the sins of many" (ἁμαρτίας πολλῶν ἀνενέγκεν), alludes to Isa 53:12, which is confirmed by the early Christian link of Jesus with the suffering servant image.[45] Ribbens goes on to claim that motifs of servant Christology, such as Jesus' suffering, obedience, and self-offering for others, pervade Hebrews and fit smoothly into the cultic framework of Jesus' high priestly ministry. Thus, the author of Hebrews reinterprets the servant's vicarious suffering in Isa 53 in the cultic context of Jesus' redemptive death, concluding that Heb 9:28 combines servant and cultic themes to articulate Jesus' comprehensive redeeming work.[46] As Ribbens concludes, "the removal of sins in 9:26 and the bearing of sins in 9:28 refer not only to the removal of the deserved punishment for sins (forgiveness) but also to the removal of the sins themselves (redemption),"[47] forming a comprehensive sin treatment.

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[43] Gäbel, *Die Kulttheologie des Hebräerbriefes*, 301–2. See Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 482; Ribbens, *Levitical Sacrifice and Heavenly Cult*, 221–22.

[44] Ribbens, *Levitical Sacrifice and Heavenly Cult*, 222–23.

[45] Guthrie, "Hebrews," 975. See Attridge, *Hebrews*, 266; Bruce, *Hebrews*, 222–23; Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 426–27; Gäbel, *Die Kulttheologie des Hebräerbriefes*, 305; Grässer, *An die Hebräer*, 2:198–99; Hughes, *Hebrews*, 388; Joslin, *Hebrews, Christ, and the Law*, 237; Lane, *Hebrews*, 2:250; Moffatt, *Hebrews*, 192; Peterson, *Hebrews and Perfection*, 94; Westcott, *Hebrews*, 277

[46] Ribbens, *Levitical Sacrifice and Heavenly Cult*, 223. Cf. Gäbel refuses to combine these two, pointing out that 9:28 addresses only the suffering servant theme. Nevertheless, he admits that "Beide bringen die *Bewältigung der Sünden* zum Ausdruck, auf die das Opfer Christi zielte [Both express the *overcoming of sins*, which was the aim of Christ's sacrifice]" (Gäbel, *Die Kulttheologie des Hebräerbriefes*, 306, my translation, emphasis added).

[47] Ribbens, *Levitical Sacrifice and Heavenly Cult*, 223.

Holiness

When Hebrews connects the fact that we have been made holy to the onceness of Jesus' sacrifice in Heb 10:10, the author mentions how Jesus' body was prepared as a sacrifice in 10:5–9, citing Ps 40:6–8. According to the author, God began to become dissatisfied with the Levitical offerings after the incarnation of Jesus.[48] The author goes on to say that Jesus came into the world to "set aside the first [πρῶτος] to establish the second [δεύτερος]" (10:9). In light of the contrast between the sacrifices of the old and new cultic systems presented in Heb 10:510, "the first" refers to the Law and its sacrificial offerings,[49] while "the second" signifies Jesus' once-for-all offering, as referenced in 10:10. Regardless of whether the author intended to number both cultuses in chronological order, it is evident that they are in continuous order.[50] The first was established, and it was later set aside to make way for the second (10:9).

Some contend that the term ἀναιρέω ("set aside") conveys the "strongest negative" meaning,[51] which can be translated as "abolish," "destroy," or "annul,"[52] but the author does not use this word elsewhere in Hebrews. Moreover, Lane points out that ἀναιρέω is a "technical term in the juridical sphere" that is "well suited to express a change of structures or arrangements."[53] Thus, the author's point in 10:9 can be

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[48] See Attridge, *Hebrews*, 273; Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 433–34; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 500–501; Kistemaker, *Hebrews*, 274; Koester, *Hebrews*, 432; Peterson, *Hebrews*, 225.

[49] Lane, *Hebrews*, 2:256, 264.

[50] See Bruce, *Hebrews*, 243; Guthrie, "Hebrews," 978. Bruce asserts that "no particular substantive is understood with them" because these numerals are "neuter here" (243n48).

[51] Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 504. See Cockerill, *Hebrews*, 440–41; Peterson, *Hebrews (TNTC)*, 227.

