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Honoring the Name:

A social-rhetorical approach to the Holiness Legislation (Lev 17-26)

by

Andrew K. Heyd

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Study Leader: Prof. Esias E. Meyer

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Declaration

I, Andrew K. Heyd, declare that this thesis, "Honoring the Name: A social-rhetorical approach to the Holiness Legislation (Lev 17-26)," which I hereby submit for the degree of Ph.D. in Old Testament and Hebrew Scriptures at the University of Pretoria, is my own work and has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other tertiary institution.

Ethics Statement

I, Andrew K. Heyd, have obtained, for the research described in this work, the applicable research ethics approval (see p. 241). I declare that I have observed the ethical standards required in terms of the University of Pretoria's Code of Ethics for researchers and the policy guidelines for responsible research.

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Summary and Key Words

The purpose of this study is to understand how the Holiness Legislation in Leviticus attempts to shape the response of the People of God to Yhwh's holy presence amongst them using the rhetoric of honor. While commentators have alluded to the concept of honor in the Holiness Legislation (Lev 17-26), none have brought any social science methodologies to bear on it. Because the social setting of the text is different than our own, social-science methodologies may be employed to limit anachronistic and ethnocentric assumptions during cross-cultural readings and provide deeper insight into the cultural situation and rhetorical strategies at work. The goal of this study is to use these cultural scripts heuristically to formulate hypotheses about how texts are shaped by concepts of honor and shame. These hypotheses are used to develop a "thick reading" that interprets texts relative to a network of cultural presuppositions. This thesis argues that not only is the concept of honor present in pieces of the Holiness Legislation, it is integral to understand how the Holiness Legislation coheres as a whole

I argue this by first examining how honor brings coherence to the Nadab and Abihu narrative (Lev 10) and Blaspheming Son pericope (Lev 24), which are mutually interpretative. In particular, I argue that the Blaspheming Son "made light of" (not cursed) Yhwh's name. The seriousness of making light of Yhwh's name is highlighted in the concentric oracle that follows, centered on the *talion,* that forms a status hierarchy of animals, humans, and Yhwh's name, with Yhwh's name having the highest status.

Next, I argue that this narrative pericope, stands as an archetypical offense against the Divine Name Formula [I am Yhwh (your God)] (DNF), which structures the Holiness Legislation. First, I demonstrate how the DNF forms the structural backbone of the Holiness Legislation. Then, I argue that Yhwh's name signifies not only his authority but his reputation,

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which can be affected by Israel's public response to Yhwh's instruction and boundaries of holiness. I conclude that the Blaspheming Son pericope is not misplaced (as is often thought), but stands as an archetypical offense to Yhwh's Name that structures the Holiness Legislation, in a way that parallels how Nadab and Abihu's offense is an archetypical offense in the first half of Leviticus.

Finally, while Israel's obedience publicly reflects on Yhwh's honor, I also argue that the blessings and curses are a talionic response from Yhwh that affects Israel's honor. Thus, blessings and curses persuade through a talionic honor-for-honor, shame-for-shame response, in ways paralleled to Deuteronomy 28 and the ANE, in general.

Thus, a social-science model of honor brings coherence to the brief narrative pericope, the purpose of the DNF, the relationship between the two, and the concluding blessings and curses. This makes honor critical to understanding the persuasive strategy and coherence of the Holiness Legislation as a whole.

Key Words

Holiness Legislation, Honor, Shame, Social-Science Criticism, Rhetorical Criticism, Name, Nadab and Abihu, Blaspheming Son, *Selbstvorstellungsformel*, Abduction

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This project was largely inspired by my experience of living and teaching at the International Graduate School of Leadership in Quezon City, Philippines. I wrote the first half of this thesis with the support and encouragement of the faculty and leadership at IGSL. I especially want to thank Steve Pardue, Craig Thompson, Brian Virtue, Adam Day, and Ron Barber whose friendship and encouragement greatly enriched this project and my time at IGSL.

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editors at *JSOT* also provided helpful feedback on the first half of chapter 4. Finally, Russ Meek read this manuscript and provided tremendous feedback for which I am thankful. Of course, any mistakes remain my responsibility, however, the feedback of others has greatly improved this paper.

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Soli Deo Gloria

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Dedication

This project is dedicated to my students and colleagues in Asia, whose lives and friendships have inspired this project. It is offered in gratitude for your patient instruction in the manifold ways that honor and shame shape our lives. I hope this work continues our conversation.

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Abbreviations

AB	Anchor Bible
ABD	Anchor Bible Dictionary
ATD	Das Alte Testament Deutsch
AThANT	Abhandlungen zur Theologie des Alten und Neuen Testaments
BA	*Biblical Archaeology*
BBB	Bonner biblische Beiträge
BBR	Bulletin of Biblical Research
BBRSup	Bulletin of Biblical Research Supplemental Series
BHS	Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia
Bib	*Biblica*
BibInt	Brill Biblical Interpretation Series
BTB	*Biblical Theology Bulletin*
CBQ	*Catholic Bible Quarterly*
ESV	English Standard Version
FAT	Forschungen zum Alten Testament
GBS	Guides to Biblical Scholarship
HALOT	Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament (2001)
HAR	*Harvard Annual Review*
HCOT	Historical Commentary on the Old Testament
IJP	*International Journal of Psychology*
JAOS	*Journal of the American Oriental Society*
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
JQR	*Jewish Quarterly Review*
JSOT	*Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series
LHBOTS	The Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies
MT	Masoretic Text
NICNT	New International Commentary on the New Testament
NICOT	New International Commentary on the Old Testament
NSBT	New Studies in Biblical Theology
OTE	*Old Testament Essays*
OTL	Old Testament Library
RBL	*Review of Biblical Literature*
SBLRBS	Society of Biblical Literature Resources for Biblical Studies
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
TDOT	Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament
VT	*Vetus Testamentum*
VTSup	Vetus Testamentum Supplement Series
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WO	*die Welt des Orients*
ZAR	*Zeitschrift für Altorientalische und Biblische Rechtsgeschicte*
ZAW	*Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*

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Note: Unless otherwise indicated, the BHS has been used for the Hebrew text and the ESV has been used for English translations of the Hebrew text. However, regarding the latter, the Tetragrammaton has been consistently rendered throughout the thesis as Yhwh rather than "the LORD."

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Cultural Scripts and Learning to Read

"Kuya [older brother], you gained some weight during the holidays!"

I was caught off guard as a Filipino student whom I had previously taught greeted me after our Christmas break. I was in my first year of teaching at an international seminary and was briefly startled because in my home culture weight gain is undesirable and not a topic for public comment. However, seeing his smile and knowing that students almost always honor faculty were enough context to infer the likely values under his statement and make sense of it. I had a hazy recollection that in traditional Filipino culture, weight gain is a sign of prosperity and health, so after a moment I was able to infer that he was expressing a compliment.

I experienced Bakhtin's insight that all utterances are social enthymemes.[1] In contrast to syllogisms where all premises are present, an enthymeme presumes the listener brings shared but unstated premises (in this case, what is healthy) to the conversation. This is what makes cross-cultural communication fraught with misunderstanding. As the initial example shows, the unstated cultural assumption about what is healthy made the difference between two entirely opposite interpretations—a mildly rude observation or a compliment.

I had other cues (history, his smile, and tone of voice) to help me snap into a more coherent interpretation, but what if I was interpreting a text instead of an embodied, spoken

[1] "The situation enters into the utterance as an essential constitutive part of the structure of its import. Consequently, a behavioral utterance as a meaningful whole is composed of two parts: (1) the part realized or actualized in words and (2) the assumed part. On this basis, the behavioral utterance can be likened to an enthymeme." This comes from Voloshinov but is commonly understood to come from Bakhtin. V. N. Voloshinov, *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, trans. L. Matejka and I. R. Titunik (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973 [1929]), 100.

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utterance? How do we detect cultural assumptions at work in a text and move from detection to sense-making of what is spoken with what remains unstated? Such questions drive this thesis. This project was birthed out of seven years of experience teaching cross-culturally in Asia, as I experienced both a blindness to cultural assumptions and good-faith but misguided attempts to "read" other cultures. One more story may locate this thesis and illustrate two key concepts that undergird it.[2]

I was first invited to teach a biblical studies class at a seminary in Manila as something of a trial for a possible long-term position. In working out my course load, I ended up teaching the book of Hebrews. Although my focus was on the Old Testament, I had completed an MA thesis on Hebrews and it filled a need they had. Because I had a basic sense that honor and shame were important in Asia, I decided to work through deSilva's socio-rhetorical commentary on Hebrews as part of my preparation.[3] It was shocking on several fronts. First, although I was quite comfortable explaining Hebrews' exhortation toward faithful endurance in the face of persecution, never once during my thesis work did it sink in that the persecution the listeners faced had anything to do with honor and shame. This, even though the author explicitly references shame as part of the persecution[4] and the discourse uses honor to motivate faithful endurance.[5] I was entirely blind to how honor shaped relational dynamics such as who ate with

[2] In seeking to apprehend an emic understanding of another culture, it is important to be cognizant of my own emic cultural perspective and interest as an outsider. There is no neutral scholarly perspective, so this narrative situates the perspective I bring to this project. For more on this, see Daniel Y. Wu, *Honor, Shame, and Guilt: Social-Scientific Approaches to the Book of Ezekiel* (University Park: Eisenbrauns, 2016), 24–31.
[3] D. A. deSilva, *Despising Shame. Honor Discourse and Community Maintenance in the Epistle to the Hebrews*, SBLDS 152 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996). See also idem, *Perseverance in Gratitude: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000).
[4] Heb 10:32–34, esp. v. 33.
[5] Especially explicit in Heb 2:11; 11:24–26; 12:1–3; 13:12–13. The author consistently refocuses the listeners attention from the passing honor of the present Public Court of Recognition to the lasting honor of the Divine Court

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whom, who could marry whom, acceptance into guilds, and financial credit to do business. I was similarly amazed at the overlap between the world of the text and the world of my students, who were often a minority in their context and shamed by family and the broader community in ways that discouraged them in their Christian faith. The text spoke directly to their experience, and the call to endure by seeking honor from God was intriguing to them. I had the experience all teachers love as students "lit up" in attention and interaction around this issue.

After this initial encounter, I was not fully blind to honor anymore but was far from seeing. I later was invited to teach full-time at this seminary, and in preparation, I was determined to read up on honor and shame and "understand" it. In my reading, recurrent ideas appeared that helped me form a model of how honor and shame worked. And indeed, this model had some explanatory power. However, this seminary draws students from seventeen countries across Asia. Because of the diversity of cultures within my classes, it also became apparent that honor and shame operate in diverse ways across different cultures and even within a given local culture. Honor and shame in the Philippines have some similarities and some significant differences with how honor and shame operate in Korea, for example, which are different from how honor and shame function in my home context of the United States and in the biblical text. The last seven years have been a delightful education in honor, and while I certainly continue to miss cues that insiders would pick up, my sense-making ability of social interactions has certainly increased through the patient explanations of my colleagues and students.

I tell this short history as an embodiment of several elements of honor and shame found in the literature and significant to this thesis.

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of Recognition, arguing especially in Heb 11 that temporary suffering and dishonor are normal, but faith in what God has said leads to commendation.

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- All conversations have unstated cultural premises.
- Honor is ubiquitous in the social interactions of communal cultures and present to some extent in all cultures.[6]
- It is entirely possible, particularly for Westerners, to miss the significance of honor. However, it is quite possible to grow in understanding of how honor and shame work within a culture.
- Models are helpful in beginning to understand honor; however, no model captures the particularity of how honor works, especially when applied to a foreign context.
- Through experience that provides feedback to our cognitive models, our understanding can adapt and increase our ability to interpret how honor is functioning in social situations.
- While as an outsider I may not have complete understanding, sufficient cross-cultural understanding can occur with care and work.

The shock of being so blind to the significance of honor and shame, and subsequently experiencing daily how cultural assumptions are present in communication, have helped motivate this thesis.

1.2 Purpose of this Study

The purpose of this study is to understand how the Holiness Legislation in Leviticus attempts to shape the response of the People of God to Yhwh's holy presence amongst them

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[6] The distinction between honor/shame cultures and guilt cultures put forth by Ruth Benedict and Margaret Mead has been thoroughly discredited. All cultures contain aspects of both and the methodology in which they arrived at those conclusions has been exposed. See §2.3 below for further discussion and references. Also, for a current, helpful description of how "status games" are played from a Western perspective, see Will Storr, *The Status Game: On Social Position and How We Use It* (London: HarperCollins, 2021).

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using the rhetoric of honor. The study assumes that texts are generated in socially constructed ways that both reflect and speak into their social settings. Because these social settings are different than our own, social-science methodologies may be employed to limit anachronistic and ethnocentric assumptions during cross-cultural readings and provide deeper insight into the cultural situation and rhetorical strategies at work.[7] The goal of this study is to use these cultural scripts heuristically to formulate hypotheses about how texts are shaped by concepts of honor and shame. These hypotheses will then be used to develop a "thick reading" that interprets texts relative "to a network of cultural presuppositions and symbolic associations."[8] I will argue that not only is honor present, but that it illuminates key aspects of the structure and coherence of the Holiness Legislation.

1.3 Need for this Study

The need for this study can be simply stated: there is *prima facie* evidence that honor and shame are being signaled in the Holiness Legislation, and commentators regularly mention honor in passing, but no study has brought any social-science theory of honor to bear in the reading of the Holiness Legislation.

The recognition of honor in the Holiness Legislation and what proceeds from this recognition fall into several categories. Sometimes commentators reference honor without

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[7] For a humorous but enlightening example of how we make ethnocentric assumptions while reading, see the anecdote of Bohannan telling the story of Hamlet to an African tribe in Shane Kirkpatrick, *Competing for Honor: A Social-Scientific Reading of Daniel 1–6*, BibInt 74 (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 1–3. Wu, *Honor, Shame, and Guilt,* 4–8, also demonstrates how anachronistic assumptions found in "Developmental" understandings of culture cause bias against understandings of communal cultures that lead to assumptions being read into the text.

[8] Ken Stone, *Sex, Honor and Power in the Deuteronomistic History*, LHBOTS 234 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 49. He uses the work of Clifford Geertz, "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture" in *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 3–30.

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exploring its dynamics. Rhyder[9] consistently refers to Yhwh as Israel's "patron deity" but does not discuss how patronage works—typically an exchange of honor for services—in her analysis of power. Similarly, in passing Knohl makes a profound assertion that all disobedience is an insult to the name of the one who empowers the law but without a sound argument or social-science theory behind it.[10]

Second, commentators recognize honor at work in one part of a pericope but neglect its dynamics throughout the text. For example, I will agree with Nihan's argument that in Leviticus 24:10–13, the blaspheming son does not curse but "makes light of" —or dishonors— the Name of Yhwh.[11] However despite seeing this in the narrative, Nihan doesn't attend to its implications in the hierarchy of relationships in the oracle that follows the narrative. I will argue later that honor has a profound role in uniting the narrative and subsequent oracle.

Third, sometimes theoretical models of honor are invoked but used poorly and incompletely. Although this thesis will focus on the HL, it will also explore the narrative pericope in Leviticus 10 in relation to the similar, and significant, narrative pericope in Leviticus 24. Houston provides a singular use of a social-science reading of honor in Leviticus in his paper on Leviticus 10.[12] Like Nihan in the example above, he recognizes the dynamics of honor in the first three verses but does not explore the dynamics of honor that continue throughout the

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[9] Julia Rhyder, *Centralizing the Cult: The Holiness Legislation in Leviticus 17–26*, FAT II 134 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2019), 26, 28, 79, etc.
[10] Israel Knohl, *The Sanctuary of Silence: The Priestly Torah and the Holiness School* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2007), 183–184.
[11] Nihan makes this argument in his initial monograph C. Nihan, *From Priestly Torah to Pentateuch: A Study in the Composition of the Book of Leviticus*, FAT II 25 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007). He follows up in more detail in C. Nihan, "Narrative and Exegesis in Leviticus: On Leviticus 10 and 24,10–23," in *Schriftgelehrte Fortschreibungs- und Auslegungsprozesse. Textarbeit im Pentateuch, in Qumran, Ägypten und Mesopotamien*, ed. Walter Bührer, FAT II 108 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2019), 207–42.
[12] Walter Houston, "Tragedy in the Courts of the Lord: A Socio-Literary Reading of the Death of Nadab and Abihu," *JSOT* 90 (2000): 31–39.

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chapter. Further, as we will explore more carefully in §4.4, he forces the model onto the text without allowing the particularity of the text to provide feedback to the model. Part of our methodological discussion will be to consider how we can use a model productively but also allow the text to push back in its particularity.

The most extensive use of theory of honor brought to bear on the HL is an article by Matthias Hopf, "Heiligkeit und Ehre: Die Aufforderung zur *imitatio Dei* im Heiligkeitsgesetz im Verhältnis zu *honor-shame*."[13] In it he analyzes an assertion by Matthews and Benjamin that "The 'Holiness Code' in the book of Leviticus (Lev 17–26) is comparable to a code of honor and shame in ancient Israel."[14] Hopf recognized this assertion was never explored in the literature and seeks to evaluate the statement. He starts by overviewing the theory surrounding honor and shame and its integration into biblical studies. He then takes aspects of the dynamics of honor and shame (internationalization of norms, formation of group identity, social differentiation, public perception, connection with the name, and gender perspectives) and reviews evidence for their presence in the HL. Overall, he finds that Leviticus 17–26 creates a "theo-anthropologische Gemeinschaft der Heiligkeit und keine sozialanthropologische Ehrgesellschaft"[15] and that social norms are guided by holiness and not honor.

There is much to commend in Hopf's analysis; however, in relationship to this thesis, he is not reading texts with a model of honor but rather trying to decide if the text overall functions as an honor code. He decides against this because of the primacy of holiness, but the narrowed

[13] Matthias Hopf, "Heiligkeit und Ehre: Die Aufforderung zur imitatio Dei im Heligkeitsgesetz im Verhältnis zu honor-shame," in *Gott u nd Mensch im Alten Testament: Zum Verhältnis von Gottes und Menschenbild*, ed. Jürgen van Oorschot and Andreas Wagner. Veröffentlichungen der Wissenschaftlichen Gesellschaft für Theologie 52 (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2018), 139–53.
[14] Victor Matthews and Don C. Benjamin, "Social Sciences and Biblical Studies," *Semeia* 68 (1994): 11.
[15] Hopf, "Heiligkeit und Ehre," 150.

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scope of his study omits careful reading of texts and exploring how honor could reinforce the boundaries of holiness. In other words, holiness could be primary and the HL likely does not function as an honor code, but this thesis will argue that honor is leveraged in undergirding the norms of holiness and that reading with a lens of honor brings coherence to the text. Finally, he gives very short work to the concept of "Name," which I will argue is a significant feature in understanding the role of honor in the HL.

In sum, although many scholars recognize language and concepts of honor in the Holiness Legislation, no one has brought any theory of how honor works to bear on the text, a lacuna this thesis will seek to fill.

1.4 Honor and Rhyder's Discourse on Power

One other reference point to situate this work is not specifically about honor but on power and cult centralization in the work of Rhyder.[16] Instead of arguing about centralization in terms of place, Rhyder provides a Foucauldian reading (supplemented with historical-critical and inner-biblical exegesis) that examines how the Holiness Legislation as a discourse utilizes standardization and center-periphery to assert hegemony.[17] Discourse typically emerges from institutions that seek, through their defining, what can be reasonably thought and said about the world to assert "normalizing judgment"[18] and construct a world that manufactures consent.[19]

[16] Julia Rhyder, *Centralizing the Cult*.
[17] Rhyder argues that standardization leads to the dissent of diversity and assertion of power by the one making standards. Sacred space forms a center and periphery as a way of organizing social relationships interwoven with ritual practices mediating meanings and dictating practices so as to define the reality of the social world and the people, ideas, and objects that inhabit it. See Rhyder, *Centralizing the Cult*, 9–12.
[18] Rhyder, *Centralizing the Cult*, 13–14. Here she draws on M. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan, 2nd ed. (New York: Pantheon, 1995 [1977]), 177.
[19] This consent is what Gramsci calls "hegemony"—the willingness of social actors to conform to the norms of a social system in which power is distributed unequally because they subscribe to the assumptions of popular

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Rhyder argues that the Holiness Legislation defines time and space in everyday experiences to construct and define the world that justifies the Levites centralizing power in Jerusalem and manufactures consent among listeners.

Rhyder's work is pertinent because it examines the Holiness Code using a type of social-science lens and because there are some resemblances between honor and power worth considering.[20] One way to distinguish between honor and power is to compare how Rhyder deals with Leviticus 17 and how Malachi 1 is dealt with in this thesis. Rhyder argues that Leviticus 17 outlines laws that standardize sacrifice and thereby centralize power to Jerusalem. By contrast, Malachi 1 uses the honor that fathers are due by their sons to explicitly call out both priests and people for offering defective sacrifices. Malachi 1 explicitly references honor on the surface of the text, while Rhyder examines how power inheres in judgments and practices that lay beneath the surface of the text. Honor influences in the context of interpersonal relationships, while Rhyder's study focuses on how power is implicit in the context of the standardization of the law.

While we both read Leviticus relative to a postexilic context in Yehud, Rhyder has a stronger historical-critical emphasis in showing how defining sacrificial law and the calendar enabled the cult in Jerusalem to centralize power at that time. By contrast, my rhetorical reading will argue that the unique narrative of Leviticus 24 provides a contrast to the Divine Name

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discourse that present themselves as common sense. See Ryder, *Centralizing the Cult*, 13 drawing on Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*, trans. Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (New York: International, 1971), 325, 333.

[20] We will discuss this distinction further in §3.3.3 below. Max Weber in his three-component theory of stratification, recognized there is a difference in political power of a party, economic power of wealth, and social status (honor). This was first articulated in Max Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft: Grundriss der verstehenden Soziologie* (Tübingen, Mohr, 1922). See also in English, Max Weber, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, trans. and ed. Hans Gerth and C. Wright Mills (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946).

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Formula (DNF) that structures the final form of the entire Holiness Legislation and thereby brings greater coherence to the text.

In sum, although our text is the same, our methodology and aims are dissimilar yet complementary. There is still a large gap in the literature about the role of honor in the rhetoric of the Holiness Legislation.

1.5 Outline of this Study

This study will proceed fairly linearly. Chapter 2 will explore social-science methodologies of honor and shame, reviewing the history of biblical scholars' appropriation of anthropological models. These will be critiqued, and then a method will be articulated. The latter half of the chapter will then introduce rhetorical criticism and how social-science models can articulate the situation of the text and complement rhetorical critical efforts to notice the strategy of the text to persuade listeners in the situation toward a particular end.

Chapter 3 will then introduce the situation and strategy of the text. Bitzer's theory of Rhetorical Situation will be used to situate the Holiness Legislation and detail the social situation and exigence of the text. The second half of the chapter will review the structure of Leviticus, which will provide a broad overview of the rhetorical strategy and be used as background at key points later in the thesis.

Next, chapter 4 will apply the social-rhetorical methodology developed in chapter 2 to the narrative pericopes of Nadab and Abihu in Leviticus 10 and the Blaspheming Son in Leviticus 24. While Leviticus 24 occurs within the Holiness Legislation and will be the major focus, attention will also be given to how Leviticus 10 and 24 are mutually interpretive pericopes that emphasize the significance of priests and laity honoring Yhwh, both in approaching him in the

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tent (Lev 10), and in using his name in the camp (Lev 24). The significance of these narratives to interpret surrounding material in Leviticus will also be explored and connected with the next chapter. These narrative pericopes embody the implications of the surrounding material and persuade through the consequences of not honoring Yhwh.