[52] Cf. Hoskins, *Jesus as the Fulfillment of the Temple*, 22. Probably focusing this term and Hoskins observes one of the natures of the relationship between the type and antitype "as the goal and fulfillment to which the imperfect type pointed, the antitype goes beyond or surpasses the patterns and predictions associated with the type" (emphasis added). I agree with the purpose of his typological application, but it is prudent to avoid using imperfect and inferior language when describing the type, particularly the Old Testament element.

[53] Lane, *Hebrews*, 2:256.

interpreted as presenting the transition of the cultic system from the first repetitive to the second ever-lasting. The continuity lies not between *the first* and *another first*, but rather between *the first* and *the second*. This is God's will, which is why Jesus was incarnated. God's will therefore establishes continuity between the first and the second.

As specified in 10:10, the body of Jesus Christ was to be sacrificed once for all in accordance with God's will, which was emphasized twice in 10:7 and 9 with references to Ps 40:6–8. It was Jesus' execution of God's salvific will, and it refers back to "the second" mentioned in 10:9. Then, it appears that the first is being described as not being God's will, which he disapproves of. However, the assumption that the first was also established by God and later disliked it due to various reasons must be applied here. It follows that if the second is presently the divine will, then the first must have been divine prior to the advent of Jesus, who completed the second.[54] As a result, the holiness that was bestowed to us, which is the fulfillment of God's salvific will, became possible through the first, the old cultic system, and the second, Jesus' once-for-all offering his body (10:10).

Eternal Perfection

The final indication of the extent of purification in relation to the frequency of cultus is referred to as having been "made perfect" (τετελείωκεν) in Heb 10:14. Both the word θυσίαν (a singular form of θυσία) in 10:12 and the phrase εἰς τὸ διηνεκές in 10:14 refer to

[54] Regardless of the precise moment of God's dislike, as stated in Chapter 5 of this study, God was already disliking them at the time of Jesus' incarnation. As a result, it is worth noting that God, as the author of the first covenant and the old cultus, desired and appreciated sacrifices and offerings. It does not make sense that God despised the old cultus that he established. If there was a problem, it had to be with the worshipers' disobedient attitudes rather than the old cultus itself. See Ribbens, "Sacrifice God Desired," 290–93. Cf. Steyn, *Quest for the Assumed LXX Volage*, 296.

the onceness of Jesus' sacrifice, implying that a single sacrifice ultimately leads people to eternal perfection. When the author mentions the inability of the Levitical repetitive sacrifices to completely remove sins in 10:11, their ability to remind people of their sins must be remembered (10:3; cf. 10:4), and the outcome of this repetition is our eternal perfection gained through Jesus' once-for-all sacrifice (10:14).

The author acknowledges that the repetition of the old cultic rituals was not able to achieve perfection. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that he does not state that perfection was the intended goal to be attained through repeated sacrifices. Accordingly, the contrast between the repetitive and once-for-all natures of both cultuses should not be interpreted as elevating one over the other. It is rather in order to show how each element of the Levitical sacrifice is fulfilled by Jesus' sacrifice.

Concluding Remarks

This chapter focused on the final ritual element, ritual time, specifically the frequency of old and new cultuses in Hebrews, attempting to identify the relationship between them. While the similarities in their origin and goal serve as the foundation for continuity, the majority of criteria recognize their differences, particularly in their descriptions and outcomes. Nonetheless, all of the various aspects of both repetitive and once-for-all sacrifices do not allude to the author's criticism of the old cultus, but rather to his admiration for it as a process that leads to the new cultus's onceness and, as a result, eternal perfection.

I contend that the author of Hebrews emphasizes the divine designation of sacrificial system frequencies, challenging the assumption that repetition implies

insufficiency and onceness perfection. Terms like ἅπαξ and ἐφάπαξ, meaning "once and for all," highlight the uniqueness and permanence of Jesus' sacrifice (Heb. 7:27; 9:12; 10:10). However, these terms have no inherent value apart from their context. Repetition, on the other hand, is not always negative, as Scripture frequently depicts repeated actions such as prayer and teaching in a positive light (e.g., Matt 26:44; Phil 3:1). Accordingly, both onceness and repetition should be interpreted in context rather than as intrinsically good or bad. The repetition of Levitical sacrifices, rather than reflecting deficiency, is demonstrated to be divinely appointed, as is the onceness of Jesus' sacrifice. Hebrews depicts the old cultus as a "shadow" (Heb. 10:1), foreshadowing Jesus' ultimate sacrifice, with its repetitive rituals ordained by God to prepare worshipers for the fulfillment of Jesus' once-for-all sacrifice.

The Hebrews author's description of the frequency of the two cultuses appears to be starkly contrasted. According to the description, the Levitical sacrifices were repeated daily (καθ' ἡμέραν) and yearly (κατ' ἐνιαυτόν), whereas Jesus' sacrifice was presented as once for all (ἐφάπαξ, ἅπαξ, or εἰς τὸ διηνεκές). The repetitive nature of the old cultus, such as the Day of Atonement, highlights its provisional role in preparing for Jesus' singular offering. This repetition does not indicate any inadequacy in serving this role, but rather aligns with God's divine intention, serving as a "shadow" (σκιά) of the good things to come. Contrary to the notion that repetition reflects failure, the author emphasizes that God commanded the old sacrificial system, making its repetition a necessary and purposeful component of divine instruction.

The onceness of Jesus' sacrifice is a distinguishing feature of the new cultus, representing its completeness and eternal efficacy. Hebrews underscores this by

contrasting Jesus' single offering with the repetitive rituals of the Levitical priests, as seen in Heb 9:25–28 and 10:11–14. However, it should be noted that the author never places any value on the repetitive character, instead using it as an indicator of the old cultus. Instead of opposing the old system, Jesus' onceness reflects its fulfillment and culmination. The singular sacrifice of Jesus is presented as sufficient to fully and permanently address sin, fulfilling the divine purpose foreshadowed by the repeated Levitical sacrifices. While the repetitive rituals served as reminders of sin and pointed to the need for ultimate atonement, Jesus' once-for-all sacrifice perfected this purpose by bridging continuity between the old and new systems without denigrating the former.

The final criterion I considered was the type and extent of purification that could be gained from each of the repeated and once-for-all sacrifices. Both systems were intended for sin treatment, but their scope and functions differ. The old cultus, with its repeated sacrifices, served as a reminder of sin (Heb 10:3) and foreshadowed Jesus' ultimate, once-for-all sacrifice. This repetition was not a flaw, but rather an anticipatory process that pointed toward Jesus' final offering, which resulted in eternal redemption and perfection (9:12; 10:14). The repetitive rituals kept worshipers aware of their sins and gave them hope for the coming fulfillment, while Jesus' singular sacrifice achieved comprehensive sin removal and eternal holiness for believers.

The onceness of Jesus' sacrifice reflects its ultimate efficacy and fulfillment of the old system. Hebrews links Jesus' once-for-all offering to eternal redemption (9:12), sin removal (9:26, 28), and believers' perfection (10:14). Rather than dismissing the old cultus as insufficient within its historical and socio-cultural context, the author emphasizes its divine purpose as preparatory, demonstrating the continuity between the

two systems. The repeated old cultuses, while incapable of perfecting worshipers, were part of God's plan to lead to the new covenant established by Jesus. The transition from repetition to onceness demonstrates fulfillment rather than opposition, with the old serving as a shadow and the new bringing reality to completion.

Consequently, the time of cultus, namely the frequency of ritual performances of each cultus mentioned in Hebrews, is important in revealing Jesus' fulfillment of the sacrificial system. The author of Hebrews repeatedly emphasizes that the removal of sins could not be perfectly accomplished despite numerous performances. On the other hand, Jesus' sacrifice contains both onceness and permanence, as well as ritual quantity, and the result is believers' perfection.[55] This contrast should be interpreted as a juxtaposition of the process of preparation and its fulfillment, akin to the relationship between a type and its antitype, rather than a correlation between possibility and impossibility.