Chapter 5 will continue by examining the Divine Name Formula—אני יהוה ("I am Yhwh") and אני יהוה אלהיכם ("I am Yhwh your God")—that appears throughout Leviticus 17–26. I will demonstrate that it acts as a structuring device that attaches Yhwh's name to his commands and signifies not only authority but honor. This chapter will also argue that the Blaspheming Son provides an archetypical rebellion of dishonoring Yhwh's name that contrasts with the concern for Yhwh's name that undergirds the Holiness Legislation.

Chapter 6 will examine Leviticus 25 and 26 and argue that the blessings and curses persuade listeners through a rhetoric of honor, namely the promise of status on Yhwh's land as Yhwh's servants, or the removal of that status. The argument will begin with a general overview of the rhetorical purpose of blessings and curses within a covenant before examining a concrete example in Deuteronomy 28, where honor and shame explicitly frame the blessings and curses. This will provide background to a demonstration that Leviticus 26, building off a picture of a temple estate in Leviticus 25, contains both content and structure that point toward honor and shame as motivation for covenant obedience.

Chapter 7 will conclude the thesis with a review of major findings and a reflection on the role of honor in the theology of the Holiness Legislation and how it contributes to a coherent reading of the text. The chapter will also reflect on how honor and holiness are related. Finally, the thesis will conclude with possible areas of study that could build off this project.

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Chapter 2

Methodology Synthesis

2.1 Social Science Approaches Overview: Three Introductory Issues

In this thesis I will argue that the Holiness Legislation[1] (HL) in Leviticus 17-26[2] persuades people to respond to Yhwh's holiness using a discourse of honor. I will seek to demonstrate that honor is an operative category that is significant to the content, structure, and persuasive intent of Leviticus. This will be demonstrated using social science methodologies to relate Leviticus to cultural scripts of honor and shame and then use rhetorical critical methods to show how Leviticus uses these concepts to persuade. To provide an orientation and point of departure for this study, I begin by briefly introducing the need for Social Science Approaches (SSA), how they relate to other exegetical methodologies, and a justification for a particular starting place for this inquiry. This will provide the necessary background for the explanation of the social science and rhetorical methodologies that follow.

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[1] I agree with Schwartz's argument that it is unlikely that Lev 17–26 ever existed as an independent code, so Holiness Legislation is to be preferred to Holiness Code. See Baruch Schwartz, "Introduction: The Strata of the Priestly Writings and the Revised Relative Dating of P and H," in *The Strata of the Priestly Writings: Contemporary Debate and Future Directions*, ed. Sarah Schectman and Joel S. Baden, AThANT 96 (Zürich: Theologischer Verlag Zürich, 2009), 6.

[2] This thesis focuses on how honor structures Leviticus 17-26, while recognizing that that H language and concepts exist outside of Leviticus 17-26, as Klostermann, and more extensively, Milgrom and Knohl have observed. This has led to ongoing debate about the relationship between H and P and the role that assigning P texts to H has on the Priestly narrative (e.g. Stackert). While this issue is important, it is beyond the scope of this thesis, which will focus on honor brings coherence to Leviticus 17-26. See Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 17-22: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* vol. 3B, *AB* (New Haven; Yale University Press, 2000), 1439-1443. Israel Knohl, *The Sanctuary of Silence*, 225-30. August Klostermann, "Ezechiel und das Heiligkeitsgesetz" In *Der Pentateuch: Beiträge zu seinem Verständnis und seiner Entstehungsgeschichte*, ed. A. Klostermann (Leipzig: A. Deichert, 1893), 375-78. Jeffrey Stackert, "The Holiness Legislation and its Pentateuchal Sources: Revision, Supplement, and Replacement," in *The Strata of the Priestly Writings: Contemporary Debate and Future Directions*, ed. Sarah Schectman and Joel S. Baden, AThANT 96 (Zürich: Theologischer Verlag Zürich, 2009), 187-204.

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2.2 The Need for and Use of Social Science Approaches

Social science methodologies begin with an understanding that texts are generated in socially constructed ways that both reflect and speak into their social settings. Culture has assumed values about "the way we do things around here" that undergird communication but are not necessarily explicit in utterances.[3] When listening or reading we naturally and necessarily make inferences about these unstated cultural assumptions that help us make sense of communications. However, it is entirely possible, especially when reading cross-culturally, to recontextualize communicative acts in terms of our own culture, as I almost did when my student commented on my weight.[4]

SSA seek to be sensitive to the cultural assumptions present in the text to limit anachronistic and ethnocentric assumptions during cross-cultural readings. However, the goal is not just to avoid the negative outcomes of ethnocentrism but positively assist in a deeper, more coherent reading of texts. SSA can serve as heuristic aids to formulate hypotheses and ask questions about the significance of cultural social scripts on ancient texts.[5] This enables movement toward a desired outcome of developing a "thick reading" that interprets texts relative "to a network of cultural presuppositions and symbolic associations."[6] We will argue below that this type of reading is possible (with appropriate cautions) and desirable to account for the social nature of the text.

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[3] See chapter 1, n. 1 for more information. See also Stone, *Sex, Honor and Power in the Deuteronomistic History*, 30–33.
[4] For a helpful discussion with humorous examples, see Kirkpatrick, *Competing for Honor*, 1–3.
[5] Seth Schwartz, *Were the Jews a Mediterranean Society? Reciprocity and Solidarity in Ancient Judaism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 24–5.
[6] Stone, *Sex, Honor and Power in the Deuteronomistic History*, 49.

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2.3 The Place of Social Science Methodologies within Biblical Studies

Social science approaches to biblical texts complement other exegetical methodologies that seek to understand texts in their original context. They may be helpfully located using Holladay's taxonomy of biblical studies into religious ("Divine Oracle Paradigm"), historical, and literary approaches.[7] Holladay places SSA on the historical-critical portion of his map, as SSA seek to read the text against a plausible reconstruction of the original context.[8] However, Elliot helpfully suggests that SSA are both distinct and complementary to historical-critical approaches.[9] He notes that historical criticism seeks to account for the development of the text against specific, concrete historical particulars while social science approaches focus instead on reading a text against cultural scripts that inform general patterns of group behavior. Historical-critical methods emphasize unique actors or groups and demonstrate a concern to elucidate cause and effect with concrete particulars, often in the absence of stated assumptions of their meaning within culture. Social science criticism seeks to use a model with explicitly stated cultural assumptions to illuminate how a text works within cultural patterns of meaning. While this distinguishes social science approaches from historical-critical approaches, Elliot is also quick to see their complementarity: each is seeking to read the text against its original (historical/cultural) context.

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[7] Carl R. Holladay, "Contemporary Methods of Reading the Bible," in *The New Interpreter's Bible*, ed. Leander Keck, 12 vols. (Nashville: Abingdon, 1994), 1:126–147. Holladay's taxonomy was introduced to me through the work of Kirkpatrick, *Competing for Honor*, 5–7.
[8] Holladay, "Contemporary Methods of Reading the Bible," 135–36.
[9] John Elliot, *What is Social-Scientific Criticism?*, GBS (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 7, 107–9.

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It is worth noting that Gottwald, using a similar taxonomy,[10] associates SSA with rhetorical approaches within the "literary" portion of the map. And indeed, Social Science Approaches view texts as vehicles of communication and seek to build connections between the *situation* that motivates the author's communication and the *strategy* used to elicit a response within that social situation.[11] While we generally favor Holladay's understanding that SSA are closer to historical-critical concerns about reading a text against its original (social) context, it is commonly noted that SSA provide a natural link to rhetorical criticism and span the historical and literary methodologies.[12] This is true of this study, as we will use a social science model for heuristic purposes to develop a plausible account of the situation of the text that will then feed into a rhetorical analysis of the strategy of the text to persuade listeners towards a desired end.

2.4 Social Science Foundations: Starting with Malina, a Justification

We will begin our investigation into SSA to honor using Bruce Malina's 1981 book *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology*, which launched an SBL working group, a series of critical reflections, and an evolution in methodology that we will trace below. Although Malina's work is often used as a touchstone for the development of SSA related to honor and shame, we must note that the topic of honor and shame has been the subject of works

[10] Gottwald calls "confessional" what Holliday calls "Divine Oracle Paradigm" but also follows with historical and literary in his taxonomy. Norman K. Gottwald, *The Hebrew Bible: A Socio-Literary Introduction* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985), 8–31.
[11] Elliot, *What is Social-Scientific Criticism?*, 54.
[12] See Elliot, *What is Social-Scientific Criticism?*, 100; Vernon K. Robbins, *Exploring the Texture of Texts: A Guide to Socio-Rhetorical Criticism* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1996). Note also that Eerdmans has an entire socio-rhetorical commentary series.

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in biblical studies long before.[13] Therefore, starting in 1981 and narrowing our focus to an anthropological approach to honor requires some justification.

We begin with Malina for several reasons. First, he draws on fieldwork from the Mediterranean region in the 1960s about honor and shame that had matured beyond some earlier missteps in the field of anthropology. Margaret Mead's work in Samoa (1928) and Ruth Benedict's post-World War II work in Japan (1946) were foundational studies in introducing honor and shame to the West.[14] Unfortunately, as Freeman's title implies—*Margaret Mead and Samoa: The Making and Unmaking of an Anthropological Myth*—they did so with simplistic definitions, unhelpful distinctions between shame as an external control and guilt as in internal control, and methodology that led to misleading conclusions that have been thoroughly critiqued.[15] Malina draws on the studies of Peristiany and Pitt-Rivers[16] in the 1960s, which are closer geographically and culturally to our Levantine text (although the notion of a Mediterranean cultural region will be debated below) and methodologically more mature (although not above critique, as we will note below).

Second, we start with Malina because he represents a moment when not only had anthropological methodologies evolved, but also biblical studies had become more rigorous in

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[13] Johannes Pederson, "Honor and Shame," in *Israel: Its Life and Culture*, 4 vols. (London: Oxford University Press, 1926), 2:213–58.
[14] Margaret Mead, *Coming of Age in Samoa: A Study of Adolescence and Sex in Primitive Societies* (Hammondsworth: Penguin, 1928); Ruth Benedict, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword: Patterns of Japanese Culture* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1946).
[15] See especially Derek Freeman, *Margaret Mead and Samoa: The Making and Unmaking of an Anthropological Myth* (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1983). For insight into the unhealthy circularity of Mead's work, see Douglas L. Cairns, *Aidōs: The Psychology and Ethics of Honour and Shame in Ancient Greek Literature* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1993); M. R. Creighton, "Revisiting Shame and Guilt Cultures: A Forty-Year Pilgrimage," *Ethos* 18.3 (1990): 279-307.
[16] Julian Pitts-Rivers and J. G. Peristiany, *Honor and Shame: The Values of the Mediterranean Society* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1966).

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appropriating social science methodologies. Within biblical studies, there is a long history of using the Bible to reconstruct social conditions and being sensitive to social conditions in interpretation. Elliot overviews eight scholars from Max Weber (1864–1920) to Edwin A. Judge (1960s) but concludes that their work serves as “precursors, yet distinguishable from, current social-scientific critics in their perspectives and methods.”[17] Elliot finds broad consensus among biblical scholars that a more self-conscious attempt at methodological rigor emerged within the 1970s within biblical studies.[18]

This holds true for work on honor and shame. For example, Pederson’s early work (1929) contains admirable accounting of the effects of honor and shame based on his study of Job, but he fills in gaps about honor through allusions to unsourced knowledge of Arabian and Bedouin culture.[19] Later work by Daube and Klopenstein are more rigorous in terms of biblical studies, but they do not attach themselves to any established discourse on honor and shame and suffer for it.[20] While I will note agreement with earlier works in footnotes, I will be tying our argumentation to works that follow Malina and form arguments within a well-grounded social science framework.

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[17] Elliot, *What is Social-Scientific Criticism?*, 17.
[18] He draws this conclusion with support from the following sources: Robert W. Funk “The Watershed of the American Biblical Tradition: The Chicago School, First Phase, 1892–1920,” *JBL* 95 (1976): 4–22; Robert R. Wilson, *Sociological Approaches to the Old Testament*, GBS 9 (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984); Bernhard Lang, ed. *Anthropological Approaches to the Old Testament*, Issues in Religion and Theology 8 (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985); Robert Morgan with John Barton, “Theology and the Social Sciences,” in *Biblical Interpretation*, ed. Robert Morgan with John Barton, Oxford Bible Series (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 133–66; Carolyn Osiek, “The New Handmaid: The Bible and the Social Sciences,” *Theological Studies* 50 (1989): 260–78.
[19] Pederson, “Honor and Shame,” 213–58.
[20] For example, Klopfenstein subsumes shame under guilt. See Martin A. Klopfenstein, *Scham und Schande nach dem Alien Testament*. *Eine begriffsgeschichtliche Untersuchung zu den hebräischen Wurzeln bôš, klm und ḥpr*, AThANT 62 (Zürich: Theologischer Verlag, 1972).

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Finally, it should be noted that I am using an anthropological model instead of a psychological model. This is not because such models do not exist. Stiebert and others have used psychological models to good effect studying the prophets and sanctions of shame.[21] However, psychological accounts of shame tend to focus on how shame affects the individual, whereas anthropological approaches focus on how that works out in the relational dynamics of a group, which is more fitting to our material in Leviticus.[22]

Therefore, because Malina's work a) draws on more mature anthropological work, b) comes in an era where biblical studies more maturely appropriates social science methodology, and c) is fitting to our material, we will develop our methodology by starting with Malina's work and working through subsequent critiques and developments in the field.

2.5 The Mediterranean Model and Its Methodological Development

2.5.1 The Model Stated: Bruce Malina

With that prolegomenon, we can now turn our attention to issues of methodology, and as discussed above, Bruce Malina's seminal book *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology* will be our point of departure.[23] Malina's book is written as a textbook for students for whom he is a very capable teacher. He uses Kluckhohn's description of culture as "patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols."[24] These symbols create patterns of shared meaning that generate the social world of the group, and

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[21] Johanna Stiebert, *The Construction of Shame in the Hebrew Bible: The Prophetic Contribution*, LHBOTS 346 (London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002).
[22] For a helpful overview of various psychological approaches to shame, see Wu, *Honor, Shame, and Guilt*, 37–46.
[23] Bruce J. Malina, *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1981).
[24] Malina, *The New Testament World*, 11, quoting A. L. Kroeber, and C. Kluckhohn, *Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions*, Harvard University Peabody Museum of American Archeology and Ethnology Papers 47 (Cambridge: Peabody Museum, 1952), 181.

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Malina establishes how these patterns play a role in our interpretation of our own culture and of texts. Understanding texts from another culture involves being sensitive to how their cultural patterns differ from our own. Because patterns have some regularity, they can be described through a model that serves as an entry point for understanding a foreign culture by giving us a point of reference closer to the original culture and one that is outside our own. Models are not just useful, Malina argues, but necessary.[25] He refers to findings from cognitive science that demonstrate that humans can only focus on around seven items in our mind at one time.[26] Creating models that chunk regular patterns together from innumerable particularities is an inescapable aspect of any interpretation for both insiders and outsiders. Thus, models are necessary and useful as an entry point for a cultural foreigner trying to make sense of the many particularities of a new culture.

Drawing from the work of Peristiany and Pitt-Rivers,[27] Malina synthesizes a model that posits that in Mediterranean societies, honor is both a claim to status and acknowledgement of that status by others, built on values such as lineage, wealth, moral standing, and social class.[28] Honor was largely ascribed through family status and maintained by keeping community standards in areas such as morality and purity. Honor shapes relational transactions, as deference is shown to those with greater honor, whose views are given "weight." Honor could be achieved through heroic deeds and increased or diminished through challenge-riposte. Pursuit of honor along these lines was agonistic, because a gain in honor of one came at the expense of another

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[25] Malina, *The New Testament World*, 17.
[26] Malina, *The New Testament World*, 17. Malina doesn't source this idea, but he is likely drawing from a relatively well-known paper by Harvard psychologist George Miller, "The Magical Number Seven, Plus or Minus Two: Some Limits on Our Capacity for Processing Information," *Psychological Review* 63.2 (1956): 81.
[27] Pitts-Rivers and Peristiany, *Honor and Shame*.
[28] The outline of the model in this paragraph summarizes the first three chapters of Malina, *The New Testament World*, 27–107.

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who then experienced shame or a loss of honor. Finally, the model proposes that individuals had anti-introspective and dyadic personalities, so that individual status was measured by the external assessment of the community and was tied to the status of that community. This status can be symbolled through blood or name.

Malina's book invites the reader to validate the model by examining texts through its lens for the following outcome: "You should find that you can see much better what was going on in that social world, how and why people behaved the way they did, what they considered significant and important in life."[29] Malina offers several other models as well as examples and exercises to help readers practice using social science models as lenses.

There is much to commend to Malina's work. In response to the cultural difference between modern Western culture and ancient texts, he has demonstrated the necessity of using models to understand cultural scripts, synthesized the work of cultural anthropologists into a lucid model, and provided a model that is relatively easy to understand, apply, and obtain insights into non-individualistic ways of thinking for Western researchers. The fruit of this model can be seen in the several decades of scholarship that Context Group has produced, largely in the field of New Testament studies.[30]

2.5.2 Herzfeld Critique of the Use of the Model and Responses

While Malina's model has proven influential and long-lasting, it must be noted that the model's ease of use is based on the assumption that the anthropologists' nuanced study of a particular time and place can be generalized and applied to contexts far removed by time and

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[29] Malina, *The New Testament World*, 23.
[30] For a review of their history, see John H. Elliot, "From Social Description to Social-Scientific Criticism: The History of a Society of Biblical Literature Section 1975–2005," *BTB* 38 (2008): 26–36.

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distance from the model's source—for example, the Hebrew Bible. It is ironic that just as the world of biblical studies was incorporating the work of anthropologists on honor and shame, anthropologists were questioning whether the Mediterranean could be considered as a homogenous unit and surfacing the dangers of using a particular model to interpret other cultures. In 1980, a year before Malina's book was released, Michael Herzfeld published an article that surveyed the use of honor and shame within anthropology.[31] In it he demonstrated that, even within the Mediterranean world during the same time frame of the original model (the 1960s), there were competing systems of honor based on different sets of values.[32] Therefore, to use honor and shame as if they refer to a uniform set of values is methodologically unsound even in one culture, let alone across cultures. Herzfeld warned that honor and shame were "inefficient glosses" that could import alien meanings and values, leading to misinterpretation of cultures.[33] He advocated studying each culture in its particularity to understand the local values that inform what is honorable and shameful.

This critique was noted in the world of biblical studies but rarely acted upon, as biblical scholars continued to deductively apply Malina's model to texts.[34] Fourteen years after Malina's work, the anthropologist John Chance wrote a response in an issue of *Semeia* devoted to honor and shame in biblical studies [Volume 68 (1994) of the journal *Semeia*].[35] After all the articles

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[31] Michael Herzfeld, "Honour and Shame: Problems in the Comparative Analysis of Moral Systems," *Man* 15.2 (1980): 339–51.
[32] Just as today, a variety of values associated with sexual ethics would lead to honor in one group and shame in another, even within one society.
[33] Herzfeld, "Honour and Shame," 339.
[34] Wu, *Honor, Shame, and Guilt*, 20–21.
[35] John Chance, "The Anthropology of Honor and Shame: Culture, Values, and Practice," *Semeia* 68 (1994): 139–51.

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by biblical scholars, he noted that "the authors in this volume have not heeded Herzfeld's call: they have employed a common model and applied it to peoples diverse in time and space."[36]

2.5.3 Responses to the Herzfeld Critique: Induction

In response to Herzfeld's critique of deductive use of the Mediterranean model, several scholars thoughtfully modified their methodology in more inductive ways to allow the local culture of the text to speak for itself instead of being fit into a more universal model. Timothy S. Laniak's work on Esther[37] attempted to validate the Mediterranean model through an inductive semantic analysis of the word כבד in the Old Testament. He found the word clustered around four conceptual spheres: substance (wealth), status, splendor, and self.[38] This helped him verify the basic categories of the model, which he then applied to elucidate the narrative dynamics of Esther.[39] Laniak's close reading of Esther is certainly stimulating and is enhanced by his close attention to the dynamics of honor and shame. However, Jobes notes that his model is rather general (substance, status, splendor, and self are ubiquitous), making his localized validation rather weak, and there is no way to connect this to the operating cultural values of the time.[40] Yael Avrahami moves a step further toward induction by eschewing the Mediterranean model as a starting point, which she believed had distorted the interpretation of בוש.[41] Instead, she

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[36] Chance, "The Anthropology of Honor and Shame," 148.
[37] Timothy S. Laniak, *Shame and Honor in the Book of Esther*, SBLDS 165 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998).
[38] Laniak, *Shame and Honor in the Book of Esther*, 17–23.
[39] Laniak, *Shame and Honor in the Book of Esther*, 7–11.
[40] Karen Jobes, Review of T. S. Laniak, *Shame and Honor in the Book of Esther*, *RBL* (2000), accessed online on 6/13/2016 at http://bookreviews.org/pdf/67_366.pdf
[41] Yael Avrahami, "בוש in the Psalms—Shame or Disappointment?" *JSOT* 34.3 (2010): 339.

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inductively studied the use of בוש in Psalms to understand what it meant within the world of the Psalter.

This switch from a top-down deductive approach to an inductive approach seems to heed Herzfeld's call to pay attention to the particularity of each culture. However, an inductive approach causes another methodological problem: How does a researcher determine what counts as honor and shame? Although the researchers may claim to start with a text rather than a model, they implicitly have an idea of what counts as honor and shame that guides them in their process of distinguishing and identifying the concepts. Unless researchers are explicit about their standard, they risk being subjectively biased in their inductive decision making. Opaque standards also close the door to outside critique and potential improvement.

2.5.4 Response to the Herzfeld Critique: John Elliot and Abduction

Twelve years after Malina's seminal work, Elliot published *What is Social-Scientific Criticism*?,[42] which synthesized the burgeoning social science work within biblical studies and became a touchstone for most work in the field that followed. Like Malina, Elliot aims to avoid anachronistic and ethnocentric readings through the use of social science models and, like Malina, emphasizes the necessity of using models. While Malina's textbook is devoted to introducing one model of honor and shame and spends just a chapter on methodology, Elliot's entire book is devoted to social science approaches more broadly and to providing significant methodological rigor. He provides a taxonomy of different social science approaches,[43] lays out

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[42] Elliot, *What is Social-Scientific Criticism?*.
[43] Elliot, *What is Social-Scientific Criticism?*, 21.

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the presuppositions of social science approaches to biblical texts,[44] and elaborates a clear procedure for analyzing a text.[45] Elliot's book stands as an admirable review and synthesis.

Of interest to our current argument is Elliot's response to the deductive and inductive approaches of the previous decade. Elliot notes the weakness of each approach individually and synthesizes an abductive approach that incorporates an iterative process involving both. Abduction "is a process in logic of the discovery procedure of working from evidence to hypothesis, involving a back-and-forth movement of suggestion checking. In this process data is accounted for by a hypothesis, the validity of which could be corroborated by testing with additional data."[46] This is rooted in the work of C. S. Peirce, who noted the scientific process iteratively moves from experience to conjecture, which is then shaped again by experience.[47] In the hard sciences, this allows the researcher to hypothesize about unseen causes that produce known effects. The iterative, abductive process, while never being able to state with certainty the unseen causes it explores, may move to increasing levels of probability, as hypotheses cohere with other sources of knowledge. Similarly, in the social sciences, hypothesizing about social patterns and beliefs, particularly in high-context societies[48] where underlying beliefs may not be made explicit, enables one to try to coherently explain features of a text without the unreasonable burden of the certainty of correspondence.