This typological relationship is reinforced by the fact that the repeated Levitical sacrifices in Hebrews represent the tabernacle age's cultic system rather than Hebrews's contemporary cultic system. Because the Levitical sacrifices performed in the tabernacle were already discontinued long ago, at least with Israel's entry into Canaan, the author may not consider the cessation of the rituals significant enough to focus on. He highlights the significance of Jesus' once-for-all sacrifice, which is capable of perfecting believers, by contrasting it with the repetitive Levitical sacrifices performed in the tabernacle long

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[55] Given that perfection in Hebrews is closely related to the idea of completion and fulfillment, the ultimate goal of all ritual activities can be referred to as perfection (Peterson, *Hebrews and Perfection*, 94–103). Under the old cultic system, Levitical sacrifices had to be repeated because the purity gained through them could be defiled by sins again and again. As observed thus far, however, this repetition was not a result of its flaw, but rather its inherent qualities, specifically, its purpose of preparing for the ultimate fulfillment through Jesus. The anthropological perspective enables us to consider the concept of purity as a mode of ordering that seeks the ultimate state of purity, perfection. Perfection is the final state of purity fulfilled by Jesus' once-for-all sacrificial ritual (Rogan, "Purity in Early Judaism"). See Kazen, *Impurity and Purification*, 26.

ago. As a result, both cultuses seek to purify the sins of believers, thereby establishing the same religious boundary. The old cultus, representing the type, prepares for the fulfillment that the new cultus can achieve, while the new cultus, as the antitype, achieves what the old cultus anticipated.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

Summary

The book of Hebrews presents interpretive challenges due to its engagement with the Old Testament, particularly its cultic elements, which have frequently been misunderstood or overlooked. Several factors have led to the perception that Hebrews is anti-Judaistic, or at the very least, has pejorative views of ancient and contemporary Judaism. Historically, anti-Judaic beliefs in Christianity have influenced the interpretation of Hebrews, leading many to view the author's stance toward the old cultic system as derogatory. This viewpoint can be traced back to John Chrysostom, who considered Judaism as inferior and the Levitical sacrificial system as flawed. Despite the weakening of explicit anti-Judaism, subsequent scholars tended to interpret the Hebrews author's descriptions of the old cultus as negative because of the vestige of anti-Judaism. I presented two major vestiges of anti-Judaism that influenced the interpretation of Hebrews: overlooking the cultic dimension of Hebrews and understanding Hebrews as a warning against Judaism.

Most of all, the cultic concept was overlooked until a certain point in history, leading many to misinterpret the author's treatment of the Levitical sacrificial system as negative. Johnsson highlights the importance of understanding the cultic language within the religious genre of Hebrews. He claims that the abundance of cultic terms reflects a profound religious experience, rather than a denigration of the old cultus.[1] Another

[1] Johnsson, *Defilement and Purgation*, 193–98.

significant interpretive challenge stems from Hebrews being viewed as a warning against Judaism. Such readings have historically influenced the perception that the old cultus was simply obsolete and was replaced by the new cultus. Although recent scholars have attempted to balance the themes of continuity and discontinuity between them, they still recognize the perceived superiority of the new over the old. However, these interpretations often overlook the nuanced argument of Hebrews, which reframes the old cultus as a typological foundation for Jesus' sacrifice rather than dismissing it.

Recognizing the problem I see with Hebrews scholarship, particularly that which identifies a pejorative view of the old cultus in Chapter 1, this study argued that the author of Hebrews does not take a polemical stance against the old cultus, but rather establishes an interdependent relationship between the old and new cultuses in his presentation of the significance of Jesus' sacrifice, which I chose to call a typological *symbiotic* relationship. The author's presentation and emphasis on Jesus' once-for-all sacrifice is in continuity with the Levitical sacrifice.

Chapter 2 presented methodological frameworks and criteria for identifying the relationship between the old and new cultic systems. The primary methodology for this study was social scientific criticism, with a focus on cultural anthropology with purity concerns. The ritual theory identified four ritual elements—sacrificer, sacrifice, time, and space—for the concept of purification in Hebrews, as well as three criteria—origin and identity, description, and extent of obtained purity—to determine similarities and differences between each ritual element of the old and new cultuses.