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[44] Elliot, *What is Social-Scientific Criticism?*, 45.
[45] Elliot, *What is Social-Scientific Criticism?*, 72–74.
[46] Elliot, *What Is Social-Scientific Criticism?*, 48.
[47] Elliot, *What Is Social-Scientific Criticism?*, 48, referencing Charles Peirce, "The Laws of Nature and Hume's Argument against Miracles," in *Values in a Universe of Chance: Selected Writings of Charles S. Pierce*, ed. P. P. Wiener (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1958), 320.
[48] High-context cultures communicate through contextual elements as opposed to low-context cultures, where communication is spelled out at length using language. This concept was popularized by the anthropologist Edward T. Hall in his book *Beyond Culture* (New York: Doubleday, 1976).

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We will follow Malina and Elliot in understanding that texts are generated in socially constructed ways that both reflect and speak into the social and cultural settings. We aim to utilize methodologies that limit anachronistic and ethnocentric assumptions. And we recognize both the usefulness and necessity of using models to do so. Following Elliot, we find an iterative, abductive approach that moves back and forth between model and the particularities of the text will help heed both the warnings of Herzfeld of flattening a text into a model and the dangers of attempting a "pure" inductive approach.

2.5.5 Postmodernism and the Use of Social Science Models

Because SSA, along with historical approaches, seek to read the text against the world behind the text, they must also answer postmodern challenges about our abilities to know the world behind the text. Kirkpatrick, writing in 2005 on honor and shame in Daniel,[49] draws from broader postmodern trends within biblical studies[50] and articulates these questions well. These questions revolve around the ontological status of the model, the epistemological confidence to "describe what was 'really there,'" and the ethical question of why historical or cultural backgrounds are privileged in reading texts.[51]

Kirkpatrick mounts apologia for SSA that emphasizes ethical concerns. Ethically, he finds SSA helpful in that they are respectful of cultural difference and seeks to check blind ethnocentric bias by trying to interpret utterance within its given cultural symbolic universe.[52] He addresses SSA from a number of interesting angles and demonstrates clearly that social science

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[49] Shane Kirkpatrick, *Competing for Honor*.
[50] Kirkpatrick relies on a variety of sources but especially of A. K. M. Adam, *What is Postmodern Biblical Criticism?*, GBS (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995), and Fred W. Burnett "Historiography" in *Handbook of Postmodern Biblical Interpretation*, ed. A. K. M. Adam (St. Louis: Chalice, 2000), 106–12.
[51] Kirkpatrick, *Competing for Honor*, 12–13.
[52] Kirkpatrick, *Competing for Honor*, 11–13.

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models are constructs, not privileged windows that exactly correspond to "what is really there."[53] He seems mainly interested to justify SSA readings alongside more mainstream historical-critical methods and move away from the ethically troubling "power play" of assuming a foundationalist approach to a "web of meaning" approach that negotiates between various discourses.

Unfortunately, with his attention given to relations between discourses, he briefly acknowledges critiques by Herzfeld, Chance, and others[54] but doesn't reflect on the implications of his methodology within the SSA discourse beyond recognition of the model being a construct and epistemic humility. In practice, his methodology reverts back to using Malina's model and Malina's deductive approach.[55]

2.5.6 Schwartz and the Ontological Implications of the Model as a Construct

The implications of the model being a construct are more helpfully addressed by Schwartz.[56] If Kirkpatrick addresses the issue philosophically from above, Schwartz starts from below—literally the ground up.[57] He wrestles with Herzfeld's critique that the Mediterranean cannot be assumed to be homogenous and comparing the Mediterranean model to Torah and states, "that the Torah's prescriptions constitute mediterraneanism's nearly perfect antithesis requires an explanation."[58] By demonstrating differences between Torah and the Mediterranean model, and drawing on Herzfeld's insight (and registering a blistering critique of those who

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[53] See Bruce J. Malina, "Interpretation: Reading, Abduction, Metaphor," in *The Bible and the Politics of Exegesis: Essays in Honor of Norman K. Gottwald on His Sixty-Fifth Birthday* ed. David Jobling et al. (Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 1991), 266.
[54] Kirkpatrick, *Competing for Honor*, 26–7.
[55] Kirkpatrick, *Competing for Honor*, 31.
[56] Schwartz, *Were the Jews a Mediterranean Society?*
[57] Schwartz, *Were the Jews a Mediterranean Society?*, 2, recommends starting with dirt and agriculture rather than the shimmering veil that literary sources reveal..
[58] Schwartz, *Were the Jews a Mediterranean Society?*, 26.

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ignore this),[59] Schwartz affirms from the ground up that the model isn't a picture of the world behind the text but a construct, but then he also helpfully thinks through the implications of use:

> But for premodernists it is not trivial, since we are not looking for analytical tools alone but tend to use our models as ways of filling in gaps, of providing ourselves with sets of social-historical assumptions (in the absence of real information) against which we can measure the exiguous fragments of information we do have. Whatever anthropologists may think, mediterraneanism is potentially important for us because, if it turns out to be not pure projection but at least a plausible if partial account of how some premodern society somewhere lived—if, in other words, it is tolerably coherent if only as a construct—and if it is then used with cautious skepticism, not as a determinist frame into which to force evidence, it could conceivably help us better understand biblical and rabbinic texts and the societies and cultures that generated them.[60]
>
> Rather than viewing Mediterranean culture as the real, normative culture of the Mediterranean basin throughout history, we should perhaps understand and use it as a Weberian ideal type, whose real-life manifestations were almost always diffuse, adulterated, partial: neither ubiquitous in the Mediterranean world, wherever its boundaries might be, nor necessarily exclusive to it.[61]

Whereas Kirkpatrick argues generally that the model cannot, in a positivist sense, be used to tell us what is really there, Schwartz from an "on-the ground" perspective shows the heuristic usefulness and reasonableness of using a model with the appropriate cautions. Namely, the Mediterranean Model cannot be assumed to be an accurate depiction of what was happening in Israel, but as opposed to trying to argue for homogeneity across the Mediterranean, a reader can acknowledge the likelihood that this model describes dynamics of a collective society in part. Then he argues for an abductive approach (similar to Elliot, although unacknowledged) that

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[59] Schwartz is a pleasure to read. "Leaf through volumes of *Semeia*, *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*, and other relatively progressive journals of biblical studies from the 1990s and early 2000s and you will find nearly the whole agenda of mediterraneanist ethnography applied to the Bible and the ancient Israelite and Jewish worlds in a way that strikes me in most cases as staggeringly vulgar. For example, *Semeia* dedicated an entire volume to articles trying very hard but with dismayingly little success to find traces of the honor-shame complex in the Bible, on the grounds, as one editor put it, that since the Israelites and their descendants were a Mediterranean people and honor and shame were centrally important in all Mediterranean lands, they must have been central for the Jews, too. It hardly needs to be said that this deterministic syllogism is very far from what Braudel and the great team of anthropologists assembled by Peristiany had in mind in tracing out subtle continuities in Mediterranean culture. Such work may at least serve as a warning to us about the consequences of incautious use of reified social scientific hypotheses." Schwartz, *Were the Jews a Mediterranean Society?*, 23–24.

[60] Schwartz, *Were the Jews a Mediterranean Society?*, 24–25.

[61] Schwartz, *Were the Jews a Mediterranean Society?*, 30.

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allows the data to provide a feedback loop that refines the model.[62] Using the model cautiously, recognizing it as a construct, and allowing for it to be broken will avoid the mistakes of making the text fit the model and hopefully yield a positive hermeneutical spiral. This view is similar to Elliot's abductive approach but with a closer examination of the nature of the model itself.

2.5.7 An Epistemological Stance to Postmodern Concerns and Methodological Implications

Having explored the implications of the model's ontological status as a construct, we return to a philosophical register to answer some of Kirkpatrick's epistemological concerns and their methodological implications. If we move away from a logical positivism that assumes we can describe "what is really there," are we resigned to radical (cultural) relativism? Does our critique of the modern quest for objectivity leave us with only subjectivity? Wu suggests a middle course can be achieved through "critical realism" that moves away from a goal of entire comprehension but leaves room for sufficient apprehension of the intended sense of the text.[63]

This view is *realistic* in that it supposes that communicative acts have an intended sense that precedes interpretations of it. We assume the "intended sense is the 'formal cause' of the texts' unique configuration and coherence."[64] We are not assuming that we can reach back into the author's psychology and extrinsic intention, but we can focus on intention as intrinsic to the

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[62] In practice, Schwartz holds the Mediterranean model and Torah as two ideal types and then reads Second Temple and rabbinic literature against these types to show how they wrestle with calls to solidarity (Torah) and reciprocity (Mediterranean models).
[63] Wu, *Honor, Shame, and Guilt*, 33–5. See especially Margaret Archer, "Introduction: Realism in the Social Sciences," in in *Critical Realism: Essential Readings*, ed. Margaret Archer (New York: Routledge, 1998), 189– 205; and William Outhwaite, "Realism and Social Science" in Archer, *Critical Realism*, 282–96; and Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text?: The Bible, the Reader, and the Morality of Literary Knowledge*, Landmarks in Christian Scholarship (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 1998).
[64] Ben Meyer, *Critical Realism and the New Testament*, Princeton Theological Monographs (Allison Park: Pickwick, 1989), 19–20.

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text. "'Intention' is a shorthand for the structure of meaning and effect supposed by the conventions that the text appeals to or devises: for the sense that the language makes in terms of the communicative context as a whole."[65]

This view is *critical* because it recognizes that we bring culturally situated assumptions, theories of interpretation, and models with assumptions to our reading along with various cognitive biases so that our interpretive efforts will be perspectival and limited. These limitations preclude a naïve quest for objectivity. However, it is a mistake to assume that our apprehension of meaning has to be all or nothing.[66] It is possible to apprehend without complete comprehension. Perspectival apprehension means that our interpretive frameworks may vary and may yield different insights into the complex reality of "the way things are." However, "it is not that our descriptive frameworks simply construct reality, but rather that certain aspects of reality only emerge or come to light under particular descriptions."[67]

Further, although we bring frameworks to the text, and different frameworks will yield different insights, if we are open-minded to feedback of coherence of the text, it will give feedback on the frameworks we use. The text itself can "educate our (literary) sensibilities."[68] In this case we do not begin with certain, objective knowledge of how honor worked in the original context of the text, but as we bring a social science framework to bear, the reality of the text will

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[65] Meir Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative: Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading*, Indiana Studies in Biblical Literature (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 8–10.
[66] Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in this Text?*, 322.
[67] Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in this Text?*, 322.
[68] Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in this Text?*, 323. He draws this from Farrell, who argues against the idea that conceptual systems constitute their own objects that then determine what counts as a sentence being true. Farrell responds, "There must be a regulation of those conceptual systems themselves by the world, as over time, they have to accommodate their articulation to *its* way of doing things. Reality itself 'educates' our sensibility toward it." See Frank B. Farrell, *Subjectivity, Realism, and Postmodernism—The Recovery of the World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 167.

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give feedback through coherence, and that gives us some probability (but not certainty) of correspondence. Or it is possible that a lack of coherence will signal the unsuitability of the framework.

Thus, in addressing epistemological questions, we find again that reflecting on the nature of the model helps us avoid the mistake of assuming we have objective insight into the text in a logical positivist sense. And it again suggests that we bring our framework to the text, allow the text to give feedback and shape our interpretations, and look for coherence that signals suitability and probability of grasping meaning that we presuppose is embedded intrinsically in the text by the authors.

This returns us to Kirkpatrick's ethical concern in raising postmodern questions. An SSA model is a responsible attempt to try to account for our own biases in an effort to hear text as the authors would want it to be heard. This is an ethical choice that does not ignore our situatedness, but attempts to subject it to the objectivity of the text in an effort to honor the speaker.

2.5.8 Daniel Wu: A Synthesis

Wu offers a recent, admirable methodological synthesis in his 2016 monograph, *Honor, Shame, and Guilt: Social Science Approaches to the Book of Ezekiel.*[69] One of the many strengths of his study is his vast survey of literature and careful methodological reflection.[70] Wu adds additional clarity to the conversation by drawing on the anthropological concepts of emics and etics, which enable him to make the clearest presentation of the abductive process and note several helpful distinctions along the way. Etics and emics are derived from the linguistic terms

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[69] Wu, *Honor, Shame, and Guilt*.
[70] Wu, *Honor, Shame, and Guilt*, 4–57.

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phon*etic* and phon*emic* and refer to the perspective one takes when approaching a foreign language. An etic perspective seeks to understand the language in terms of an outside, universal phonetic alphabet that is used to study many languages. An emic perspective tries to understand a language from an insider perspective.[71]

These categories allow additional clarity in the abductive/iterative process.

1. The process begins with the recognition that modern scholars read from their own emic point of view, "complete with interests, sensitivities, and blind spots that are particular to their own subculture."[72] Thus, both the scholar and the text each have their own emic perspective that must be acknowledged.
2. Next, an imposed etic model is formulated from the emic understanding of the modern scholarly community. Thus, the Mediterranean Model, with refinements discussed below, is recognized as an imposed etic derived from a foreign culture that has its own emic understanding.
3. The ancient text in question is then read in light of this imposed etic. Wu draws on McCutcheon to note that the resultant reading "…is not so much an insider's *actual* views but rather an outsider's attempt to reproduce, as faithful as possible, a native's own descriptions of their production of sounds, behavior, beliefs, meanings and so on. This sort of definition preserves the 'otherness'—in a positive sense—of the text over the researcher, and thus upholds the communicative intent of its author/community, as worth pursuing as an entity in its own right."[73]

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[71] See Marvin Harris, "History and Significance of the Emic/Etic Distinction," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 5 (1976): 329–50, esp. 331–32.
[72] Wu, *Honor, Shame, and Guilt*, 24.
[73] Wu, *Honor, Shame, and Guilt*, 27. Intent being understood within the critical realism framework described above.

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4. The imposed etic is modified, or perhaps even discarded, in favor of a derived etic that reflects a more accurate understanding of the other culture.
5. Finally, the derived etic is applied to the understanding of the researcher's own emic perspective. It variously impacts, confirms, contradicts, nuances, etc. their original perspective. This modified perspective is then "carried over" to become the new initial model in the subsequent iteration of the research.

Wu adapted this process from the work of John Berry in the field of cross-cultural psychology.[74] In practice, steps 1 and 5 are about recognition of our own situatedness and limits in engaging a text from a foreign culture. It is a helpful, but in practice, perhaps an overly fine distinction between recognizing a researcher's own emic and recognition of using a derived etic. Steps 2–4 are similar to Elliot's abductive process and Schwartz's call to allow the text to "break" or modify the model. Thus, we will heed Wu's call to be aware of our own emic situatedness and proceed in applying the iterative methodology of Steps 2–4, which are common to Wu, Elliot, and Schwartz.

2.5.9 Summary

Based on this survey, we may now summarize our approach to studying honor and shame using a social science methodology. We begin with a recognition that all communication contains embedded cultural assumptions that make re-contextualization using our own cultural assumptions a danger. However, because culture provides some patterns of regularity, we may

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See also Russell T. McCutcheon, ed. *The Insider / Outsider Problem in the Study of Religion* (London: Cassell Academic, 1999).

[74] J. W. Berry, "Imposed Etics-Emics-Derived Etics: The Operationalization of a Compelling Idea," *IJP* 24.6 (1989): 721-735.

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use a model of honor and shame to help enter into a text from a foreign culture and make sense of the particulars of its utterance. We recognize that the model is an ideal construct that does not give us certainty to the world behind the text, so we must be wary of using it naively as a lens in a way that forces the text to fit the model. However, it can be used as a plausible but partial account[75] that can serve a heuristic purpose to "generate hypotheses about the pre-text to which a particular text can plausibly be read as having responded and with which the text can plausibly be read as having interacted."[76] Deference is given to the particularities of the text, and the coherence that the model enables in reading the particularities will be a key marker in knowing if the reading is productive. The particularities can provide feedback as we compare and contrast the text with the model and "allow the text to educate our literary sensibilities."[77] This allows the model to be adjusted in the iterative, abductive process.

We recognize that this reading is generated within our emic context, but we also believe that communication is possible and that we have an ethical obligation toward hearing the text as best we can. The final goal is a "thick interpretation" that can account for the words and actions of biblical characters by relating them to a network of cultural presuppositions and symbolic associations.[78] This follows Geertz's notion of "thick description" as a valuable enterprise in which the anthropologist attempts to describe and elaborate upon the webs of symbolic meaning that constitute a particular culture.[79]

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[75] We will demonstrate in chapter 2 in "rhetorical setting" how the text and the history of Israel make assuming a culture of honor and shame plausible.
[76] Ken Stone, "Gender and Homosexuality in Judges 19: Subject–Honor, Object–Shame?" *JSOT* 67 (1995): 62.
[77] Vanhoozer, *Is There Meaning in this Text?*, 323.
[78] Stone, *Sex, Honor and Power in the Deuteronomistic History*, 49.
[79] See especially Clifford Geertz, "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture," 3–30. Geertz builds off the difference of significance of a blink and a wink in exploring cultures for stratified layers of structures of meaning.

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2.6. Developments on the Mediterranean Model

Now that we've traced methodological developments from Malina through Wu, we return again to the contents of the model itself. Although Malina's appropriation of a cultural anthropology of honor and shame has proven durable, there have also been several helpful critiques and suggested refinements. We now will consider developments of the model in order to formulate, in Wu's terms, the best initial Imposed Etic.

2.6.1 The Public Court of Recognition

The first development comes from Zeba Crook's critique of the implicit individualism of the original Mediterranean Model and championing of the priority of the Public Court of Recognition (hereafter, PCR). Malina originally drew from Julian Pitt-Rivers' work to define honor as "a claim to worth with the social acknowledgement of that worth."[80] Crook notes that ascribed status is what an *individual* is born into, and acquired honor is what an *individual* accomplishes. Crook notes that, "Malina acknowledges the PCR, but it only acts to confirm *individual* claims to honor."[81] So Crook's first main point is that in defining honor, "We should, rather, start with the focus on the collectivistic and relentless PCR. When that is accomplished, the PCR becomes the first, last and only arbiter of honourable and shameful behavior."[82] Once

[80] Malina, *The New Testament World*, 27. In Pitt-Rivers' original essay: "Honour is the value of a person in his own eyes, but also in the eyes of his society. It is the estimation of his own worth, his *claim* to pride, but it is also the acknowledgement of that claim, his excellence recognized by society, his *right* to pride." Julian Pitt-Rivers, "Honour and Social Status" in Pitts-Rivers and Peristiany, *Honor and Shame*, 21.
[81] Zeba A. Crook, "Honor, Shame, and Social Status Revisited," *JBL* 128.3 (2009): 599.
[82] Crook, "Honor, Shame, and Social Status Revisited," 599.

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we start with the PCR as a reference point, a related point surfaces: at any point and time, there may be multiple PCRs active within a culture and within an individual.[83]

2.6.2 The Role of Theology in Honor and Shame

Pitts-Rivers and Peristiany followed up their 1966 volume on honor and shame in the Mediterranean with a 1992 volume on honor and grace in anthropology. In its introductory chapter, they recognize that by focusing on the social aspects of honor, they had "been blind to [honor's] intimate connection with the realm of the sacred."[84] In relation to this thesis, they especially note the role of sacred ritual in defining reality, guaranteeing social order, and conveying honor.[85] To this point, we may also add that the relationship between the sacred and honor not only applies to the cult but to the person of Yhwh within the Leviticus narrative. Stiebert notes with regard to theology proper: "Social science models . . . are ill-suited to

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[83] J. G. Peristiany and Julian Pitt-Rivers, "Introduction," in *Honor and Grace in Anthropology*, ed. J. G. Peristiany and Julian Pitt-Rivers, Cambridge Studies in Social and Cultural Anthropology 76 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 4. They note competing factions fighting for what is honorable. This aligns with Herzfeld's analysis that even with the Mediterranean region at the time of the original anthropological research, there were more than one set of values underlying honor operating at the same time. This can work out within the culture and within the individual:

Two PCRs in the same culture: imagine two families eating at the same restaurant discussing two fights at the same school. One family may laud their son for turning the other cheek in his fight, while at the next table a father lauds his son for knocking down a boy who insulted the family. Each son is honored relative to their family's different values.

Two PCRs can compete within the same person: The youth who turned the other cheek because of his family and church values of what is honorable may also perceive pressure from the PCR of a high school culture (fight!) that is in conflict with the PCR of his church (turn the other cheek!). He may realize that turning the other cheek will lower his honor in the eyes of his classmates but will be seen as honorable in the sight of his family and church.

The PCR may be divine: Finally, we transition to our next section by recognizing that the youth's resistance to his high school culture could be explained not just by what his family or church would say but based on his internalization of theology. Instead of the social nature of the church, it is possible that the youth has internalized "the fear of the Lord," which merits a discussion of how a type of Divine Court of Recognition (DCR) plays into honor and shame.

[84] Peristiany and Pitt-Rivers, "Introduction," 2.

[85] Peristiany and Pitt-Rivers, "Introduction," 2.

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accommodating the figure or representation of Yhwh. Interpretative literature embracing the value complex tends to ignore the issue of what Yhwh might be equated with in a social system constructed along the lines of honour and shame; or alternatively, fails to explore whether the notion of Yhwh deconstructs such social arrangements."[86] We may note the tension of whether Yhwh as a character has honor independently of his people and thus defines honor or whether his honor is entirely dependent on his reputation of the people, a point we will explore further in later chapters.

Within the framework we've developed this far, this does not so much modify our anthropologically based model, but it does sensitize us to a particular point at which the model might break. Since our methodology anticipates and invites such a break with the model, this is not problematic, and given that the text we are exploring is theocentric, we may expect it. Indeed, I will argue that the text can "educate our literary sensibilities"[87] by showing how honor is related to and undergirds the cult. We will be attentive to how the figure of Yhwh both "plays the honor game" using our anthropologically derived model and how Yhwh defines honor.

2.6.3 Synthesis of Initial Imposed Etic

We are now in position to synthesize a model to begin our exploration of Leviticus. This model is the Mediterranean Model reshaped following Crook's notion that the PCR "begin, end, and be the only arbiter" of honor[88] and is open to the role of theology. We may articulate the

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[86] Stiebert, *The Construction of Shame in the Hebrew Bible*, 173. Although, actors may also act outside of prescribed models of honor and shame, as is emphasized in "social anthropologies" in comparison to older structuralist conceptions of culture. See Zeba A. Crook, "Structure Versus Agency in Studies of the Biblical Social World: Engaging with Louise Lawrence," *JSNT* 29.3 (2007): 253.
[87] Vanhoozer, *Is There Meaning in this Text?*, 323.
[88] Crook, "Honor, Shame, and Social Status Revisited," 598.

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model this way:[89] Honor is conferred by a Public Court of Recognition that grants social status built on values such as lineage, class, wealth, and moral standing. Honor is largely attributed through the family, although the PCR also recognizes the achievement of heroic deeds. The PCR also attributes honor to those who live in alignment to community standards of morality and purity, which may be defined with reference to the sacred sphere.[90] In social transactions, honor becomes evident in claims to status and acknowledgment of that status by others. Honor is a limited good, and some social transactions sometimes take the form of a challenge and a response, where the limited supply of social status may be adjusted based on the PCR's adjudication of the results of the challenge. Honor may be signified through the concept of name, blood, and face. This model, adapted from Malina's Mediterranean model, will be the initial Imposed Etic against which we read Leviticus.