Chapter 3 explored the interdependence and continuity of the earthly and heavenly tabernacles in Hebrews, using a mixed methodological approach grounded in

cultural anthropology and spatial theory. The earthly tabernacle, which served as a physical space for Levitical rituals, is considered a "shadow and copy" of the heavenly tabernacle. However, this distinction does not imply inferiority in a pejorative sense; it serves as a foundation and typological foreshadowing of the ultimate heavenly purification made possible by Jesus' sacrifice. The earthly tabernacle serves as a representation of the heavenly one, laying a hermeneutical foundation as the author relies on the earthly one to emphasize the value of the heavenly one. At the same time, it is existentially dependent on the heavenly one because Moses built in accordance with the heavenly pattern. As a result of this analysis, I concluded that, the author does not hold a pejorative view of the earthly tabernacle.

Critical spatial theory was also proposed to effectively establish the relationship between the heavenly and earthly tabernacles, later referred to as the antitype and type, respectively. In this way, it was noted that typology is how Hebrews presents the earthly and heavenly tabernacles, making it a critical framework for understanding these spatial dynamics. The earthly tabernacle prefigures the heavenly one, serving as a foundational type pointing forward to Jesus' sacrifice in the heavenly tabernacle. This typological structure incorporates both historical continuity and theological escalation, connecting the old and new cultuses. From a cultural-anthropological perspective, purity concern is woven into these spatial considerations and typological connections, distinguishing between the heavenly and earthly tabernacles and highlighting the transformative effect of the heavenly one. Hebrews underscores the purification accomplished in the heavenly tabernacle as a fulfillment of the earthly tabernacle's Levitical sacrificial system.

Chapter 4 examined the sacrificial roles of the Levitical high priesthood and Jesus

in the book of Hebrews, with a focus on continuity and fulfillment. The Levitical high priesthood is portrayed as a necessary, divinely ordained system designed to achieve ritual purity for believers. Although the limitations of the Levitical high priestly role are not to be dismissed, they do serve as a typological foundation for Jesus' perfected priestly ministry. The author of Hebrews regards the Levitical high priesthood as a legitimate means of purification, as evidenced by their two-time acts of offering gifts and sacrifices for sin—first for their own sins and second for the worshipers. The Levitical high priest's inability to attain perfection in Heb 7:11 is not a criticism, but rather a foreshadowing of the eschatological hope it represents.

Jesus accomplished what the Holy Spirit indicated Jeremiah predicted (10:16–17) and the Levitical system symbolized (9:9): complete and eternal purification that allows believers direct access to God (7:25). Jesus' resurrection and exaltation inaugurate his eternal high priesthood, which emphasizes this fulfillment by confirming Jesus' unique role as the high priest who provided perfected access to God. The author's presentation of the Levitical high priesthood can be understood from a typological perspective, which confirms its purpose in salvation history. The old cultic high priesthood serves as a preparation, divinely intended to lead to Jesus' ultimate purification. Jesus' high priestly ministry satisfies the Levitical high priesthood's expectations of atonement, salvation, and perfected access to God by achieving "perfection."

Chapter 5 investigated the similarities and differences between animal sacrifices in the old cultus and Jesus as the sacrifice in the new cultus. Both sacrificial systems required high priests to bring offerings, which were referred to as "gifts and sacrifices" and emphasized the importance of blood. Levitical sacrifices were divinely ordained, and

they foreshadowed Jesus' ultimate sacrifice, which was offered "through the eternal Spirit." The author compares the purification achieved through the sacrificial blood of the old and new covenants, focusing on their preparatory and ultimate roles in God's redemptive plan.

Levitical sacrifices effectively provided external purification and a reminder of sin, allowing worshipers to approach God through the old covenant framework. These sacrifices were provisional, foreshadowing the more profound and eternal purification brought about by Jesus' blood, which cleanses the conscience and achieves "eternal redemption." Hebrews regards the old cultus as necessary for preparing for the perfection found in Jesus, whose blood offers transformative, eternal redemption and unrestricted access to God. The typological relationship in Hebrews emphasizes the continuity and progression from Levitical sacrifices to Jesus as the sacrifice, with animal sacrifices serving as the foundation upon which Jesus' eternal sacrifice stands.

Chapter 6 examined the relationship between the frequency and significance of the old and new cultuses in Hebrews. The author emphasizes the divine designation of sacrificial system frequencies, challenging the notion that repetition itself implies inferiority in a pejorative way, resulting from deficiency. The repetition of Levitical sacrifices, such as the Day of Atonement, serves as a "shadow" of Jesus' ultimate sacrifice, whereas Jesus' onceness represents the new cultus's completeness and eternal efficacy. The author connects Jesus' once-for-all offering to eternal redemption, sin removal, and believers' perfection, demonstrating the continuity of the old and new systems. The repetition of the old cultus, while incapable of perfecting worshipers, was part of God's plan to usher in the new covenant established by Jesus.

In conclusion, this study argued that the author of Hebrews establishes an interdependent relationship between the old and new cultuses, emphasizing Jesus' once-for-all sacrifice in continuity with the Levitical sacrifice. I combined cultural anthropology and spatial theory with ritual elements, criteria, and spatial dynamics, highlighting the earthly tabernacle as a groundwork of the heavenly one and the transformative effect of Jesus' sacrifice. The spatial relationship between the two tabernacles, Firstspace and Secondspace, can be extended to the other three ritual elements—sacrificers (high priests), sacrifice, and the frequencies of the old and new cultuses—as the antitype and type of the concept of typological relationship. Or, at the very least, this relationship entails that the old cultus is consistently a kind of functional and schematic representation of the new cultus. Despite their differences and similarities, the old and new cultic systems in Hebrews exist in a *symbiotic* relationship, with the old preparing for the new and the new fulfilling the old, the old existentially dependent on the new and the new hermeneutically dependent on the old.

Implication

This study dealt with the book of Hebrews as a New Testament corpus, purity concerns from cultural-anthropological and spatial perspectives, and typology as an applicational concept. The conclusion is that the old and new sacrificial systems described by the author of Hebrews are in a *symbiotic* relationship, establishing interdependence. The author does not have a pejorative view of the Levitical sacrificial system, but rather regards it as a hermeneutical foundation for justifying and emphasizing the importance of Jesus' new sacrificial system. The old cultus pursued the appropriate preparation for the

new cultus's fulfillment, serving as type and antitype, both aiming for the same ultimate purification that forms the same socio-religious boundary line.

This study, I believe, will benefit both Hebrews scholarship and New Testament studies in a variety of ways, especially those interested in the relationship between the Old and New Testaments, old and new sacrificial systems, or ancient-contemporary Judaism and early Christianity. Given that this study focused on rituals for purification and that the sacrificial system was an essential part of both ancient and early Judaism, the Hebrews author's presentation of Jesus' new sacrificial system must have reflected and influenced the author's and readers' perceptions of the relationship between ancient and early Judaism and early Christianity. Most of all, the author's respectful references to the old cultus can contribute to the "parting of the ways between Judaism and Christianity" debate because he appears unconcerned about distinguishing himself and his readers from either ancient or contemporary Judaism.

The concept of the "Parting of the Ways" has long been used to describe Christianity's separation from Judaism, which is traditionally thought to have occurred in the late first or early second century CE. It originated in twentieth-century scholarship and has been criticized for oversimplifying a complex historical reality.[2] Scholars such as James D. G. Dunn have emphasized that this "parting" was a long and regionally diverse process influenced by theological, social, and political factors.[3] Dunn's metaphorical framing, which employs imagery of crisscrossing or overlapping paths rather than a clean

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[2] Judith M. Lieu credits F. J. Foakes-Jackson's edited volume as the first appearance and employment of the "Parting of the Ways" metaphor (Lieu, "The Parting of the Ways," 101). See Foakes-Jackson, ed., *The Parting of the Roads*. See also Reed and Becker, "Introduction," 8. For earlier discussions about the notion of the distinction between Judaism and Christianity, see Dunn, *Partings of the Ways*, 1–21.

[3] For example, see Becker and Reed, eds., *Ways That Never Parted*; Boyarin, *Border Lines*; Dunn, ed., *Jews and Christians*; Dunn, *Partings of the Ways*; Lieu, "Parting of the Ways."

break, recognizes the diversity found in both early Judaism and early Christianity.[4]

Critics of the "Parting of the Ways" metaphor contend that it assumes a level of coherence and distinctness in early Judaism and Christianity that is not supported by historical evidence. For example, Daniel Boyarin has proposed that early Christianity and Judaism were more intertwined than the metaphor implies, with boundaries frequently blurred and identities fluid.[5] Meanwhile, Judith Lieu has questioned the clarity of the metaphor, proposing the image of "muddy tracks" to represent the messiness of the separation.[6] The persistence of social interactions between Jews and Christians, such as shared festivals and communal spaces, complicates the narrative of a decisive split.