2.7 Rhetoric in Light of Social Context

With a social science methodology delineated, we now move to develop a rhetorical-critical methodology. It is helpful to recall that we are not interpreting culture but interpreting a text replete with cultural assumptions that both reflects the culture and attempts to shape it. Our SSA is an attempt to interface responsibly between the text and how it reflects the cultural *situation*. The situation is assessed so we can more sensitively make sense of the text's rhetorical *strategy* to speak to and shape the *situation*. This requires a rhetorical-critical methodology. To situate our approach, we will briefly recount the history of rhetorical criticism within biblical

[89] This paragraph is a summary of Malina, *The New Testament World*, 27-107, with the adjustment of foregrounding the PCR per the suggestion of Crook, "Honor, Shame, and Social Status Revisited," 597–610.
[90] Crook, "Honor, Shame, and Social Status Revisited," 610, suggests attributes to replace the notion of ascribed honor, per Malina.

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studies, starting with Muilenburg, then trace how a resurgent interest in rhetoric in the twentieth century in academia at large has been appropriated within biblical studies. This history will give background to the approach used in this thesis that will be synthesized with our SSA.

2.7.1 Muilenburg: Form Criticism and Beyond

In 1968 James Muilenburg delivered the SBL presidential address entitled "Form Criticism and Beyond" to give vision to what he called "rhetorical criticism."[91] As his title suggests, he began by appreciating the work of Hermann Gunkel and the significant benefit that form criticism offered as a complement to historical and source criticism. It is worth highlighting that Muilenburg appreciated how form criticism situated genres in their ANE *Sitz im Leben* and gave insight into how the text could be interpreted in terms of its cultural milieu.[92] But despite these advances, Muilenburg also noted "inadequacies . . . and discontent with the prevailing state of affairs, of a sense that the method has run its course."[93] In particular, focus on the *Gattung* tended to push interpreters to find meaning in the text only in terms of its generic features at the expense of the particularities of the text. He asserted that the task of the interpreter is not complete "until he has taken full account of the features which lie beyond the spectrum of genre."[94] His defining statement concluded: "What I am interested in, above all, is in understanding the nature of Hebrew literary composition, in exhibiting the structural patterns that are employed for the fashion of a literary unit, whether in poetry or in prose, and in discerning the many and various devices in which the predications are formulated and ordered into a unified

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[91] James Muilenburg, "Form Criticism and Beyond," *JBL* 88 (1969): 2–3.
[92] Muilenburg, "Form Criticism and Beyond," 2–3.
[93] Muilenburg, "Form Criticism and Beyond," 4.
[94] Muilenburg, "Form Criticism and Beyond," 7

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whole. *Such an enterprise I should describe as rhetoric and the methodology as rhetorical criticism*."[95] Muilenburg went on to articulate a method of delimiting the text, finding its structure and configuration of component parts, and noting the rhetorical devices used to unfold the writer's thought. While Muilenburg did not want to throw away the gains from form criticism in relating texts to broader ANE sources, he wanted to focus on the particularity of Hebrew literary composition. This is what is meant by his title, "Form Criticism and Beyond."

Muilenburg's speech served as a touchstone for increased attention to particularity within the text, ironically at the expense of the gains he cited in Gunkel. Much of rhetorical criticism that followed catalogued rhetorical devices and essentially became literary criticism with the loss of any interest in the role it played in the text's *Sitz im Leben*. Whereas Muilenburg lamented finding meaning only in terms of generic features, rhetorical criticism swung the pendulum to the other extreme, appreciating ". . . the text as a literary artifact whose effect can be explained solely by reference to the elegance of its artistry."[96] Understanding of persuasion in light of an audience was largely lost.

2.7.2 Twentieth-Century Rhetorical Criticism outside of Biblical Studies

Muilenburg's rhetorical criticism was situated inside the world of biblical studies as a reaction to the stagnation of form criticism. Outside the world of biblical studies, the classical categories of Greek rhetoric again drew interest throughout the twentieth century. Literary critics Mikhail Bakhtin and Kenneth Burke reexamined and reformulated Aristotle's categories of

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[95] Muilenburg, "Form Criticism and Beyond," 8, emphasis added.
[96] Dale Patrick and Allen Scult, *Rhetoric and Biblical Interpretation*, JSOTS 26 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2012), 17.

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rhetoric to develop comprehensive theories of communication. Each in his own way[97] found that rhetoric as an art of persuasion is not limited to particular types of public oration but is an inherent function of language use. While we recognize certain speeches in their context and content have an explicit goal of persuasion (what Kennedy calls Primary Rhetoric), communication in general involves selectivity and arrangement with a desire for a particular response in the listener (in Kennedy's terms, Secondary Rhetoric).[98] In our case, Leviticus may not have primary marks of a political stump speech, but its narrative elements are selected and arranged to persuade a listening audience to embrace and respond to a particular view of how the world is configured.

Understanding communication as rhetoric led to a variety of theoretical approaches to analyze communication through a rhetorical lens. Some were a renewal of Aristotelian categories, while others, such as the experiential approach of E. Black and the New Rhetoric by Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, expanded categories of Greek thought with increased focus on the audience's reception. The results are not monolithic, and categorizations vary. For example, one recent taxonomy presented the eclectic approaches in three categories: the dramaturgical approach (dramatistic, fantasy theme, and narrative approaches), the sociological approach

[97] Bakhtin despised rhetoric and came about his observations in a more roundabout way than Burke. Most helpful is Don Bialostosky, "Aristotle's *Rhetoric* and Bakhtin's Discourse Theory" in *A Companion to Rhetoric and Rhetorical Criticism*, ed. Walter Jost and Wendy Olmstead (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2004), 393–408. Also see John M. Murphy, "Mikhail Bakhtin and the Rhetorical Tradition," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 87.3 (2001): 259–77; Charles I. Schuster, "Mikhail Bakhtin as Rhetorical Theorist," *College English* 47.6 (Oct 1985): 594–607; Hebert Simons, "The Rhetorical Legacy of Kenneth Burke," in Jost and Olmstead, *A Companion to Rhetoric and Rhetorical Criticism*, 152–67.

[98] George A. Kennedy, *Classical Rhetoric and Its Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980), 5–6.

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(sociolinguistic, generic, social movement, and feminist approaches), and the postmodern approach (constructionist and deconstructionist approaches).[99]

While modern rhetorical theory is not monolithic, each approach generally is trying to form an organic link between the analysis of a text (or artifact more generally) and an understanding of the situation of the text. What characterizes classical and modern rhetorical criticism (as opposed to Muilenburg's version) is an awareness of the "external reference of discourse, the context both immediate and antecedent, the suasory potential in the situation that plays an 'organic part' of the analysis."[100] Meaning is not understood in terms of just literary artistry but in terms of the situation in which the rhetoric was generated.

Within biblical studies, Patrick and Scult note that it is unfortunate that Muilenburg's speech—rooted in an appreciation of Gunkel's form criticism that utilized the *Sitz im Leben*—did not build on form criticism but "moved beyond it" by abandoning it. They formulate an oft-quoted synthesis: "Rhetoric . . . must be broadened to its fullest range in the classical tradition, namely, as the means by which a text establishes and manages its relationship to its audience in order to achieve a particular effect. This, of course, includes stylistic/literary devices, but goes beyond style to encompass the whole range of linguistic instrumentalities by which a discourse constructs a particular relationship with an audience in order to communicate a message."[101] While some literary approaches are still categorized as rhetorical criticism, many biblical

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[99] Bernard L. Brock, Robert Lee Scott, James W. Chesebro, *Methods of Rhetorical Criticism: A Twentieth-Century Perspective*, 3rd ed. (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1989), 5–6.
[100] Donald C. Bryant, *Rhetorical Dimensions in Criticism* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1973), 35, quoted in John Robert Barker, *Disputed Temple: A Rhetorical Analysis of the Book of Haggai*, Emerging Scholars (Minneapolis, Augsburg Fortress, 2017), 14.
[101] Patrick and Scult, *Rhetoric and Biblical Interpretation*, 12.

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scholars now refer back to Patrick and Scult's work and seek to situate their analysis relative to the situation of the text.[102]

2.7.3 Rhetorical Method

Our goal is to understand the strategies at work in a text to persuade listeners of that text *in a particular setting* and towards some end. George Kennedy has outlined a common method for rhetorical criticism within biblical studies.[103]

1. *Determine the rhetorical unit to be studied*. In our case, we will be examining portions of the Holiness Legislation.

2. *Determine the rhetorical situation of the unit that caused the discourse to be communicated.* This includes identifying the complex of the speaker, the audience, the relationship between them, and the situation that called forth the discourse. As we will explore shortly, this is where our SSA will have a significant role to responsibly negotiate the relationship between text and the situation.

3. *Identify the rhetorical disposition or arrangement*. This step examines how the stylistic devices, including structure, arrange the content into an effective whole to persuade within the rhetorical situation identified in step 2.

4. The final step is to evaluate the effectiveness of the rhetorical strategy to address the exigence of the situation described in Step 2.

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[102] James W. Watts is a major interpreter of Leviticus and follows Patrick and Scult's reasoning and synthesizes his rhetorical analysis as "who is trying to persuade whom of what in these texts?" See James W. Watts, *Ritual and Rhetoric in Leviticus: From Sacrifice to Scripture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 35–6; idem, *Leviticus 1–10*, HCOT (Leuven: Peeters, 2013), 69–72.
[103] George Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation through Rhetorical Criticism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984), 33–38.

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Kennedy's framework is rather general and in practice is often adapted to the particular text being studied.[104] In our case, we will be utilizing SSA in step 2 of Kennedy's framework to establish the rhetorical situation (detailed in the following chapter) to help interface between the text and situation. In practice, steps 2 to 3 are not neat, linear steps. It is necessary to have some understanding of how the text works to have sufficient understanding to complete step 2. But the four steps are heuristically useful to understand the overall movement of understanding how a text persuades an audience in a particular setting. Thus, we blend social science approaches and rhetorical-critical approaches to form a socio-rhetorical methodology.

With this methodology in place, before we turn to examine the text, we need to overview our approach to Leviticus. The following sections will place Leviticus into its rhetorical context and overview macro-features of the text that will provide significant context to our detailed study in the following chapters.

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[104] For examples of tailoring Kennedy's general framework to a specific purpose, see Ryan Cook, "Prayers That Form Us," *JSOT* 39.4 (2015): 451–67; Katy Smith, "The Persuasive Intent of the Book of Leviticus" (PhD diss., University of Bristol, 2017), 10–17.

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Chapter 3

Rhetorical Situation and Structure of Leviticus

At the end of chapter 2, we concluded that rhetorical criticism would help make sense of a text's *strategy* to shape the audience within a particular *setting*. While our SSA will help provide cultural context, this chapter will begin by using Bitzer's theory of rhetorical situation to provide more background detail against which to hear the text. Once this is established, we will then examine the structure of Leviticus as a first step toward understanding the arrangement of the text's persuasive strategy. This examination of the structure will also raise questions that later chapters will seek to answer.

3.1 Lloyd Bitzer's Rhetorical Situation

In 1968 Lloyd Bitzer noticed that "no major theorist has treated rhetorical situation thoroughly as a distinct subject in rhetorical theory; many ignore it."[1] In a groundbreaking paper he theorized that rhetoric must be understood in terms of its rhetorical situation, which is comprised of 1) an exigence, 2) an audience, and 3) constraints.[2] The *exigence* is the problem with the status quo that the rhetor seeks to address. The rhetorical *audience* consists of "those persons who are capable of being influenced by discourse and of being mediators of change."[3] Finally, the rhetor must work within *constraints*, which control what can be said and how it can be said. The constraints are things such as "beliefs, attitudes, documents, facts, traditions,

[1] Lloyd Bitzer, "The Rhetorical Situation," *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 1.1 (1968): 2.
[2] Bitzer, "The Rhetorical Situation," 1–14.
[3] Bitzer, "The Rhetorical Situation," 8.

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images, interests, motives and the like"[4] that have the "power to constrain decision and action needed to modify the exigence."[5] These can limit what can be said but also may productively be "harnessed" to persuade the audience toward a particular end.[6]

Bitzer's theory of the rhetorical situation is "both widely accepted and deeply contested."[7] Critics accuse it of being too modern and too simple, as he rooted his approach in Aristotle's realism and John Dewey's pragmatism.[8] He sees the rhetor as *discovering* the problem present in the situation and persuading an audience toward a practical response. Against Bitzer, Vatz argues that the exigence is not an objective meaning found in events but is found in the perception of the rhetor and audience. In his view, exigence is not discovered; it is created.[9] Consigny offers a more balanced view that the rhetor is not free to "create his own exigencies at will" but finds exigence in a fittingness between the event (e.g., a funeral or graduation speech) and the rhetor's creative ability to discover and manage indeterminacies into a coherent structure for action.[10] Since the creativity is still rooted in the situation, the model itself continues to be a good starting point to relate the speech to the situation, which in turn can raise awareness of additional complexities. Despite the critiques and even minor accommodations to his critics by

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[4] Bitzer, "The Rhetorical Situation," 8. For example, rhetoric in arguments for and against socialism in America in the 1980s were constrained by the Cold War between the United States and USSR. This could be harnessed when arguing against socialism and would have to be navigated when arguing for socialism for fear of being perceived as aiding and abetting the enemy.
[5] Bitzer, "The Rhetorical Situation," 8.
[6] Keith Grant-Davie, "Rhetorical Situations and their Constituents," *Rhetoric Review* 15.2 (1997): 272–73.
[7] M. Garret and X. Xiao, "The Rhetorical Situation Revisited," *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 23.2 (1993): 30.
[8] Craig R. Smith and Scott Lybarger, "Bitzer's Model Reconstructed," *Communication Quarterly* 44.2 (1996): 197.
[9] Richard E. Vatz, "The Myth of the Rhetorical Situation," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 6.3 (1973): 154–61.
[10] Scott Consigny, "Rhetoric and Its Situations," *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 7.3 (1974): 178. Gorrell offers an excellent comparison of Bitzer, Vatz, and Consigny in D. Gorrell, "The Rhetorical Situation Again: Linked Components in a Venn Diagram," *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 30.4 (1997): 397–98.

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Bitzer in later years[11] (although not fundamentally reformulated), "the usefulness of the concept itself has not been questioned"[12] and his original model continues to find widespread use. We will therefore address the constraints, audience, and exigence, in turn, to articulate a fitting background for understanding the rhetoric of Leviticus in the following chapters.

3.2 Constraints

Two major constraints are drawn upon in the HL—the exodus and covenant. The exodus is referenced throughout the HL, particularly at key intermediate conclusions (as we will explore below in §5.1). The exodus is interpreted as the foundational event in which Yhwh possessed his people, separating them from the nations and becoming their God (19:36; 20:24, 26; 22:33; 25:38; 26:45).[13] Leviticus is situated in the "at-Sinai narrative"[14] (Exod 18–Num 10) following the exodus, which is drawn upon as a foundational event with ongoing implications that Leviticus articulates.

The other obvious constraint is the covenant relationship between Yhwh and Israel. The covenant with Abraham was the basis of the original exodus and future hope of new exodus after exile (cf. Lev 26:44–45). It is especially prominent in the blessings and curses of Leviticus 26 (e.g., vv. 9, 15, 25), being used seven times in the chapter within the form that traditionally concludes covenant discourse with persuasion toward covenant fidelity. Leviticus 26:12–13

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[11] Lloyd F. Bitzer, "Functional Communication: A Situational Perspective," in *Rhetoric in Transition: Studies in the Nature and Uses of Rhetoric*, ed. Eugene E. White (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1980), 21–38.
[12] Garret and Xiao, "The Rhetorical Situation Revisited," 30.
[13] See especially Crüsemann on the theological significance of the exodus undergirding the Holiness Legislation. Frank Crüsemann, *The Torah: Theology and Social History of Old Testament Law*, tr. Allen W. Mahnke (Edinburgh: T&T Clark: 1996[1992]), 301–2.
[14] John I. Lawlor, "The 'At-Sinai Narrative': Exodus 18–Numbers 10," *BBR* 21.1 (2011): 23–42.

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contains the covenant formula ("I will be your God; you will be my people"). Otto also argues that the covenant formula is bound up in the parenetic framework of the HL.[15] This framework begins with "I am Yhwh your God" (Lev 18:2) and continues in texts such as Leviticus 20:22–26, that emphasize that not only is Yhwh their God but that Israel is Yhwh's people. They are holy unto Yhwh and they are his slaves (Lev 25:55). This covenant binds Yhwh and Israel together with the expectations of kin (loyalty, redemption, etc.) in a suzerain-vassal relationship.[16] Following Olyan,[17] I will argue below that the covenant also binds their reputations and is the basis for appeal to honor in the HL.

3.3 Historical Setting and Audience

As we observed in chapter 2, both historical and social-science readings are attempting to read the text against a proposed background. Historical-critical methods emphasize unique actors and show a concern to elucidate cause and effect with concrete particulars (e.g., Milgrom arguing that HL is written in response to the critique of the prophets in the eighth century).[18] Social science criticism seeks to use a model with explicitly stated cultural assumptions to illuminate more broadly how a text works within cultural patterns of meaning. Ideally, both will work together synergistically. The reading in this thesis will foreground cultural detail through the use of the model but will not ignore historical background, to which we now turn.

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[15] Eckart Otto, "Innerbiblische Exegese im Heiligkeitsgesetz Leviticus 17–26," in *Levitkus als Buch*, ed. Heinz-Josef Fabry and Hans-Winfried Jüngling, BBB 119 (Berlin: Philo, 1999), 89.
[16] Frank M. Cross, "Kinship and Covenant in Ancient Israel," in *From Epic to Canon: Historical and Literature in Ancient Israel* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1998), 3–21.
[17] Saul M. Olyan, "Honor, Shame, and Covenant Relations in Ancient Israel and its Environment," *JBL* 115.2 (1996): 201–18.
[18] Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 3A (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), 27.

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The question of historical setting depends a great deal on the provenience of the text. Several extensive studies on the history of the HL have been written in recent years.[19] We therefore will briefly review major trends from this history as a backdrop for a discussion on how we understand the historical and cultural context.

From a critical perspective, Graf was the first to argue that the HL was a distinct document, based on his observations of its unique characteristics.[20] He and those who followed in the late nineteenth century[21] noted its paraenetic form, use of the exodus as a rationale for obedience, distinctive phrases such as the Divine Name Formula ("I am Yhwh"; "I am Yhwh your God") in high concentration, and a distinct concern for כרת. Wellhausen's influential work[22] argued this was a pre-priestly code that was a collection of independent laws haphazardly collected and integrated only later as a supplement edited into Priestly works that stand between P and D. However, during this period Baentsch hypothesized that there were preexisting groups of materials (e.g., 18–20, 21–22, etc.) that were later compiled.[23] This background led to

[19] Sun has the most in-depth review of literature from Graf until 1990. His work is outstanding in clarity and depth. Henry T. C. Sun, "An Investigation into the Compositional Integrity of the So-Called Holiness Code (Leviticus 17–26)" (PhD diss., The Claremont Graduate School,1990), 1–43. More recently, Rhyder, *Centralizing the Cult*, 22–43, covers similar ground more quickly but has a much richer discussion about scholarship in the last thirty years, the volume of which has increased since Sun wrote.
[20] Karl H. Graf, *Die geschichtlichen Bücher des Alten Testaments: Zwei historisch-kritische Untersuchungen* (Leipzig: T.O. Weigel, 1866).
[21] August Klostermann, "Ezechiel und das Heiligkeitsgesetz," 406–45; August Kayser, *Das vorexilische Buch der Urgeschichte Israels und seine Erweiterungen: Ein Beitrag zur Pentateuch-Kritik* (Strassburg: C. F. Schmidt, 1874).
[22] Julius Wellhausen, *Die Composition des Hexateuchs und der historischen Bücher des Alten Testaments*, 4th ed. (Berlin: DeGruyter, 1963).
[23] Bruno Baentsch, *Das Heiligkeits-Gesetz Lev. XVII–XXVI: Eine historisch-kritische Untersuchung* (Erfurt: H. Güther, 1893).

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increasingly complex theories of redaction throughout the twentieth century, although the main idea that H was pre-P material continued to be the dominant view.[24]

Three major trends have dominated recent scholarship. First, Elliger argued in 1959 that H must be dependent upon P and was shaped from the beginning as its literary supplement.[25] He argued that the HL depended on the narrative setting of P and many details, especially in Leviticus 21–22 (priestly vestments, veil), that were integral to the argument of the HL. Although ignored at first, Elliger's view now has broad consensus, although the particulars of its development in relation to P are contested.[26]

Second, in place of the idea that there are many pieces from many sources whose layers can be teased apart, the pendulum has swung to see the HL as a coherent literary structure.[27] Although not denying a developmental history, the emphasis is on the coherence and literary artistry of the text, which makes recovery of layers difficult.[28]

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[24] For example, Elliger proposed four layers, two primary and two supplementary. See Karl Elliger, *Leviticus*, HAT I, 4 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1966), 17–18. For the development of ideas through this period, see especially Sun, "Compositional Integrity of the So-Called Holiness Code," 4–14.

[25] For example, the detailed instructions for priests in Lev 21–22 clearly depend on P. Elliger argued this in a brief, short notice in 1959 and later expanded this view in his commentary. See Karl Elliger, "Heiligkeitsgesetz," in *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart: Handwörterbuch für Theologie und Religionswissenschaft*, ed. Kurt Galling (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1959), 3:175–76; idem., *Leviticus*, 14–20.

[26] While H is considered post-Pg, there is little consensus to the state of P at the time of H. See Rhyder, *Centralizing the Cult*, 24–28 for a thorough discussion of the many proposals.

[27] See J. Joosten, *People and Land in the Holiness Code: An Exegetical Study of the Ideational Framework of the Law in Leviticus 17–26*, VTSup 26 (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 6–9. A. Ruwe, *Heiligkeitsgesetz und Priesterschrift: Literaturgeschichtliche und rechtssystematiche Untersuchungen zu Leviticus 17,1–26,2*, FAT 26 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999), 3–4.

[28] Nihan is particularly prone to critique attempts at separating out layers with his characteristic conclusions of "without warrant" and "unnecessarily complicated." See Nihan, *From Priestly Torah*, 53, 186 n. 341, 202, 211 n. 439, 121 n. 55, 128 n. 91, 138, 144 n. 174, 212, 240 n. 588, 454, 564.

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Finally, starting with Cholewinski in 1976, scholars have argued that the HL is dependent not only on P but also on D.[29] In this view, HL uses priestly language to polemicize against P in order to integrate Deuteronomic reforms into a priestly caste.[30] This has developed in the European *redaktionsgeschictliche Schule*,[31] represented by Nihan, Rhyder, Otto, and others, who see H as postexilic material that seeks to mediate between P and D, drawing on preexilic texts and reshaping them to centralize power of the priesthood to organize life in Persian Yehud.[32] They read the HL as an attempt by the priests to consolidate power around the sanctuary in a time of postexilic struggle.

However, Knohl and Milgrom, building on Kaufmann, argued that the Holiness Legislation is part of a "Holiness School" involved in editorial activity across the Pentateuch to respond to eighth-century prophetic critiques to integrate piety and ethics into the Priestly scripture.[33] In their view H is not just one author but a school with ongoing influence, responsible for the final editing of the Pentateuch, which means some edits followed D in the postexilic period.

3.3.1 Evaluation of Trends in Interpretation

From this brief overview of major trends, several preliminary conclusions are apparent that have implications for this study. First, it's clear through the history of scholarship that H has

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[29] Alfred Cholewiński, *Das Heiligkeitsgesetz und Deuteronomium: Eine vergleichende Studie*, AnBib 66 (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1976).
[30] Eckart Otto, "Innerbiblische Exegese im Heiligkeitsgesetz Leviticus 17–26," 53.
[31] This is the description of Jeffrey Stackert, "The Holiness Legislation and its Pentateuchal Sources: Revision, Supplementation, and Replacement," 195.
[32] Rhyder, *Cult Centralization*, 21–42; Nihan, *From Priestly Torah*, 4–11; Otto, "Innerbiblische Exegese im Heiligkeitsgesetz Leviticus 17–26," 46–106.
[33] Knohl, *The Sanctuary of Silence*, 119–224; Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 17–22*, 1361–64.

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distinctive features, including the Divine Name Formula and paranetic frame rooted in the exodus. Any account of the social and rhetorical nature of the HL should account for these distinct features. Second, I am persuaded by recent scholarship that the text is not haphazardly constructed but has well-defined groups and was composed into a coherent whole that should be appreciated. Regarding these first two points, this thesis will, in part, argue that the use of the Divine Name Formula is part of the rhetorical strategy of the HL that comes into focus when considered in relationship to the Blaspheming Son's misuse of the Name and, because of the public nature of the exodus, has to do with Yhwh's honor. I will argue for coherence based on distinctive features of the HL in relationship to the unique Blaspheming Son narrative pericope.

With respect to HL's relationship with other law codes, I find it much easier to see how the HL depends upon P, but arguments on its mediating position with D, while plausible, seem as yet underdetermined. For the analysis I am attempting, this question can remain open. Finally, while the European redactional school and the Kaufmann school disagree about a relative dating of the HL to D, there is broad consensus that the text came into final form in postexilic Yehud with materials from preexilic times. I will use this as my point of departure for the historical setting of the text. In this context, two facets of life were prominent: life was organized as a temple community whose authority was contested, and in a related point, the honor (or reputation or name) of Yhwh was contested. I'll briefly review these in turn.

3.3.2 Life Organized Around the Temple

I will read Leviticus against a historical background of postexilic Yehud where the temple held a central, though contested, place in the life of those who had returned. This aligns in

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many ways with Weinberg's Citizen-Temple Community.[34] The city and temple were rebuilt under Persian authorization and given a degree of autonomy and authority over civic and economic life around it. The emphasis here is less on the ongoing influence of Persian authorization (as in the Persian Imperial Authorization theory posited by P. Frei[35]) but in the resultant state of relative autonomy of the temple and its status at the center of the community as a point of integration of religious, civic, and economic life (e.g., Ezra 7:16; 10:7–8).

Weinberg's articulation of the temple community had a strong economic emphasis.[36] However, Rhyder has more recently argued that temple influence in the economic realm should not be overstated.[37] It seems likely, based on archeological evidence, that the Persian administrative seat was in Ramat Raḥel, five kilometers away from Jerusalem, and that Persian practice precluded temples from being a treasury in other parts of its kingdom.[38] She concludes that "for the majority of the Persian period, the temple at Jerusalem was unlikely to have been in a position of economic strength, and probably lacked significant claims to manage the land or economic resources of the province."[39]

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[34] See especially J. P. Weinberg, *The Citizen-Temple Community*, JSOTSup 151 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992). Originally his idea was stated in J. P. Weinberg, "Die Agrarverhältnisse in der Bürger-Tempel-Gemeinde der Achämenidenzeit," in *Wirtschaftund Gesellshaft im Alten Voderasien*, ed. J. Harmatta and G. Komoroczy (Akadémiai Kiadó: Budapest, 1976), 443–46.

[35] Peter Frei, "Persian Imperial Authorization: A Summary," in *Persia and Torah: The Theory of Imperial Authorization of the Pentateuch*, ed. James W. Watts, SymS (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2001), 1–40.

[36] Weinberg was operating within the academic environment of the Soviet Union. Soviet Assyrologists Struve and Diakonoff were interested in pre-capitalist economies in the ANE and Soviet anthropological work on pre-Christian villages in the Caucauses studied by Bardavelidze that were centered around the temple. These led to the development of the concept of a "temple community" that a variety of precursors to Weinberg applied to a variety of contexts. Weinberg more fully articulated the temple community as a socio-economic unit. For a history of this development see Daniel L. S. Christopher's helpful introduction at the beginning of his translation of Weinberg's work in Weinberg, *The Citizen-Temple Community*, 10–16.

[37] Rhyder, *Centralizing the Cult*, 349–50.

[38] Rhyder, *Centralizing the Cult*, 349–50.

[39] Rhyder, *Centralizing the Cult*, 351.

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Not only was Jerusalem not an economic center after exile, life there was a struggle during the time of rebuilding and beyond. Lipschits argues, ". . . there is no archaeological evidence of settlement in Jerusalem from the time of the Babylonian destruction until the middle of the Persian Period. …Jerusalem was wretchedly poor not only in the period after the destruction but even at the height of the Persian Period."[40] The region suffered societal collapse that reduced its population by an estimated 70-95% from its Iron II period peek.[41] However, just because it was economically poor does not mean that the religious implications of the temple and the land should be discounted. Life in the ANE respected the role of deities to sustain life and influence events, so a temple to Yhwh would have implications to life throughout the land, as the HL attests. Knowles argues that, "seen through the practices of sacrifice, incense offering, pilgrimage and tithing, Jerusalem in the Persian period was a city connected to other communities. . . . [T]he city and its temple exhibited an influence over geography far beyond its own border."[42] However, when considering the breadth of its influence, one must recognize the existence of other Yahwistic temples at Mount Gerazim and in Elephantine and, of course, the ever-present danger of turning to other deities, whose temples were present throughout Yehud.[43]

Against a contested background, one way to approach Leviticus would be to understand how the HL centralizes power amidst contested claims. Rhyder draws on social theorists such as

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[40] O. Lipschits, *The Fall and Rise of Jerusalem: Judah under Babylonian Rule* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2005), 211. Further discussion can be seen in Peter Altmann, *Economics in Persian-Period Biblical Texts: Their Interactions with Economic Developments in the Persian Period and Earlier Biblical Traditions*, FAT 1/109 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016), 166.

[41] O. Lipschits, "Demographic Changes in Judah between the Seventh and the Fifth Centuries B.C.E.," in *Judah and Judeans in the Neo-Babylonian Period,* eds. O. Lipschits and J. Blenkinsopp (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2003), 323-76.

[42] M. Knowles, *Centrality Practiced: Jerusalem in the Religious Practice of Yehud and the Diaspora in the Persian Period*, Archaeology and Biblical Studies 16 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006), 124.

[43] Rhyder, *Centralizing the Cult*, 48–49.

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Foucault to argue that "centralization should be understood as the various processes which structure power relations and social organization so that authority, decision making and resources are concentrated rather than dispersed."[44] Related to this is Watts' study on priestly power. In Watts' rhetorical parlance, "who is trying to persuade whom of what?," the answer is the priesthood persuades the people in order to retain power and ensure their livelihood.[45]

While recent scholarship tends to articulate this situation in terms of priests' goal of centralizing power, this thesis will use a complementary lens of honor.[46] Honor is inherently communal and relational, and I will argue is explicitly referenced in the text in a way that coordinates relationships between Yhwh, priests, and people.

3.3.4 Honor in the Cult

There is evidence in the Hebrew Bible that honor was a live issue in postexilic Yehud. The most straightforward linkage between honor and the cult is in Malachi, where honor of fathers by sons is used to question the priests Israel about their honor of Yhwh.

> A son honors (כבד) his father, and a servant his master. If then I am a father, where is my honor (כבד)? And if I am a master, where is my fear? says Yhwh of hosts to you, O priests, who despise my name. (שם) But you say, "How have we despised your name?" (שם) By offering polluted food upon my altar. But you say, "How have we polluted you?" By saying that Yhwh's table may be despised. When you offer blind animals in sacrifice, is that not evil? And when you offer those that are lame or sick, is that not evil? Present that to your governor; will he accept you or show you favor? says Yhwh of hosts. (Mal 1:6–8; cf. Hag 2:14–19)

In contrast, Yhwh envisions his name being great among the nations and their offerings demonstrating appropriate honor, in contrast to Israel's present offerings that profane the name of Yhwh.

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[44] Rhyder, *Centralizing the Cult*, 357.
[45] Watts, *Ritual and Rhetoric in Leviticus*.
[46] Max Weber in his three-component theory of stratification recognizes there is a difference in political power of a party, economic power of wealth, and social status (honor). This was first articulated in Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*. See also in English, Weber, *From Max Weber*.

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> For from the rising of the sun to its setting my name (שם) will be great among the nations, and in every place incense will be offered to my name, and a pure offering. For my name (שם) will be great among the nations, says Yhwh of hosts. But you profane it when you say that the Yhwh's table is polluted, and its fruit, that is, its food may be despised. (Mal 1:11–12)

The consequence of this lack of honor is that blessings will become curses, and Yhwh will shame his people (as I will argue Lev 26 does):

> If you will not listen, **if you will not take it to heart to give honor** (כבד) **to my name** (שם), says Yhwh of hosts, then I will send the curse upon you and **I will curse your blessings**. Indeed, I have already cursed them, because you do not lay it to heart. Behold, I will rebuke your offspring, and **spread dung on your faces, the dung of your offerings**, and you shall be taken away with it. (Mal 2:2–3, emphasis added)

In sum, Malachi is a postexilic text that speaks to three issues we will also address in the HL. First, honor was related to the cult functioning well. Second, while honor is expressed in the well-understood necessity of honor of parents to their children, it is also expressed in terms of Yhwh's name, which will be great among the nations. And finally, not honoring that name leads to a *talionic* response where blessings will be cursed.

Each of these points can be found in other postexilic literature as well. In Haggai, Yhwh chastises Israel for paneling their own homes but neglecting the temple. By dishonoring Yhwh, their efforts are futile and blessing turns to want.

> Thus says Yhwh of hosts: Consider your ways. Go up to the hills and bring wood and build the house, that I may take pleasure in it and that I may be glorified (כבד), says Yhwh. You looked for much, and behold, it came to little. And when you brought it home, I blew it away. Why? declares Yhwh of hosts. Because of my house that lies in ruins, while each of you busies himself with his own house. Therefore the heavens above you have withheld the dew, and the earth has withheld its produce. (Hag 1:7–10)

Yhwh's name as deserving of honor is also the subject of Ezekiel's discourse about his name among the nations. In particular, categories of holy and profane are attached to the name of Yhwh and his reputation among the nations. Through disobedience Israel profaned Yhwh's name *in the eyes of the nations*. And Yhwh in judgment and salvation will act to vindicate the holiness of his name *before their eyes* (Ezek 36:16–23; 38:16, 23; 39:7, 27).[47] Discerning the relationship

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[47] See especially Karl-Friedrich Pohlmann, *Das Buch des Propheten Hesekiel: Kapitel 20–48*, ATD 22/2 (Göttingen: Vandnhoeck & Ruprect, 2001), 483–86.

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between Ezekiel and the Holiness Legislation is difficult, but clearly there is a relationship. "The quality, frequency, and distribution of [common locutions] are such that most agree they can be explained only by a model of literary dependence—either by one text borrowing from the other or by mutual dependence during a process of textual formation."[48] I will argue more carefully below in chapter 5 that while Ezekiel is concerned about Yhwh's name among the nations, the HL is concerned about the sanctity of Yhwh's name among Israel, which in both cases represents a concern for his reputation or honor in postexilic Yehud.

In Chronicles, the temple is the place where Yhwh's *name* is to be displayed as great over and against all others. In contrast to Kings, where Solomon explains to Hiram that the temple is being constructed because Israel is no longer under military threat (1 Kgs 5:17-19), Chronicles offers a different rationale.[49] Solomon explains to Hiram in 2 Chronicles 2 that he is building a temple for the name of the name of Yhwh, because he is greater than all gods (2:5), showing again that Yhwh's name, that is, status, is a live issue in post-exilic Yehud.

Finally, the theme of honor in a cultic context, with the same *talion* expressed in terms of honor, is found in the DtrH in the ark narrative of 1 Samuel 4–7, which is a story of exile and return built on the keyword כבד. Previously, Yhwh had pronounced judgment on Eli and his sons because Eli honored (כבד) his sons above Yhwh in letting them take the fat portions intended for

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[48] Michael A. Lyons, "How Have We Changed? Older and Newer Arguments about the Relationship between Ezekiel and the Holiness Code," in *The Formation of the Pentateuch: Bridging the Academic Cultures of Europe, Israel, and North America*, ed. Bernard M. Levinson et al., FAT 1/111 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016), 1055.

In fact, the prevailing consensus is that models of simple literary dependence are insufficient and that there is a mutual literary dependence. See H. Sun "Holiness Code," *ABD* 3:256. Christophe Nihan, "Ezekiel and the Holiness Legislation—A Plea for Nonlinear Models," in Levinson et al., *The Formation of the Pentateuch*, 1015–40; W. Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 2: A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel Chapters 1–24*, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983), 52.

[49] Matthew Lynch, *Monotheism and Institutions in the Book of Chronicles: Temple, Priesthood, and Kingship in Post-Exilic Perspective* FAT 2/64 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), 106-7.

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Yhwh (2:29). Yhwh continues with a proverbial statement that precedes the judgment he is about to announce: "for those who honor (כבד) me I will honor (כבד), and those who despise me shall be lightly esteemed (קלל)" (2:30). Because Eli and his sons did not honor Yhwh, they experience death and the loss of status.

3.3.5 Summary of Cultural and Historical Context

In determining provenience, I noted broad consensus that the HL came to final form in postexilic Yehud and outlined historical issues during this period: the temple was a central organizing hub, this was a period of struggle, and the temple occupied a central though contested place in the life of postexilic Yehud. Along with establishing this background, our accent on honor allowed us to note that in several other postexilic texts, honor of Yhwh's name was a key issue that presents one way to view the relationship between Yhwh and Israel (and its priests) during a contested time. Thus, the detail of cultural background we attempt through the SSA complements the postexilic historical setting we assume. This fulfills our goal of allowing cultural and historical contexts to work in harmony, and indeed, our awareness of cultural issues surfaced the issue in other texts of the period.

3.4 Exigence

From this brief survey, we see that Yhwh's honor in exile has a key role to play in the function of the cult. Indeed, no cult can function if its deity is treated lightly, and cult's influence outside its walls depends on Yhwh's name, a sanctum that can be profaned in relationship to the

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people's actions.[50] The rhetor must address the honor of Yhwh, the role of Israel's obedience in relationship to Yhwh, and the coupled reputations of the people, priests, and Deity. I will argue below that the rhetor draws upon a covenant understanding with Yhwh and a shared history of exodus from Egypt that binds Israel and Yhwh relationally and reputationally. In the context of a contested cult and low reputation of Yhwh, the rhetor uses the framework of Israel's exodus and life centered around the tabernacle to manage indeterminacies into a coherent structure for action.[51] He persuades listeners toward a vision of life of a people possessed by/covenanted with Yhwh. If they will live out their identity as Yhwh's possession and honor his holy name, they themselves will gain a flourishing, dignified life on the land. The call to honor Yhwh (Lev 18–24) will, in turn, bring honor to the people (Lev 25–26). When Israel honors Yhwh, they are honored, and when they dishonor Yhwh they will be shamed, although Yhwh will remain faithful to this relationship in the eyes of the nations.

3.5. The Structure of Leviticus

We now transition from the rhetorical situation of the Holiness Legislation to initial consideration of the structure of both the HL and Leviticus as a whole.[52] Milgrom's dictum that

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[50] S. Tamer Kamionkowski, "Leviticus 24,10–23 in Light of H's Concept of Holiness," in Sarah Schectman and Joel N. Baden, *The Strata of the Priestly Writings*, 74–75. cf. Lev 20:3.

[51] Consigney, "Rhetoric and Its Situations," 178.

[52] The concept of Leviticus as a book has been capably defended by Rendtorff and Nihan. Rendtorff mentions that both the Greek ("the five-volume book") and Hebrew ("the five books of Torah"), along with the earliest midrashim, consider Leviticus to be an individual book within a larger composition. At the same time, it is connected within the Pentateuch, as Levi 1:1 picks up with a waw-consecutive that continues where Exod 40 leaves off and is part of a larger "at-Sinai narrative."

Nihan adds to the conversation by noting the formal markers that distinguish Leviticus and how it is centrally situated between Genesis and Deuteronomy and also Exodus and Numbers. Both Leviticus and Numbers have Yhwh speaking to Moses and conclude by noting commandments given at a specific geographical location (at Sinai: Lev 27:34; plains of Moab: Num 36:13). But while Leviticus occurs from the tent of meeting at Mount Sinai (Lev 1:1; 27;34), Numbers is given in the tent of meeting in the wilderness of Sinai (Num 1:1). Numbers also moves

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"structure is theology"[53] indicates that structural features are meaningful for interpreting how an author intends to guide listeners in making sense of the text. However, the vast number of approaches to the structure of Leviticus signals an abundance of structural features, and choice of emphasis among them yields different understandings of how the text works together as a whole.[54] Harper draws an appropriate caution from Shead, who comments on Jeremiah:

> The first criterion for thinking about structure is caution. It is important to remember that few biblical texts have been written so tightly that one and only one structure can be meaningfully assigned them. . . . It is also evident that the book has a history of growth and development, from which older structural schemes remain, sometimes incorporated into the structural framework of the final product and sometimes superseded by it. In the end, the purpose of structural analysis is to throw light on the shape and purpose of the narrative, and *the most convincing arguments will be cumulative ones, in which diverse features of the text are seen to point in the same direction*.[55]

Heeding Shead's call, I will look for cumulative arguments by working through different approaches to the structure, noting limitations and gains, and developing a coherent proposal that

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forward in organizing the camp in preparation for movement from Sinai and preparation for holy war. Nihan draws on Blum's conclusion that the material of Num 1–10 more closely parallels Exod 19–40. Exodus deals with setting up the tabernacle, Numbers deals with tearing it down to move, and Leviticus has Yhwh speaking from it. And moving out one step from the center, there are chronological notices regarding the arrival and departure from Sinai (Exod 19:1; Num 10:12), and one step beyond that, Exodus and Numbers contain many similarities in wilderness narratives and the language of murmuring, so that Num 1–10 complements Exod 19–40 rather than Leviticus. Similarly, Genesis and Deuteronomy have distinctive beginnings and end with the blessing of the twelve tribes at the death and burial of the main character (Jacob, Gen 49–50; and Moses, Deut 33–34). Finally, from a narrative point of view, Leviticus provides a fitting summary of Genesis and Exodus, and Leviticus provides a fitting introduction to Numbers and Deuteronomy. Thus, Leviticus is a book that is attached both to a larger Sinai narrative and the Pentateuchal narrative in general but also has a distinctive beginning and ending and is editorially situated at the center of the Pentateuch as a unique book. See Rolf Rendtorff, "Is It Possible to Read Leviticus as a Separate Book?," in *Reading Leviticus: A Conversation with Mary Douglas*, ed. John F.A. Sawyer (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 22–35. See also, Nihan, *From Priestly Torah*, 69–72.

[53] Milgrom, *Leviticus 17–22*, 1322.

[54] See G. Geoffry Harper, "The Rhetorical Function of Allusion to Genesis 1–3 in the Book of Leviticus" (PhD Diss, Australian College of Theology, 2016), 123–126; and Didier Luciani, *Sainteté et Pardon. Vol. 1, Structure littérarire du Lévitique* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2005), 209-21, for an overview of the wide-ranging number of approaches to the structure of the book.

[55] See Andrew G. Shead, *A Mouth Full of Fire: The Word of God in the Words of Jeremiah*, NSBT 29 (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2012), 67, emphasis added. This argument is taken up by Harper, "Rhetorical Function of Allusion," 125–26, in specific relation to Leviticus.

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gives relative weight to each. This introduction to structure will also raise questions that the following chapters will answer.

3.6 Organization by Content

The traditional method of organizing Leviticus is to delineate sections based on coherent content.[56] For example, Leviticus 1–7 focuses on sacrifices, Leviticus 8–10 narrates the inauguration of the cult followed by failure, and Leviticus 11–15 is dominated by a discussion of טמא and טהר. In general, this lens has led to consensus on the first half of the book (1–7; 8–10; 11–15; 16) but not for the second half, where a wider variety of material is woven together more creatively. It is not uncommon to have outlines of 1–7, 8-10, 11–15/16, and 17–26,[57] where the diversity of material in 17–26 is distilled into the theme of holiness. However, there are criteria beyond content coherence that can help make sense of the structure.

3.7 Literary Markers

More recently, formal literary markers have risen in significance in evaluating structure. Wilfred Warning provides a notable example by highlighting how divine speech formulae ("And Yhwh said to Moses . . .") and various summary statements (e.g., 23:44) help indicate an overarching structure. Warning divides the book up into thirty-seven divine speeches,[58] which has the advantage of placing Leviticus in a narrative frame in continuity with Exodus/Numbers and highlights the significance of Leviticus 16 as the center of Leviticus. It is unfortunate that

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[56] See for example Baruch A. Levine, *The JPS Commentary: Leviticus* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989), xvi–xvii.
[57] Hartley, Ellinger, Budd, Wenham and others have this basic form, sometimes including 16 with 11–15 and sometimes distinguishing it.
[58] W. Warning, *Literary Artistry in Leviticus*, BibInt 36 (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 37–45.

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Warning weights each speech equally, which tends to flatten Leviticus and miss how other features differentiate some divine speech formulae as more significant than others.[59] Warning also points out the abundance and significance of keyword repetitions, chiastic structures, numerological structures, and various envelope structures at the micro and macro levels within Leviticus.[60] He alliteratively concludes that there are a "plethora of profound and (probably) purposeful patterns present on the micro- and macrostructural levels of the extant text."[61] These features can help make sense of substructures in Leviticus 17–26, such as chapters 21–22. Leviticus 21–22 has coherent content on the sanctity of priests and sacrifices that differentiates it from the holiness of people and land in Leviticus 18–20 and the sanctity of time in Leviticus 23–25. This is complemented by four paragraphs that begin with divine speech formulae (21:1, 16; 22:1, 17) and conclude with some form of "I am Yhwh" (21:15, 23; 22:16, 30).

Warning's study of formal features also highlights the use of chiastic structures throughout Leviticus, which helps one see that Leviticus 18 and 20 paint a negative picture of avoiding sexual immorality and idolatry that brackets the positive vision of Leviticus 19 of being holy as Yhwh is holy. This chiastic structure may also be seen in Leviticus 23 and 25. Leviticus 23 introduces weekly and annual Sabbaths, which is matched by Leviticus 25 and its discussion of septennial and jubilee Sabbaths. The complex relationship these chapters have with Leviticus 24 will be discussed further below.

Inclusions can help delimit larger sections of text as well. Ruwe and Nihan note that Leviticus 22:17–33 not only provides a fitting conclusion to Leviticus 21–22 but also forms an

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[59] E.g., 11:1 at the head of Lev 11–15 vs. Lev 22:26. See Nihan, *From Priestly Torah*, 89.
[60] Warning, *Literary Artistry in Leviticus*, 20–34.
[61] Warning, *Literary Artistry in Leviticus*, 177.