Recent scholarship, such as Adam Becker and Annette Yoshiko Reed's volume *The Ways That Never Parted*, has challenged the concept of a clean break, arguing that the separation was never fully realized in some contexts.[7] This viewpoint challenges the assumption that the presence of social contact negates the conceptual or institutional differentiation between the two groups. Instead, it emphasizes the importance of understanding the "parting" as a process characterized by the formation of distinct identities within complex and overlapping religious communities. Thus, while the "Parting of the Ways" remains a useful heuristic, its limitations highlight the need for nuanced and context-sensitive approaches to studying Christian and Jewish origins.

My research on the relationship between the old and new cultic systems in the book of Hebrews adds a valuable perspective that is relevant to the "Parting of the Ways" debate. Hebrews portrays the Levitical sacrificial system as divinely instituted and

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[4] Dunn, *Partings of the Ways*, xii–xiii.
[5] Boyarin, *Border Lines*; Boyarin, *Dying for God*.
[6] Lieu, "Parting of the Ways," 118–19.
[7] Becker and Reed, eds., *Ways That Never Parted*.

essential within a typological framework, with the Levitical sacrifices serving as the type, anticipating the fulfillment in Jesus' once-for-all sacrifice, the antitype. The author of Hebrews does not denigrate or dismiss the old cultic system; rather, he depicts it with reverence as a necessary and integral part of God's redemptive plan. This theological continuity calls into question interpretations that claim Hebrews outright rejects Judaism or its practices. Instead, it implies that the old and new sacrificial systems are interdependent, emphasizing their roles in God's overarching purpose.

This understanding has far-reaching implications for the "Parting of the Ways" debate. The positive portrayal of the Levitical system in Hebrews suggests that the author and his audiences did not prioritize distinguishing themselves from Judaism. Rather than dividing "Christian" and "Jewish" identities, their theological focus appears to be on demonstrating Jesus' fulfillment of the Levitical sacrificial system. This perspective evokes a re-evaluation of the extent to which early Christian texts such as Hebrews attempted to establish separate religious boundaries, implying that continuity and reverence for Jewish tradition remained important components of their discourse.[8] Hebrews points to the typological relationship between the two cultic systems, revealing a nuanced interdependent dynamic that complicates simplistic narratives of separation.

This discussion can, in turn, inform the scholarly debate about the dating of the book of Hebrews.[9] If the author takes a theological stance that values the Levitical sacrificial system and does not emphasize a clear distinction between Judaism and what we now call Christianity, this could indicate that it was written prior to separation.[10] Such

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[8] See Dunn, *Partings of the Ways*, 272–76; Boyarin, *Border Lines*, 287n6.

[9] For an overview of diverse arguments on the date of Hebrews, see McCullough, "Some Recent Developments," 152; McCullough, "Hebrews (2)," 117–19.

[10] Cf. Schenck, *New Perspective on Hebrews*, 1–30; Docherty, *Use of the Old Testament in*

a context most likely predates the point at which Jewish and Christian identities became clearly demarcated, which many scholars place in the late first or early second century. Hebrews's nuanced relationship with the old cultic system, which is framed as divinely ordained and integral to Jesus' fulfillment, corresponds to a time when theological continuity was emphasized over separation.

As a researcher, I assumed that the entire Bible, both the Old and New Testaments, is the Word of God throughout this study. When the author of Hebrews asserts that the Old Testament cultus was fulfilled by Jesus' cultus, assuming or determining the author's intention as being critical of the Old Testament cultus must be cautious because it may imply that God provided his people with an insufficient and or inadequate covenant. I hope that this research will serve as a catalyst for deeper inquiry into Hebrews scholarship, particularly the discussion of the book's cultic aspect, and will inspire meaningful insights that address the "Parting of the Ways" debate, especially concerning the date of Hebrews.

Hebrews, 1–3; Jackson-McCabe, "Hebrews, the Catholic Epistles," 90–94.

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