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inclusion with Leviticus 17 that forms 17–22 into a larger unit within the HL.[62] Leviticus 17:1–2a and 22:17–18a share a similar divine address formula that includes not just the priests but all the people (17:1–2a; 22:17–18a). And Leviticus 22:17–30 repeats many of the themes developed in Leviticus 17. Finally, Nihan notes that the casuistic introduction of Leviticus 22:18 is characteristic of Leviticus 17 (see 17:3, 8, 10).[63]

The first two criteria of coherent content and structural markers can be complementary and mutually reinforcing. For example, Leviticus 1–7, besides having coherent content, is marked by a distinctive introduction and conclusion (1:1–2; 7:37–38). However, the number and variety of literary devices employed in Leviticus force interpreters to make decisions about their relative weight. Having to weigh competing literary markers is especially apparent when considering Leviticus 17 and 25, to which we now turn.

3.8 Distinction and Connection: Leviticus 17 and 25

Whether Leviticus 17 is a part of the HL has been a question since the HL was identified as a unique composition in critical scholarship. Graf excluded it but Wellhausen argued for it.[64] On one hand Leviticus 17 is linked strongly with Leviticus 16, with parallel introductions addressing Moses and Aaron (16:1; 17:1), an interest in blood, and its manipulation for כפר.[65] Rhyder further notes that there is a strong wilderness theme in each that largely goes missing in Leviticus 18–26,[66] and both Leviticus 16 and 17 allude to creatures of the wilderness ("Azazel"

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[62] Nihan, *From Priestly Torah*, 98. Ruwe, *Heiligkeitsgesetz*, 82–83.
[63] Nihan, *From Priestly Torah*, 98.
[64] J. Wellhausen, *Die Composition,* 149–52.
[65] E. Zenger, "Das Buch Levitikus als Teiltext der Tora/des Pentateuch: Eine synchrone Lektüre mit kanonischer Perspektive," in Fabry, *Levitikus als Buch*, 64–65.
[66] Rhyder, *Centralizing the Cult*, 150–51.

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in 16:8, 10, 23 and "wild goat demons" in 17:7). Each chapter has an interest in the גר that live among the people (16:29; 17:15). Further, Leviticus 17 is missing language of holiness and the characteristic phrase "I am Yhwh," which seems to move it away from chapters 18–26.[67] However, we've noted above how Leviticus 17 forms an inclusion with Leviticus 22:17–33. Also, if Leviticus 17 begins the HL, the Covenant Code, Deuteronomic Code, and HL would all begin with sacrifice (Exod 20:24–26; Deut 12) and conclude with blessings and curses (Exod 23:20–33; Deut 28).[68] Milgrom also notes that the language and style of Leviticus 17, despite lacking references to holiness and "I am Yhwh," is actually much closer to the HL than Leviticus 1–16. God addresses Israel in the first person, uses motivational clauses, and declares penalties for non-observance.[69] Milgrom appropriately describes chapter 17 as a bridge that provides an effective transition between the cult (Lev 1–16) and community (Lev 17–26). The balance of competing features bears this out.

Leviticus 25 also has competing features but in a slightly different way. As we noted above, Wagner highlights the natural continuity from the weekly Sabbath and annual festivals in Leviticus 23 to the septennial Sabbath year in the land and Jubilee after forty-nine years in Leviticus 25.[70] This seems to make Leviticus 23–25 like the chiastic structure in 18–20. This is further strengthened by a possible shift in content from the Sabbath in Leviticus 25 to blessings/curses in Leviticus 26. Watts draws on a variety of ANE sources to show that stories

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[67] Milgrom, *Leviticus 17–22*, 1450.
[68] This was noted by Wellhausen. See Milgrom, *Leviticus 17–22*, 1450–51; Otto, "Innerbiblische Exegese in Heiligkeitsgesentz Levitikus 17–26," 142. For a helpful comparison of the views of Milgrom and Otto on this issue, see Esias E. Meyer, "Leviticus 17, Where P, H, and D Meet: Priorities and Presuppositions of Jacob Milgrom and Eckart Otto," in *Current Issues in Priestly and Related Literature: The Legacy of Jacob Milgrom and Beyond*, ed. Roy G. Gane and Ada Taggar-Cohen, RBS 82 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2015), 349–67.
[69] Milgrom, *Leviticus 17–22*, 1450.
[70] Volker Wagner, "Zur Existenz des sogenannten 'Heiligkeitsgesetzes,'" *ZAW* 86 (1974): 307–16.

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and lists are often concluded with sanctions, or blessings and curses,[71] which indicates that there is a genre switch from Leviticus 25 to 26.

However, Milgrom argues that Leviticus 25–26 is part of the same speech denoted by the Divine Speech Formula ("and Yhwh said to Moses") that begins major sections through the HL (e.g. 18:1; 21:1; 23:1).[72] There is no such marker at the beginning of 26:1 to denote the start of a new section. Further there is a unique inclusion that begins in Leviticus 25:1 and concludes in Leviticus 26:46 that identifies that this revelation occurred בהר סיני and binds Leviticus 25–26 together. Further, both have a strong theme of deliverance from Egypt throughout, and the sabbatical year introduced in Leviticus 25:1–7 becomes a key element of exile and the time needed before return (26:34–35, 43a). Milgrom concludes that the chapters together have a single theme: "Israel's violation of YHWH's commandments, especially of the sabbatical, leads inexorably to its exile."[73] But he follows this summary with additional comments about the role of redemption in linking Leviticus 25, 26, and even extending into 27.[74] Chapter 25 thus bridges from the Sabbath themes of Leviticus 25 but, as we will argue below in §6.2, introduces life as a temple estate that provides the backdrop to the blessings and curses.

Thus far in our examination of the HL, we've noted that coherent content and divine address markers distinguish Leviticus 21–22 as a unit, Leviticus 18–20 forms a chiastic structure, Leviticus 17 and 22 have an inclusion, and Leviticus 17 and 25 serve as bridges into and out of

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[71] James W. Watts, "Rhetorical Strategy in the Composition of the Pentateuch," *JSOT* 68 (1995): 3–22.
[72] Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 23–27: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 3C, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 2274–75. See also Chavel, *Oracular Law,* 92.
[73] Milgrom, *Leviticus 23–27*, 2275
[74] Milgrom, *Leviticus 23–27*, 2275. Christopher R. Smith, "The Literary Structure of Leviticus" *JSOT* 70 (1996): 29–31.

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the HL. If we assume that Leviticus 27 is a later coda, this suggests the following preliminary structure.

1–7 8–10 11–15 16 – {[17 18–20 21–22] 23–24 25–26 / 27}

However, one other factor to consider in the role of Leviticus 25 is the role of the narrative pericope that precedes it, which provides additional insight as to whether Leviticus 25 is truly a balanced bridge or belongs more properly with Leviticus 26.

3.9 Narrative Pericopes within Narrated Instruction

One final area to explore in the structure of Leviticus, and crucial to this thesis, are the two narrative pericopes that occur within the broader narrated instruction. By broader narrative, we recall that the giving of instruction is presented through the repetitious phrase "and Yhwh said to Moses" that forms the narrative framework of the book as a whole. However, within this broad narrative framework of instruction exist two distinct narrative pericopes (8–10; 24:10–23) marked by a spike in density of *wayyiqtol* verbs that form the backbone of Hebrew narrative. The two narrative pericopes are of unequal length, but within Leviticus 8–10, the Nadab and Abihu incident (Lev 10) has remarkable similarities to the Blaspheming Son incident in 24:10–23, as we will examine more carefully below. Another interesting feature worth exploring is that while the Nadab and Abihu incident is well woven into Leviticus 8–10 (as we will explore below in §3.11) and provides a key link to Leviticus 11–15 and 16, the Blaspheming Son story is famously noted as "not belonging" and "poorly placed."[75]

[75] Jonathan Vroom, "Recasting *Mispâtîm*: Legal Innovation in Leviticus 24:10–23," *JBL* 131.1 (2012): 28–29. See also, Milgrom, *Leviticus 17–22*, 2081–82. Ibn Ezra hypothesized that the blasphemy of Lev 24:10–23 occurred chronologically near Moses' instruction of Lev 24:1–10; however, this does not take into account the selectivity and arrangement inherent in narrative and the chronological displacement that may result.

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Attention to these pericopes is merited for several reasons. From a historical-critical perspective, the narratives of Nadab and Abihu and the Blaspheming Son are considered late[76] and therefore may be especially insightful for understanding how the final form of Leviticus is organized as a whole. Watts also notes that law codes demand to be read aloud (Deut 31:9–11) and Hebrew narratives portray this act (e.g., Exod 24:3–7; Josh 8:34–35; 2 Kgs 22–23; 2 Chr 34:30–31; Neh 8–9).[77] Orality must be considered in distinguishing fine points of structure to major features that would be noticeable to hearers.[78] Here, pride of place must be given to the change of genre from instruction (or narrated instruction) to the narrative pericopes. Cognitive science backs our common experience of fading attention in a sermon or lecture but rousing attention when a story is told.[79] Similarly, hours later the sermon is lost, but the memory of the story told remains.[80] Given their significant role in the formation of the text and rhetorical significance of narrative pericopes within a broader discourse, additional attention must be given to these texts.

Christian Smith provides a helpful starting place to engage the role of these pericopes in the structure of Leviticus. He argues that the alternation between instruction and narrative is the key to the highest level of organization in Leviticus. He suggests Leviticus 8–10, 16, and 24:10–23 are three narratives (bolded in the next line), each surrounded by instruction that yield a total

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[76] Nihan, *From Priestly Torah*, 511, 574-577.
[77] Watts, "Rhetorical Strategy in the Composition of the Pentateuch," 3.
[78] Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, 15–16. See also idem, "Performing the Torah: The Rhetorical Function of the Pentateuch in the Second Temple Period" (paper presented at SBL Performance Criticism of Biblical and Other Ancient Texts Section, Boston, MA, Nov 23, 2008).
[79] See G. H. and M. C. Clark, "Narrative Stories as Mediators for Serial Learning," *Psychonomic Science* 14 (1969): 181–82; David Herman, "Storytelling and the Sciences of Mind: Cognitive Narratology, Discursive Psychology, and Narratives in Face-to-Face Interaction," *Narrative* 15.3 (2007): 306–34.
[80] Arthur C. Graesser et. al., "Constructing Inferences during Narrative Text Comprehension," *Psychological Review* 101.3 (1994): 371.

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of seven sections in Leviticus (1–7; **8–10**; 11–15; **16**; 17–24:9; **24:10–23**; 25–27).[81] He further argues that the narrative sections all allude to one another, show the centrality of the Day of Atonement, and structure discourses on sacrifice (1–7), cleanness (11–15), holiness (17–23:9), and redemption (25–27).[82]

This proposal is very "clean," and while it helpfully highlights relationships between the pericopes, it has several notable weaknesses. First, Leviticus 16 is more narrated instruction like the rest of Leviticus than the narrative pericope of Leviticus 24:10–23. Second, the relationship between Leviticus 16 and 24:10–23 that Smith alleges is weak. And finally, while the relationship of Nadab and Abihu in Leviticus 10 to the Blaspheming Son in Leviticus 24:10–23 is clear, the size of the narrative in 8–10 is greater than 24:10–23 and must be addressed. We will examine each of these in turn.

First, because Smith does not emphasize that Leviticus is framed as a narrative ("and Yhwh said to Moses"),[83] perhaps he misses the need to clarify how Leviticus 16 is given in a narrative frame that is closer to his law category than the pericope of Leviticus 24:10–23. In his defense, the unique introduction of 16:1–2 and conclusion in 16:34 do form a kind of narrative frame that goes beyond the typical divine speech formula and ties directly to the narrative of Leviticus 8–10. The divine speech formula of 16:1 is followed by two phrases that locate the instruction for the Day of Atonement in relationship to the narrative of Nadab and Abihu. Leviticus 16:34b has a narrative conclusion of compliance by Aaron to the instruction, which picks back up the compliance theme of Leviticus 8–9 ("as Yhwh commanded"), that Nadab and

[81] Smith, "The Literary Structure of Leviticus," 23.
[82] Smith, "The Literary Structure of Leviticus," 29–30.
[83] Smith, "The Literary Structure of Leviticus," 21, recognizes this formula as a literary marker but not its significance as framing Leviticus as a narrative.

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Abihu broke in 10:1 (“which he did not command”). Therefore, in a sense, the unique introduction of 16:1 and conclusion provide a kind of narrative frame to the narration of instruction that does differentiate it from other narrated sections of law. Nevertheless, the majority of Leviticus 16 reads more like instruction in other parts of Leviticus that also have a brief narrative frame (“and Yhwh said to Moses”) followed by instruction. Therefore Leviticus 16 must be distinguished from the narratives of Leviticus 10 and 24.

Of more concern is how Smith handles Leviticus 24:10–23 in relationship to its immediate context as well as his suggested connections to Leviticus 16. The main character of the pericope is a half-Egyptian son whose blasphemy offers the occasion for legislation that makes clear that holiness must concern both native and sojourner. Smith sees this as the key connection to Leviticus 16, which has one phrase that mentions native and sojourner (16:29d). However, this phrase is exceedingly brief in Leviticus 16 and also appears throughout the HL (Lev 17:8, 10, 12–13; 18:26; 20:2), making this connection weak. Also, while Smith considers the connections between 24:10–23 with the Nadab and Abihu story in Leviticus 10 he does not consider the differences of comparing the larger narrative of Leviticus 8–10, of which Nadab and Abihu is one part, with the brief narrative of 24:10–23.

With respect to its immediate context, Smith sees Leviticus 24:10–23 as a distinct thematic break. He interacts with Wagner’s analysis that Sabbath is a key theme before and after Leviticus 24:10–23 but argues that Sabbaths before Leviticus 24 are holy and belong to Leviticus 17–23:9, while after Leviticus 24:10–23, holiness language goes missing, suggesting a new section. Here he overlooks that the Jubilee is to be holy (Lev 25:12). He then argues that in place of holiness language, redemption language appears to unite 25–27. Thus, Smith sees Leviticus 24:10–23 as a boundary transition and does not integrate well with the surrounding material.

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3.10 Mary Douglas

Smith's proposal about the narrative dividing the text into sections has some similarities to Mary Douglas' proposal.[84] Douglas called Leviticus 10 and 24 "parables about trespass on forbidden ground,"[85] which, like Smith, serve as screens that divide Leviticus into parts. However, her schema has three parts, which she connected to the three sections of the tabernacle in an elaborate metaphor. As the book is read, each section brings you closer to the conclusion of 25–27, centered on 26, which is like the covenantal text kept in the Ark of the Covenant.[86] While this is very creative, ironically her focus on the narrative pericopes transforms the Leviticus narrative into a metaphor that suffers significantly. First, within the holy of holies (Lev 25–27) there is no mention of the inner sancta. In fact, the one time the priest enters the inner sancta is in Leviticus 16, which in her scheme is in the holy place. And while Douglas' scheme moves inward progressively to the holy of holies, Leviticus seems to start with the cult and then move out in the Holiness Code to apply holiness in the land. The narrative "screens" similarly move in the opposite direction of her suggestion, with the first story of Nadab and Abihu being a likely encroachment in the sancta and the second screen (supposedly the inner screen) occurring within the camp. While Leviticus 1–16 clearly has a movement toward the sancta, 18–20 and 25 clearly move to concerns in the land. On the other hand, Douglas' proposal does capture some movement in the second half of Leviticus inward: 18–20 move to the land, 21–22 to the priesthood and sacrifices, and 23–24:9 deal with Israel in worship. If 23–24:9 is parallel to

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[84] Mary Douglas, "Poetic Structure in Leviticus," in *Pomegranates and Golden Bells: Studies in Biblical, Jewish, and Near Eastern Ritual, Law, and Literature in Honor of Jacob Milgrom*, ed. David P. Wright, David Noel Freedman, and Avi Hurvitz. (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1995), 239–56.
[85] Mary Douglas, *Leviticus as Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 199.
[86] Douglas, *Leviticus as Literature*, 241.

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Leviticus 8–10, this suggests each has a movement toward the sancta followed by a failure with regards to the holy.

Both Smith and Douglas helpfully point out the parallels between Leviticus 10 and 24:10–23, with Smith also helpfully making connections to Leviticus 16. It seems apparent that the violation of Yhwh's name in H balances the violation of the sanctuary in P, which is what Milgrom drew from Douglas.[87] Unfortunately, because the placement is dictated by the ring pattern, Douglas and Milgrom are unable to explain any direct relationship between the pericope and Leviticus 24:1–9.[88]

3.11 Trevaskis and Luciani on the Placement of Leviticus 24:10–23

A better approach may be found in the work of Trevaskis and Luciani. Trevaskis, also finding Douglas' ring structure unsatisfactory, sought to relate the Blaspheming Son pericope with its immediate context in Leviticus 24:1–9 and explain how it fits with the Sabbath themes in 23 and 25.[89] Trevaskis ties to the *māʾôr* of the *menôrâh* to the "lights" (*meʾôrôt*) of Genesis 1:14–16, which are given "for signs, for meeting times, for days and years (*miqrâʾê*)" in the context of a week that culminates in Sabbath. This strengthens the connection between the lights of Leviticus 24:1–4 and the Sabbath frame he sees in Leviticus 23 and 25.[90] He also sees these lights as symbolic of Yhwh's light shining on the people (cf. Ps 90:8) that then pairs with the commonly accepted symbolic connection between the twelve loaves and the twelve tribes of

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[87] Milgrom, *Leviticus 23–27*, 2106.
[88] Milgrom, *Leviticus 23–27*, 2081–82, 2106.
[89] L. Trevaskis, "The Purpose of Leviticus 24 within its Literary Context," *VT* 59 (2009): 295–96.
[90] Trevaskis, "The Purpose of Leviticus 24," 300–302.

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Israel in verses 5–9.[91] As Rhyder notes, this “would explain why the laying out (ערך *qal*) of the loaves each sabbath is associated with the establishment of a ברית עולם ‘eternal covenant’ between Yhwh and the בני ישׂראל (v. 8): the bread itself will be a continual reminder of the community before the deity.”[92]

The result is that 24:1–9 symbols Israel (as twelve loaves) arrayed in worship before Yhwh who shines upon them (lampstands) in the context of instruction of sacred times (Lev 23 and 25). The Blaspheming Son account that follows provides a contrast from submitting to Yhwh’s authority, links to the scapegoat of Leviticus 16, and demonstrates that anything that threatens this symbolled worship/submission must be purged outside the camp.[93]

This argument links the Blaspheming Son with its surrounding context, but the contrast that he argues for is general and does not account for the particularity of the transgression against Yhwh’s name. Trevaskis addresses this in part by suggesting that this text be read against 22:32 with concern for Yhwh’s name.[94] However, it is unclear why just this one text is chosen, particularly since it is an address to priests (as part of Lev 21–22) so that Yhwh’s name will not be profaned before Israel, when this is a story about a layman.[95] He also references Bibb’s comment that the ubiquitous phrase “I am Yhwh your God” underlays the *talion*[96] but doesn’t

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[91] Trevaskis notes that he is joined in seeing the twelve loaves symbolized as Israel before Yhwh by W. Kornfeld, *Levitikus*, NEB 6 (Würzburg: Echter, 1983), 96; Gordon J. Wenham, *The Book of Leviticus*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979), 310; John E. Hartley, *Leviticus* WBC (Waco: Word, 1992), 401; S.E. Balentine, *Leviticus* (Philadelphia: Westminster John Knox, 2002), 188; Milgrom, *Leviticus 23–27*, 2095; Ruwe, *Heiligkeitsgesetz*, 326. See also Roy Gane, “Bread of the Presence: Creator-in-Residence,” *VT* 42.2 (1992): 193.
[92] Rhyder, *Cult Centralization*, 269.
[93] Trevaskis, “The Purpose of Leviticus 24,” 309–11, helpfully walks through a theology of the camp and its relationship to life in the presence of Yhwh and death outside of it.
[94] Trevaskis, “The Purpose of Leviticus 24,” 310.
[95] Trevaskis, “The Purpose of Leviticus 24,” 310, also mistakenly links profaning in Lev 22:32 with the verb קלל instead of חלל, which may have led him to an inappropriate linkage to the blaspheming son’s action of קלל.
[96] Bibb makes passing reference to this in his analysis of the Blaspheming Son but does not develop it: “Why should the *talion* law be extended to all people in the camp, regardless of their parentage? Because, as Yahweh says, ‘I am

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strongly link the narrative and the context of the Holiness Legislation. But besides these suggestions, he returns to his main argument that the ideal of holy community culminates in Israel arrayed in worship in 24:1–9, where Israel submits to God as the contrast with the Blaspheming Son.[97] Since neither he nor Bibb makes a sustained argument for the particularity of the offense against Yhwh's name in this location, there is room for further exploration.

This point may be sharpened by a counterfactual: Imagine for a moment that the Blaspheming Son was replaced by the stick-collecting Sabbath breaker of Numbers 15:32–36. Both stories provide transgression, arrest, appeal to Yhwh for direction, and stoning outside the camp, so this substitution is not difficult.[98] With this substituted story, the second half of Leviticus would then move from the holiness of the people (18–20) to the sanctity of the priests and offerings (21–22), before shifting to holy time in Leviticus 23–24:9 that arrays Israel in worship. Here the Sabbath-breaking pericope would provide a direct transgression of the Sabbath that forms the foundation of Leviticus 23. Leviticus 25 would then continue with the septennial Sabbath of the land and Jubilee, before Leviticus 26 would show how breaking the septennial Sabbath for land led to exile (26:34–35) and return was conditioned on the land resting (26:43) and the people's repentance. This would provide a well-integrated parallel to Leviticus 10. However, it would primarily integrate with Leviticus 23–26 (or in Trevaskis' argument, Lev 23–

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the LORD your God' (Lev. 24:22). This basic motivation clause is ubiquitous in the latter half of Leviticus, and by itself forms the basic reason for all of this care and reflection." Bryan D. Bibb, *Ritual Words and Narrative Worlds in the Book of Leviticus*, LHBOTS 480 (New York: T&T Clark, 2009), 155.

[97] Trevaskis, "The Purpose of Leviticus 24," 311–12.

[98] Simeon Chavel suggests the possible expectation of the Sabbath-breaker in Numbers 15 in place of the Blasphemer. He uses the terms "oracular novella" and "oracular law" as a lens to analyze both the Blaspheming Son and Sabbath Stick Collector along with secondary Pesach (Num 9:1–14) and Zelophahad's daughters (Num 27:1–11). See Simeon Chavel, *Oracular Law and Priestly Historiography in the Torah*, FAT 2/71 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), 29

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25) and secondarily to Leviticus 17–22. With this counterfactual, we wish to heighten the question of why this particular offense was chosen for this location and whether this signals that this pericope is intended to serve as a broader contrast than just "Israel arrayed in worship" in Leviticus 24:1–9 within the context of Sabbath in Leviticus 23–25.

Luciani responded directly to Trevaskis,[99] not opposing his symbolic reading but critiquing his structural delineation of Leviticus 23–25 as a unit and his dismissal of the parallels with Leviticus 8–10. Luciani argues that Leviticus 23–24 concludes the core of the HL, with Leviticus 25–26 forming a delineated conclusion.[100] While not arguing in support of Douglas' ring structure, Luciani seeks to strengthen connections between Leviticus 10 and 24, showing how beyond a surface structure of transgression → death → further legal reflection, these narratives are each preceded by a consecration of seven rites followed by a bipartite liturgy.[101] This links not only Leviticus 10 and Leviticus 24:10–23 as Smith and Douglas did, but it also links their broader contexts of Leviticus 8–10 and Leviticus 23–24. He concludes, like Milgrom and Douglas, that Leviticus 23–24 are arranged aesthetically to match Leviticus 8–10.[102] The purpose is to show that "holiness concerns all the people (priests as well as laity, resident immigrants included), in all places (in the sanctuary as in the camp), and at all times (in the

[99] Didier Luciani, "Une autre intention pour Lv 24 Réponse à Leigh M. Trevaskis," *VT* 60.4 (2010): 591–600.
[100] Luciani, "Une autre intention pour Lv 24," 593–94. I agree with Luciani that Lev 25–26 forms a unit, and his argument strengthens seeing Lev 23–24 as a distinct unit. But I prefer, as argued above, to see Lev 25 acting as a bridge from Lev 23–24, which strengthens Luciani's argument.
[101] In Lev 8–9 the sanctuary space is consecrated with seven rites followed by a bipartite liturgy—a sacrifice for the clergy and a sacrifice for the people before the Nadab and Abihu narrative. In Lev 23–24 there is the consecration of sacred time (as opposed to space) that takes the form of seven feasts followed by a bipartite inauguration of the lighting of the lamps and presentation of the loaves before the Blaspheming Son narrative. Luciani notes that the bipartite inauguration is strengthened further by noticing that in Lev 9 it is a sacrifice for the clergy and people, and in Lev 24 the menorah belongs to the tent of worship on the side of the priests while the twelve loaves likely stand for the people. See Luciani, "Une autre intention pour Lv 24," 594–99.
[102] Luciani, "Une autre intention pour Lv 24," 599–600.

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liturgical act as in everyday life)."[103] Luciani's proposal significantly enhances insights from Douglas' approach without the idiosyncrasies of her ring structure.

Another advantage of considering Leviticus 23–24 as a whole in parallel to Leviticus 8–10 is that it has a stronger connection to Leviticus 16. The connection between Leviticus 10 and Leviticus 16 is explicitly stated in Leviticus 16:1 and motivates the reason for כפר that follows. Instead of the thin גר connection Smith posits, a strong Sabbath link can be formed between Leviticus 16 and Leviticus 23–34. While Leviticus 16:2–28 presents the Day of Atonement as a response to the defilement of the sanctuary caused by Nadab and Abihu, it is Leviticus 16:29–31 that forms a link with the festal calendar of Leviticus 23. It is through Sabbath keeping that כפר will take place. With regards to the story itself (24:10–23), Bibb supplies additional support by noting the similarities between the execution of the Blaspheming Son and the scapegoat, both of which have hands laid upon them and bear away the iniquity (cf. 24:14–15, 16:21–22).[104] Both Nadab and Abihu's transgression and the Blaspheming Son point toward the need for the כפר of Leviticus 16.

Yet, beyond the general contrast that holiness concerns priests/people and sanctuary/camp, the aesthetic arrangement still fails to answer what this particular rebellion means in light of the Holiness Legislation, particularly because of how well the Nadab and Abihu pericope is integrated into Leviticus 8–10 (and Lev 1-16).[105] Presumably, because he is not opposed to Trevaskis' argument, he also assumes a contrast between submission and

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[103] ". . . les exigences de la sainteté concerne tout le peuple (prêtres comme laïcs, immigrés résidants y compris), en tout lieu (au sanctuaire comme dans le camp), et en tout temps (dans l'acte liturgique comme dans la vie quotidienne)" Luciani, "Une autre intention pour Lv 24," 600.
[104] Bibb, *Ritual Words*, 213.
[105] Nihan, *From Priestly Torah*, 90–95.

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rebellion is intended, but his conclusion focuses on the implications of the parallels with Leviticus 8–10 and does not further explore what the Blaspheming Son means in the context of Leviticus 23:1–24:9 or the Holiness Legislation. Thus, while both Trevaskis and Luciani have moved the conversation forward, neither have adequately argued the particularity of blaspheming the Name in the context beyond a contrast of rebellion (Trevaskis) that mirrors the structure of establishment/violation in Leviticus 8–10 (Luciani).

3.12 A Broader Synthesis

In the first half of Leviticus, Leviticus 10 stands as an archetypical rebellion in the context of the cult. It is well integrated into the fabric of Leviticus 1–16, as Nihan has demonstrated, both as an intentional contrast to the inauguration of Leviticus 8–9 and as a precursor for the purity legislation in Leviticus 11–15, and explicitly attached to the basis of the Day of Atonement (16:1). In contrast, Leviticus 24:10–23 is considered out of place in its immediate context. Trevaskis has helpfully demonstrated that it also stands as a contrast to Israel arrayed in submissive worship. Luciani has suggested the parallels between Leviticus 8–10 and Leviticus 23–24 are more extensive and point toward Israel in worship and a contrasting failure.

This suggests to me that we should consider that the Blaspheming Son stands as an archetypical rebellion in the camp/land. But if so, to what does it stand in contrast? Merely Israel arrayed in worship in Leviticus 24:1–9? In this paper I intend to argue that the Blaspheming Son provides an archetypal rebellion in the Holiness Legislation, which is structured around the Divine Name Formula ("I am Yhwh [your God]"). I will use a social science lens to illuminate how honor is an aspect of the Divine Name Formula and the Blaspheming Son "makes light of" (read: dishonors) that name as an archetypical violation. This reading makes sense of the

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placement of the Blaspheming Son in the context of the Holiness Legislation (inclusive of Lev 23), makes sense of the only imbalanced lines of Leviticus 24:13–23, and strengthens its parallels with Leviticus 10. This comprehensive approach also illuminates a coordinating layer of the Holiness Legislation that addresses the honor of Yhwh in postexilic Yehud.

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Chapter 4

Leviticus 10 and 24

In our survey of the structure of Leviticus, the two narrative pericopes of Leviticus 10 and Leviticus 24:10–23 are uniquely situated in each half of the book. One of the main arguments of this thesis is that Leviticus 24:10–23 is not, as commonly understood, poorly placed, nor does it have a limited role in contrasting with its immediate context. Rather, it has an important role as an archetypical offense in connection to Yhwh's name that is woven through the entire HL. Because Leviticus 24:10–23 is related to Leviticus 10, and because Leviticus 10 plays such a significant role in the first half of the text, we will examine it first. Leviticus 10 is a well-structured pericope with strong internal, narrative logic that makes it an ideal place to test our methodology and provide results that can be compared to Leviticus 24:10–23.

Before we can begin a socio-rhetorical reading, a number of introductory issues must be addressed, because Leviticus 10 contains many cruces. The chapter begins with Nadab and Abihu's punishment that leaves the crime intriguingly ambiguous, concludes with a similarly ambiguous cultic disagreement, contains a unique address to Aaron that gives him authority for cultic interpretation to which even Moses submits, and intertextually relates to several texts about priestly conflict. These moments and cruces are formed into a coherent chapter,[1] which is placed at a critical juncture within Leviticus. We've already covered how Leviticus 10 is carefully crafted to fit into the flow of Leviticus 1–16 in §3.12, so we proceed by overviewing the two ambiguous cultic situations, literary integrity, historical-critical concerns, and significant

[1] Hartley, *Leviticus*, 129; Nihan, *From Priestly Torah*, 578–79.

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intertexts. This overview and a review of Walter Houston's article[2] that makes use of honor will set the stage for my proposed socio-rhetorical reading that demonstrates the significance of honor in understanding the text.

4.1 Introduction Genre, Literary Structure, and Unity of Leviticus 10

Leviticus 10 is easily classified as a narrative. While all of Leviticus, including its legislation, is ultimately shaped into a narrative of Yhwh's revelation through the repeated structuring phrase "and Yhwh said to Moses," Leviticus 10 contains a comparatively dense deployment of *wayyiqtol* verbs associated with Hebrew Bible narratives. The narrative genre lends itself to analyzing tension and resolution.[3] I will argue that a lens of honor enables a coherent reading of the narrative tension and resolution that is complementary to previous readings.

Besides being a narrative with tension and resolution, the text also exhibits a concentric structure that may be represented as follows:[4]

A. Ambiguous Ritual Failure/Judgment and Aaron and Moses' response (1–5)
  B. Moses Instructs Aaron, Eleazar, and Ithamar (6–7)
    C. Yhwh's Instructions to and Authorization of Aaron (8–11)
  B´. Moses Instructs Aaron, Eleazar, and Ithamar (12–15)
A´. Ambiguous Ritual Disagreement and Aaron and Moses' response (16–20)

The concentric structure is a form of repetition that allows for comparison and contrast of ambiguous cultic situations on each side of a central grant to Aaron and accentuates the tension

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[2] Houston, "Tragedy in the Courts," 31–39.
[3] Nihan, *From Priestly Torah*, 575–77; Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, 509–17.
[4] Nihan and Watts both offer chiastic structures. Watts has a slightly more detailed chiasm. My chiastic structure is simpler and closer to Nihan's. See Nihan, *From Priestly Torah*, 577; Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, 509. For arguments for the chapter's coherence, see Nihan, *From Priestly Torah*, 574–75; Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, 511; Hartley, *Leviticus*, 129.

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and resolution of the chapter. In each half, Aaron's sons do (or don't do) something within the cult that causes controversy. Both are presented will elements of ambiguity. Moses appears in the aftermath of each. Aaron is silent in response to the first but speaks in response to the second. The structure also highlights Yhwh's grant to Aaron in the center of the structure, which becomes the basis for Aaron's speech in the second half of the chapter. Aaron's differing responses are related to two different, contrasting outcomes. I will later argue that Aaron's response can be compared with Yhwh's response in verse 3 that highlights the significance of honor.

The narrative genre with clear structure points toward unity. Source criticism has often identified verses 8–11 as a later interpolation.[5] However, Nihan has cogently argued for unity in noting that the end of the chapter only makes sense as an illustration of the interpretive authority given in verses 8–11 and as a contrast to the result of Nadab and Abihu's failure at the beginning of the chapter.[6] Watts agrees and aptly summarizes, "Though several editors likely did contribute to this chapter, there is not sufficient evidence of their work to reconstruct its stage of development."[7] Verses 8–11 are also thought to be an interpolation because of the transition from verses 6–7 to verses 8–11. However, I will argue in this chapter that a lens of honor makes this transition logical and smooth.

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[5] Martin Noth, *Leviticus: A Commentary*, Old Testament Library, (Philadelphia, Westminster John Knox, 1977), 86, comments, "quite unrelated to this context." Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 617; Knohl, *The Sanctuary of Silence*, 51–52.
[6] Nihan, *From Priestly Torah*, 603–5.
[7] Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, 511.

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4.2 Approaches to Narrative Ambiguities

The first and obvious issue that confronts the reader of Leviticus 10 is why Yhwh kills Nadab and Abihu—a "punishment in search of a crime," as Greenstein memorably put it.[8] The narrative doesn't answer this question that intrigues readers and has led to a variety of reading strategies. We will cover these solutions in three major headings—"solving" the cultic issues left unstated, seeing the lack of clarity as intentionally ambiguous from a postmodern lens, and seeing the lack of narrative detail as serving another rhetorical purpose. We will examine these in turn.

"Solving" the cultic issue behind the text is the most common approach, which involves close examination of the text's details in relationship to other explanatory texts to determine the precise nature of the crime. The attempts have been numerous.[9] Because Aaron and his sons are told not to drink wine or strong drink when entering the tent a few verses later (10:9), some speculate that the sons were drunk.[10] Leviticus 16:1 says that Nadab and Abihu died when they "drew near Yhwh," which suggests that they inappropriately encroached on sacred space in ways that prepare the reader for instructions for proper entry in Leviticus 16.[11] Milgrom provides the most detailed response that combines several related details into an overall reconstruction. He first notices that the report of Nadab and Abihu using "his pan" (10:1) suggests a personal and unauthorized pan instead of the official sanctuary pan, which he infers from the designation "the

[8] Edward Greenstein, "Deconstruction and Biblical Narrative," *Prooftexts* 9 (1989): 56.
[9] For a survey of the numerous rabbinic approaches, see Robert Kirschner, "The Rabbinic and Philonic Exegeses of the Nadab and Abihu Incident (Lev. 10:1–6)," *JQR* 73 (1983): 375–93. For a broader survey including more recent attempts, see Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 633–35.
[10] Arthur J. Wolak, "Alcohol and the Fate of Nadab and Abihu: A Biblical Cautionary Tale against Inebriation," *JBQ* 41.4 (2013): 219–26.
[11] Mark A. Awabdy, "Did Nadab and Abihu Draw Near before Yhwh? The Old Greek among the Witnesses of Leviticus 16:1," *CBQ* 79.4 (2017): 580–92.

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pan" in Leviticus 16:12 and Numbers 17:11.[12] Similarly, they offered incense (*qĕṭōret*), which Milgrom suspects is different from the perfumed incense (*qĕṭōret sammîm*) that was authorized at the twice daily offering and "finely ground perfumed incense" (*qĕṭōret sammîm daqqâ*) offered on Yom Kippur.[13] This background allows Milgrom to interpret the transgression described as *ʾēš zārâ* as "strange coals" in a way parallel to Korah's rejected offering in Numbers 17:5, where "strange" indicates unauthorized. Milgrom argues they are unauthorized because instead of deriving from the outer altar (e.g., 16:12; Num 17:11), the coals came from a source that was "profane" (Tg. Onq. on 16:1) or "outside" (Tg. Yer.), such as an oven.[14]

This reconstruction aligns with several points in the text, which is its strength. However, Bibb points out that the facts in the story do not provide an unassailable basis for his reading.[15] Much of his argument rests on precise expectations for the way that the language ought to appear but does not. For example, Milgrom assumes that if the incense were really the proper kind, then the text would certainly use the full name for it. Further, if the two priests each take his pan, then that must mean that the pans belong to them personally. Finally, the text does not say that they take coals from the fire, so therefore the fire was from some illegitimate source. The fact that Milgrom must rely on evidence that is not there to explain the single clue that is there (זרה) illustrates most clearly that the gap resists closure.[16]

Similarly, in the second half of the narrative, a dispute arises between Moses and Aaron about the eating of prebends. Aaron's sons ignore Moses' instruction, which angers Moses and

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[12] Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 597.
[13] Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 597.
[14] Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 598.
[15] Bibb, *Ritual Words*, 87.
[16] Bibb, *Ritual Words*, 88.

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leads to Aaron exercising his new cultic interpretive authority in a way that satisfies Moses. Milgrom conveniently summarizes the crux: "The overall problem of this pericope is twofold: why was Moses angered by the priests, and why was he assuaged by their answer?"[17] Confronted with a lack of explanation, interpreters again try to "solve" the ambiguity through appeal to other texts to reconstruct what Aaron might have been thinking. Perhaps the priests thought that despite starting the ritual according to the regulations for an individual sin offering, the circumstances warranted following the instructions for the communal sin offering (cf. Leviticus 4:11–12, 21, as opposed to 6:24-30). Or perhaps they thought the strange fire that resulted in corpse defilement had defiled the altar (Lev 5:2–3; cf. Lev 21:11; Num 6:9; 19:14) and the offerings on the altar.[18] But it is significant that *the narrator does not record Aaron's cultic reasoning*, so appeals to other texts to clarify the matter may reveal options of various probabilities but again reinforce the sense of ambiguity in discerning Aaron's cultic reasoning.

Bibb offers a second major approach as an alternative for "solving" the cultic issue that engages ambiguity from a postmodern perspective of texts resisting closure. Bibb suggests that the phrase "not commanded" in 10:1 is not a willful violation of Yhwh's commands but an entry into a gap where Yhwh has not provided instruction. The narrative presents the ambiguity of the situation to illustrate how the system in Leviticus 1–7, which appears whole, actually has gaps. While Bibb acknowledges that the "cultic system affirms there is order in the seeming chaos," ultimately "one never knows what additional circumstances may arise that will not be covered within the system."[19] The problem isn't that Yhwh is chaotic but that the people have a limited

[17] Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16,* 635.
[18] For a brief but helpful overview of options, see Mark A. Awabdy, *Leviticus: A Commentary on Leueitikon in Codex Vaticanus*, Septuagint Commentary Series (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 260.
[19] Bibb, *Ritual Words*, 95.

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understanding, so the narrative exposes "the depth of the problem [of gaps and ambiguities] and also motivates them to think more about their cultic system."[20] This also motivates the dynamic between legislation that forms a system, narrative that exposes the gaps, and additional legislation to fill the gaps.

While Bibb's reading is interesting and highlights that the relationship between instruction and narrative may serve multiple purposes, it has several weaknesses. First, Bibb argues that "not commanded" literally means there was no command available for Nadab and Abihu. This creative solution suffers from the multifaceted interface between Leviticus 10 and the end of Leviticus 9,[21] which strongly suggests that "not commanded" contrasts with the repetition of "just as Yhwh commanded" throughout chapters 8–9. While gaps are useful literary devices that play on what is missing but can be expected, they are a form of argument from silence. However, the rhythm of compliance in doing everything "according to the command of Yhwh" that is repeated throughout Leviticus 8–9 creates the presence of a clear contrast to the listener suggesting they have broken a command, not fallen accidentally into a gap.

Second, while Bibb attempts to explain the ambiguity at the beginning of Leviticus 10 as a gap exposed and filled through Leviticus 11–15, he doesn't address the ambiguity at the end of Leviticus 10, whose gap is filled a different way. While such a strategy of filling gaps through additional legislation is attested by the Mishnah's twelve tractates of purity distinctions in the

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[20] Bibb, *Ritual Words*, 95–96. Bibb concludes by arguing that one can't "solve" narratives by appealing to law. Both narratives and law have gaps, and Bibb argues that all language is rhetorical and ambiguous, so he concludes that neither law nor narrative is an objective basis for interpreting texts.
[21] Verbal links include "as Yhwh commanded" to "not commanded"; Yhwh consuming the sacrifices with fire from his presence (9:24) to Yhwh consuming Nadab and Abihu with fire from his presence (10:2); Yhwh's כבד appearing to the community (9:23) versus Yhwh glorifying (כבד) himself according to 10:3. The community shouts (9:24) while Aaron is silent (10:3). See Nihan, *From Priestly Torah*, 94–5 and Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, 512–13.

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Tohorot, it is telling that Bibb's argument moves from the ambiguity of Nadab and Abihu to the purity instruction (that fills some gaps) in Leviticus 11–15 while skipping over the conclusion of the chapter, which contains another ambiguity. In contrast to Bibb's paradigm, the solution to ambiguity in the second half of Leviticus 10 is not additional legislation but authorized interpretation aimed at honoring Yhwh. This does not negate Bibb's insight that the cultic system has gaps, but I will argue below that both the priesthood and people inevitably face gaps and Leviticus 10 provides an example of how honor enables an ongoing way to fill the gaps.

The third major approach to the lack of cultic details in the narrative is suggested by Watts, who, like Bibb, eschews trying to "solve" questions apparent in the narrative and suggests that the lack of narrative details indicates the *rhetorical interest lays elsewhere*. In particular, the ambiguity of the details is intended to point readers toward a confidence in priestly authority.[22] Watts argues that Nadab and Abihu's shocking deaths demonstrate that any deviance will be punished, but in a case of the exception proving the rule, this swift response by Yhwh to deviance provides confidence that the normal functioning means the priesthood is doing a dangerous job well on behalf of the people.[23] In the second half of Leviticus 10, Watts again argues that the ambiguity in Aaron's response to Moses' anger draws rhetorical attention away from details of Aaron's cultic reasoning (the content of what Aaron says) and focuses on the fact that Aaron is the one exercising his cultic authority in a way that Moses respects (the fact that Aaron is speaking). This illustrates his unique call by Yhwh given in Leviticus 10:8–11 and establishes priestly interpretive authority.[24] For Watts, the ambiguity is part of a rhetorical

[22] Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, 514.
[23] Watt, *Leviticus 1–10*, 514.
[24] Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, 515.

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strategy to add to the mystique of the priesthood and enhances its power. The ambiguity highlights that Aaron is the one speaking and resolves the issues through the trustworthy authority granted to him.

Watts' argument makes sense of how the ambiguity serves a rhetorical purpose in highlighting priestly authority that helps make sense of the chapter as a whole. While I'm largely in agreement with his approach, I find one element of his argument lacking. Watts argues that not only are the two cultic situations in the chapter ambiguous (vv. 1–2, 12–15), but the responses of Yhwh in verse 3 and Aaron in verse 19 are also ambiguous. While I agree that the fact that Aaron is the one speaking with authority just granted is significant, I will argue that the content of his response and Yhwh's response to the ambiguous situations are significant to the coherence of the chapter. I will argue below that the ambiguity of the situations points toward the rhetorical clarity that each of these responses provide, and in each case, I will argue that they point toward honor of Yhwh, which adds a complementary layer to Watts' argument and brings greater coherence to the chapter as a whole.

4.3 Intertexts and Historical Background

Any account of Leviticus 10 must take into account the number of intertexts that it can be read against, which also generate hypotheses about the provenience of the text. Gradwohl suggests that the deaths of Nadab and Abihu in Leviticus 10 are critiques of Jeroboam's golden calves in 1 Kings 12–14 vis-à-vis the deaths of his similarly named sons, Nadab and Abijah.[25] In this reading, the sons die for their father's construction of golden calves. Houston similarly

[25] Roland Gradwohl, "Das »fremde Feuer« von Nadab und Abihu," *ZAW* 75 (1963): 294–95.

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argues that Leviticus 10 originally appeared soon after Exodus 32–34, and quoting Damrosch approvingly, "Nadab and Abihu in effect recapitulate the Golden Calf episode and their father is brought to face the consequence of his sin."[26] He also compares this text to Eli, David, and Lot,[27] where the sons are punished for the sins of the father. However, the singular problem with this view is observed by Watts, who notes that in contrast to Jeroboam (and other examples), Aaron is not punished for the golden calf but is actually honored with a grant of authority in verses 8–11.[28]

Leviticus 10 also has clear lexical and thematic connections with the challenge to Moses and Aaron's authority in Numbers 16–18. In both stories every man takes his censor, puts fire in them, and lays incense on them (Lev 10:1; Num 16:18), and in both stories fire comes out from before Yhwh and consumes them (Lev 10:2; Num 16:35). Nihan notes that only in Leviticus 10:1–2, Leviticus 16:12–13, and Numbers 17:11 are censor incense mentioned.[29] Numbers 16:5 relates the incense to the approach of Yhwh, which of course is a key privilege of Leviticus 16 and thus suggests that in Leviticus 10:1–2 Nadab and Abihu approach inappropriately (cf. Lev 16:1). The challenges to priestly authority in Numbers 16–17 are also followed by Yhwh's address to Aaron in Numbers 18 that outlines his authority, one of only two times Yhwh directly addresses Aaron, the other being Leviticus 10:8, which also gives him authority.

This raises the possibility for some that the priestly power struggles in Numbers 16–18 may also be present in Leviticus 10. Achenbach argues because of the similarities between Leviticus 10:8–11 and Ezekiel 44:21–23, which address the sons of Zadok who keep the

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[26] David Damrosch, "Leviticus," in *The Literary Guide to the Bible*, ed. Robert Alter and Frank Kermode (London: Fontana Press, 1989), 71.
[27] Houston, "Tragedy in the Courts," 37–39.
[28] Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, 523–24.
[29] Nihan, *From Priestly Torah*, 583.

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sanctuary, that the final form of Leviticus 10 is meant to discredit Aaron.[30] Just as Aaron moves from honor to shame in Exodus 24 to Exodus 32, Aaron goes from honor in Leviticus 1–9 to being presented in shame in Leviticus 10 in order to discredit Aaronides in postexilic Yehud.[31] Unfortunately, he also does not take into account the latter half of Leviticus 10, where Aaron is apparently honored and given priestly authority that he exercises over Moses.

Otto reads the chapter in terms of conflict between Aaronides and Zadokites.[32] He argues that verses 1–7 and 16–20 were added later, so that the authority of Aaron established in Leviticus 8–9 is channeled to Eleazar, the forefather of the Zadokites. The chapter is pro-Aaron and therefore pro-Zadokite. However, Meyer rightfully regards this as speculative, because Eleazar is not presented in a particularly positive light and it is Aaron who ultimately rescues him using his interpretive authority.[33] If there are priestly power struggles behind the text, it is therefore hard to discern who would be promoting what in Leviticus 10. While the narrative of Numbers 16–18 spells out the challenge to priestly authority, Leviticus 10 seems to be a "challenge" directly to Yhwh. The second half of Leviticus 10 does affirm Aaron's authority, but it does not do so in terms of a challenge to him but as a grant for his loyalty. It is difficult to read behind Leviticus 10 to answer *cui bono*. However, it is not hard to see that Aaron's authority is established, but not in conflict with others—the remaining sons are rather passive actors in the text. It is Aaron who acts. This makes Leviticus 10 a very hard text to use for an argument for priestly conflict, but as we will see shortly, it is a stupendous text to reinforce priestly authority.

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[30] Reinhard Achenbach, *Die Vollendung der Tora: Studien zu Redaktionsgeschicte des Numeribuches im Kontext von Hexateuch und Pentateuch* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2003), 93–110.
[31] Achenbach, *Die Vollendung der Tora*, 94.
[32] Eckhart Otto, *Die Tora. Studien zum Pentateuch. Gesammelte Aufsätze*, Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für Altorientalische und Biblische Rechtsgeschichte (Verlag: Otto Harrassowitz, 2009), 107–42.
[33] Esias Meyer, "Getting Bad Publicity and Staying in Power: Leviticus 10 and Possible Priestly Power Struggles," *HTS Theological Studies* 69.1 (2013): 5.

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4.4 Walter Houston and a SSA with honor

With these introductory remarks, we now turn to briefly consider Walter Houston's social-literary approach to Leviticus 10 that utilizes an honor and shame lens. From a literary perspective he reads the narrative from the point of view of Aaron as the "hero," and from a social science perspective he interprets Nadab and Abihu's approach as an honor challenge to Yhwh. According to Houston, the judgment on the two sons demonstrates to Aaron that if "he thought he had gained honour through his elevation to the priesthood he was mistaken: in the courts of the Lord none but the Lord will be allowed honour."[34] He also posits that Leviticus 10 originally appeared shortly after Exodus 32–34 and therefore reads the text against the background of father and sons throughout the Hebrew Bible (e.g., Eli and his sons). He concludes that these types of stories were told because rival families were jealous of the honor given to Aaron's family yet dependent on the success of the family in their key role. They resolve their ambiguous feelings without the dangers of faction or civil war by telling stories of wicked sons so that "the elder sons who are unsatisfactory, and it is they, and not the rest of society, who may be responsible for the leader's downfall, if that is what happens."[35] Finally, from the perspective of Aaron, it diverts attention away from his actions at the golden calf to descendants who have been blotted out, leaving his other descendants in the clear.[36]

While I agree that this passage begins with an act of dishonor toward Yhwh and that applying a broader body of theory related to honor can be fruitful, my approach will differ from Houston's in several key ways. First, in contrast to Houston's limited use of honor to analyze

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[34] Houston, "Tragedy in the Courts," 34.
[35] Houston, "Tragedy in the Courts," 38–39.
[36] Houston, "Tragedy in the Courts," 39.

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10:1–3 and speculative overall conclusion about community jealousy of Aaron's honorable position, I will argue that honor shapes social transactions throughout the entire chapter.

Second, while Houston limits his narrative focus to the character of Aaron as a tragic hero, I will argue the narrator uses honor in developing a layer of narrative tension and resolution. Third, Houston works through the chapter without reference to its structure, whereas I will find significance in the chapter having a roughly concentric structure as outlined above. The concentric structure is a form of repetition that both allows for comparison and contrast of the ambiguous cultic situations framing the central grant to Aaron and accentuates the tension and resolution of the chapter.

Finally, Houston falls into the trap of applying the model deductively to the text without allowing the particularity of the text to give feedback to the model. In particular, in arguing that the text is an honor challenge,[37] he does not address the obvious point that Nadab and Abihu are not trying to challenge Yhwh in an agonistic struggle for honor among equals, rather they are not showing honor within the established hierarchy. Further, the text is cultic, and the question of honor is intertwined with the distinctions of holiness addressed in the text, which Houston does not address. My reading will use the model of honor but seek to allow the text to guide how honor functions in the cultic context. Since Leviticus 10 has *prima facie* evidence of the conceptual use of honor, I will read the text with sensitivity to honor and evaluate whether this is

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[37] Houston, "Tragedy in the Courts," 34, asserts, "The event is thus characterized in a manner modelled on the competition of honour among males, which was a marked feature of Israelite society, as of other Mediterranean (and many other) societies." However the model explicitly states that a superior can safely ignore the challenge of an inferior without damage. Malina, *The New Testament World*, 36, summarizes, "Only equals can actually challenge another in such a way that all perceive the interaction as a challenge. Only an equal—who must be recognized as such—can impugn a person's honor or affront another. The reason for this is that the rules of the honor contest require that challengers stand on equal status."

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a legitimate assumption based on the coherence—in this case, narrative coherence—of the reading it produces. We now turn to this reading.

4.5 A Socio-Rhetorical Reading of Leviticus 10[38]

With this survey and critique in place, I will proceed with my socio-rhetorical reading with the following emphases. First, the chapter has a concentric structure that allows us to constructively compare and contrast the repetition in the second half with the first half. There will be an assumption of unity, and special emphasis will be given to understanding the transition from verses 6–7 to verses 8–10, the place where commentators often sense the biggest breach. The text is a narrative, and this reading will track levels of tension and resolution. The text does have some narrative details that are hidden from the reader, but I will argue, alongside Watts, that this indicates rhetorical emphasis lies beyond resolving the cultic details. However, in contrast to Watts, I will emphasize the speeches of Yhwh and Aaron and discern a different rhetorical interest. Instead of that purpose being only priestly power, I will attempt to read the text in terms of Yhwh's honor and secondarily as priestly authority in terms of Yhwh's honor.

4.5.1 Leviticus 10:1–5 and Honor

We now return to the first question that confronts the reader of Leviticus 10 – why did Yhwh kill Nadab and Abihu? While the punishment is clear, the narrative only reports they did what was "not commanded" without specifying the particulars of the violation. As we discussed above, while there have been numerous attempts to "solve" the specifics of the offense,[39]

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[38] This reading follows closely to my work published as Andrew K. Heyd, "Honor in the Cult: Leviticus 10 in Socio-Rhetorical Perspective," *JSOT* 46.4 (2022): 548-562.
[39] See n. 4 above.

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Milgrom's being the most commonly cited,[40] the text resists attempts to determine what Nadab and Abihu did wrong.[41] The multifaceted interface between the beginning of Leviticus 10 and the end of Leviticus 9[42] strongly suggests that "not commanded" is in contrast to the repetition of "just as Yhwh commanded" throughout Leviticus 8–9.[43] The lack of narrative detail about the violation is arguably intentional and indicates that the rhetorical interest lies elsewhere.[44]

What is that rhetorical interest? Yhwh's response does not give a cultic explanation that could relieve the tension, but it does establish the themes that the narrator develops over the course of the chapter. Watts argues Yhwh's response is ambiguous,[45] but while it may be ambiguous in not "solving" what command was broken, I will argue that through the lens of honor, his response brings clarity to the situation and introduces the key themes that will be developed through the chapter that undergirds the tension and resolution of the entire chapter. Yhwh's answer is presented through the mouth of Moses in a bicolon of synthetic parallel lines:[46]

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[40] Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 597–98.
[41] Bibb, *Ritual Words*, 87, notes that "the facts in the story do not provide an unassailable basis for [Milgrom's] reading. Much of [Milgrom's] argument rests on precise expectations for the way that the language ought to appear but does not." For another argument why ambiguities resist closure to "solving the problem" see also Gary A. Anderson, "'Through Those Who Are Near to Me, I Will Show Myself Holy': Nadab and Abihu and Apophatic Theology," *CBQ* 77.1 (2015): 1–19.
[42] See pg. 83, n. 20 for a summary of verbal links.
[43] Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, 525–26.
[44] Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, 506, 513, 517.
[45] Watts makes a connection between Aaron's statement in v. 19 and Yhwh's oracle in v. 2 and then comments, "Both statements are obscure, perhaps potentially so." See Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, 509–10, 514, 531.
[46] Pace Feldman, who translates "I will be sanctified by those near to me, but before all of the people I will be present." This reads the niphals slightly differently, where the priests act to sanctify Yhwh in the first half, but in the second half Yhwh is present among the people. She elaborates her use of 'present' as a word play on Leviticus 9:23b, where Yhwh's כבד appears before the people. However, there כבד appears in 9:23b aś a noun and the verb is ירא in the niphal. The emphasis is on כבד as something that can be seen (and honored, as the people fall on their face). Thus, Feldman asserts rather than argues that כבד is wordplay and does not make clear what the dynamics of that wordplay are. It is more likely, in my estimation that the niphals function similarly. Either Yhwh actively sanctifies and glorifies, or more likely, he is to be sanctified by the priest and honored by the people. See Feldman, *The Story of Sacrifice,* 104-105.

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This is what Yhwh has said:
"Among those who are near to me
I will be sanctified, (קדש, *niphal*)
and before all the people,
I will be honored (כבד, *niphal*)."
(Lev 10:3, author's translation)

בִּקְרֹבַי
אֶקָּדֵשׁ
וְעַל־פְּנֵי כָל־הָעָם
אֶכָּבֵד

This response raises several questions. The first question we may ask is when Yhwh spoke these words, as Moses' report does not specify when this oracle took place. This need not detain us long. It does not matter whether Moses is calling forward an unreported oracle of Yhwh from the past and applying it to this specific moment or whether this oracle is received in the immediate aftermath. It is enough that this divine oracle is placed as a fitting comment on what happened in 10:1–2.

Second, the two verbs, קדש and כבד, are *niphals*, so we must decide if they are to be interpreted passively or reflexively. Nihan, for example, argues that כבד is passive, implying Yhwh should be "honored" by the people.[47] Milgrom argues that the *niphal* is reflexive and God is acting to sanctify and glorify himself: "The death of God's intimate priests, Nadab and Abihu, performs the function of sanctifying God—providing awe and respect for his power."[48] The result of "awe and respect" is not so dissimilar from Nihan's argument for honor. The only difference is the emphasis on the agency of Yhwh to ensure he is honored among the people. The passive option makes 10:3 a principle that stands in reflection of the action in 10:1–2, and the reflexive option makes 10:3 as an interpretation of the intention behind Yhwh's action. Although the two views show different agents, the result is the same—God is to be set apart and honored.[49]

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[47] Nihan, *From Priestly Torah*, 92.
[48] Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 602.
[49] There are several initial reasons to consider that honor might be intended. The language of כבד and קלל are the most commonly used words for honor and shame in the Hebrew Bible. While כבד is used here, קלל is used in the story that parallels this story (Lev 24:10-23) that also deals with Yhwh's honor. However, the best argument for

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In terms of Malina's Mediterranean model, Yhwh claims status and demands its recognition from Israel. Nadab and Abihu's ill-advised approach fails to recognize the honor of Yhwh, so Yhwh acts to assert his honor and calls for honor from the community.[50]

Various scholars have mentioned that כבד refers to honor, but only Houston has attempted to relate it to a larger body of theory about honor and shame. There are several initial reasons to consider that honor might be intended and would merit further consideration of how honor works according to an SSA. First, כבד and קלל are the most commonly used words for honor and shame in the Hebrew Bible.[51] Next, while כבד is used here, קלל is used in the only other narrative pericope in Leviticus that includes transgression and death (Lev 24:10–23). And we will demonstrate that the narrative in Leviticus 24 is parallel to the present text, and there making light of Yhwh's name is clearly a sign of dishonor. Third, the chiastic structure brings Yhwh's oracle in 10:3 in parallel to Aaron's response in 10:19, which, I will argue, demonstrates honor. However, and most importantly, an SSA that attends to honor will not only make sense of 10:1–3 but also brings coherence to the entire chapter. We will especially emphasize its role in 10:6–7 in connecting 10:8–11 to the narrative and show how honor makes sense of an aspect of tension and resolution in the chapter. This coherence lends credibility to a SSA.

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appealing to the lens of honor is the coherence it brings to the rest of the chapter. The best overview of the usage of כבד and קלל can be found in James N. Jumper, "Honor and Shame in the Deuteronomic Covenant and the Deuteronomistic Presentation of the Davidic Covenant" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2013), 55–74.

[50] Crook, in a critique of the Mediterranean model, suggest that honor should begin with the community that arbitrates honor and labels this the Public Court of Recognition (PCR). The PCR perspective reminds us that at any point in time, more than one PCR may be active. From this vantage point, Yhwh acts to ensure the PCR in Israel recognizes the honor they should give him in relationship to his holy presence in their midst. See Zeba A. Crook, "Honor, Shame, and Social Status Revisited," *JBL* 128/3 (2009): 599.

[51] Many analyses of honor and shame in the Old Testament note this as an antimony. The most thorough is probably Jumper, "Honor and Shame in the Deuteronomic Covenant," 55–74.

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According to our SSA model, honor is both a claim to worth and acknowledgment of that claim by society, meaning it is part of a relational dynamic that shapes social interactions and therefore may be contested.[52] But in contrast to Houston, who links this to two competing Mediterranean males engaged in an honor challenge (or challenge-riposte), a closer model is the loyalty and honor expected within a suzerain-vassal treaty.[53] Yhwh is Israel's patron deity and within a covenant relationship may expect to be honored.[54] Yhwh's response suggests that he views Nadab and Abihu's approach as an affront to his honor and acts to assert his honor "before all the people." In terms of Malina, who takes the perspective of the individual, honor is claimed and demands recognition. In terms of Crook's Public Court of Recognition, which begins with the perspective of the community, Yhwh is entering the fray of the "honor game" by ensuring the PCR recognizes the weight they should give him. The PCR perspective reminds us that at any point in time more than one PCR may be active, and Yhwh is acting to ensure his honor among all of Israel. Nadab and Abihu's actions are not just breaking a command; they are a challenge to Yhwh's honor in the sight of the people, and since honor is a dynamic public evaluation, Yhwh acts to maintain his honor. A near analogy is Esther's approach to King Ahasuerus as a similar challenge that invites response (cf. Esth 4:11). While Esther's approach without invitation was judged to be not dishonoring the king, Nadab and Abihu's transgression invites us to see this as a dishonor to Yhwh. Thus, while our reasoning is different, we agree with Houston that Nadab and Abihu's approach dishonors Yhwh, and since it is before all the people, it invites a response.

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[52] Pitt-Rivers, "Honour and Social Status," 21.
[53] Note also how this is incompatible with Peristiany's research that explicitly notes that an honor challenge may be ignored if one is of significantly higher status than the other, because the challenge by someone of much lower status can be dismissed as "not worth the time" without impeaching the honor of the one with higher status. It's a way to both further marginalize the one with lower status and not become entangled in the challenge.
[54] See Olyan, "Honor, Shame, and Covenant Relations," 201–18.

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Finally, we note that the parallelism of 10:3 invites inspection about the implied relationship between the parts. As noted above, the particularities of the passage must not be forced to fit into a model; rather, the model should provide entry into the text, whose particularities provide feedback as to how honor is operating. Here we must note that the context is cultic, which is an area that the anthropologists at the root of the Mediterranean Model have admitted they overlooked in their model.[55] However, both the parallelism of Yhwh's statement in 10:3 and the narrative coherence can guide us. Namely, the parallelism places honor in relationship with holiness, which alerts the reader to honor's intersection with distinctions of clean/unclean that holiness requires. The parallelism also highlights the relationship between the priests and people. Milgrom attempts to express this relationship in his observation, "if such things happen to his intimates, others will all the more so have cause to fear."[56] This highlights that Yhwh acted in response to priests but has all of Israel in view in his response. I will develop this insight further by arguing that the כבד of Yhwh and the response of honoring him in the cultic context underlays much of the passage and coordinates the relationship of the priesthood and people.

4.5.2 Leviticus 10:1–5 and Narrative Tension

Seen through a narrative lens, Leviticus 10:1–3 initiates a crisis that resolves over the course of the chapter.[57] Watts argues that the setting of Nadab and Abihu's "not according to the

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[55] A year later, Peristiany and Pitt-Rivers, the anthropologists upon whom Malina's model was built, admitted that they had "been blind to [honor's] intimate connection with the realm of the sacred." See Peristiany, Julian Pitt-Rivers, "Introduction," , 2.
[56] Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 603, citing Bekhor Shor; cf. b. Zebaḥ. 115b.
[57] Nihan, *From Priestly Torah*, 574–77.

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command of Yhwh" against the backdrop of priestly obedience raises the tension of possible priestly unreliability in the narrative.[58] However, over the course of the chapter, in a twist, this judgment actually enhances trust in priestly reliability and prestige. In a case of the "exception proves the rule," the beginning of the narrative reveals drastic consequences for *any* disobedience, which implies that the normal functioning of the priesthood indicates priestly reliability in a dangerous context.[59]

The tension from this possible unreliability begins to be relieved through notes of priestly obedience in verses 5 and 7. Respect for priests is then dramatically reinforced when Yhwh authorizes Aaron with interpretive authority in 10:8–11, and then Aaron exercises that authority over Moses in a way that Moses accepts. The overall effect is to demonstrate priestly reliability in the face of a dangerous job, which reinforces Watts' more general argument that the priests are writing to "provide prescriptive and descriptive justification for the Aaronides' monopoly over Israel's priesthood and cult" in postexilic Yehud where the status of the priesthood and cult were contested.[60]

While Watts roots the crisis of priestly unreliability in the narrator's assessment of "not commanded" (10:2), he downplays the report of Yhwh's assessment related to honor (10:3) as ambiguous.[61] I will argue below that Yhwh's statement in 10:3 provides a crucial frame for the rest of the chapter and suggests a complementary reading that foregrounds the immediate threat of death related to honor that is extended from priest to people. This threat is highlighted by the treatment of the corpses and multiple warnings punctuated by "lest you die" throughout the

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[58] Watts, *Ritual and Rhetoric*, 143; idem, *Leviticus 1–10*, 512–13.
[59] Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, 514.
[60] Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, 505–6.
[61] Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, 509–10, 514, 531.

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chapter. This reading is complementary in that it also acknowledges the role of priestly status, but it does so in light of Yhwh's foregrounded honor, which was also contested in postexilic Yehud.[62]

4.5.3 Leviticus 10:6–7: Aaron Demonstrating Honor Undergirding Holiness

A. Ambiguous Ritual Failure/Judgment and Aaron and Moses' response (1–5)
B. **Moses Instructs Aaron, Eleazar, and Ithamar (6–7)**
C. Yhwh's instructions to Aaron (8–11)
B´. Moses Instructs Aaron, Eleazar, and Ithamar (12–15)
A´. Ambiguous Ritual Disagreement and Aaron and Moses' response (16-20)

After the initial crisis, the narrative continues smoothly with the bodies of Nadab and Abihu being removed by Eleazar and Ithamar, and Moses forbidding Aaron and his remaining sons from following after in grief (10:6-7). But then Yhwh grants Aaron cultic interpretive authority (10:8–11), which many[63] see as such an abrupt interruption that it can only be explained as a later insertion. However, 10:6–7, often treated briefly by commentators, illustrates the relationship between holiness and honor from 10:3 in making purity distinctions and serves as a fitting transition to Aaron's grant of interpretive authority in 10:8–11.

Culticly, the command not to mourn in 10:6–7 coheres with instructions about mourning for priests in Leviticus 21:10–12. There, those with anointing oil should not dishevel hair, tear clothes, or approach any dead person, because they are anointed and in a state of holiness, so and these actions would profane the sanctuary.[64] *Culturally*, the command prohibits what would naturally take place after the death of two sons. From a social science perspective, mourning the

[62] Cf. Mal 1:6–2:9 and Ezek 36:20, 23, 24; 39:7.
[63] See pg. 79 n. 5.
[64] Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, 533–537. For the issue of why Aaron's sons were also prohibited, see Nihan, *From Priestly Torah*, 589–90.

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dead involves aspects of both honor and shame. Mourning honors the dead (or memory of the dead) and the remaining family. Westerners today retain this sense by describing visits to the funeral home as "paying respects" and at a national level through elaborate state funerals for fallen national heroes with flags flying at half-mast. Olyan has demonstrated through his creation of a taxonomy of burial rites found in the Hebrew Bible that ancient Israel also signified respect (or lack thereof) based on how the dead were buried and mourned.[65]

While mourning honors the dead, ritual mourning, such as the tearing of clothes and dishevelment, involves acts that dishonor the self. In social science models, the head is the part of the body associated with honor and garments are external manifestations of status, so dishevelment of the head and the tearing of clothes are acts of self-humiliation.[66] Medina argues from Job and the myth of Baʿlu that this ritual mourning is a withdrawal from a normal mode of life and entrance into a liminal state, where the mourners are stripped of clothes that are symbolic of a life of purity (life being "in place") and enter into a state of impurity ("out of place"). Thus, they ritually identify with death and potentially come into contact with the dead.[67]

This understanding is strengthened by noting the parallels between the prohibition by Moses in Leviticus 10 and the instructions for people with skin disease a few chapters later. The word for tearing of clothes (פרם) in 10:6 is extremely rare, occurring elsewhere only in the

[65] Saul M. Olyan, "Some Neglected Aspects of Israelite Interment Ideology," *JBL* 124.4 (2005): 601–16. See also idem, "Jehoiakim's Dehumanizing Interment as a Ritual Act of Reclassification," *JBL* 133.2 (2014): 271–79; Seth Richardson, "Death and Dismemberment in Mesopotamia: Discorporation between the Body and Body Politic," in *Performing Death: Social Analyses of Funerary Traditions in the Ancient Near East and Mediterranean*, ed. Nicola Laneri, Oriental Institute Seminars 3 (Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2007), 198.
[66] Malina, *The New Testament World*, 35; Pitt-Rivers, "Honour and Social Status," 25; Pederson, "Honor and Shame," 227.
[67] See Richard W. Medina, "Job's Entrée into a Ritual of Mourning as Seen in the Opening Prose of the Book of Job," *WO* 38 (2008): 194–210. On the tearing of garments, see Morris Jastrow, Jr. "The Tearing of Garments as a Symbol of Mourning, with Especial Reference to the Customs of the Ancient Hebrews," *JAOS* 21 (1990): 23–39.

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priestly instructions on mourning in 21:10 and in instructions for people with skin disease in Leviticus 13:45–46, where skin-diseased people also follow the pattern of tearing their clothes, disheveling their hair, and calling out "unclean" outside the camp.[68] The camp being the place of normal life is contrasted with life outside the camp—the place of death—accompanied by actions that symbolize impurity, including verbalization of their impure state. The parallel of dishevelment and tearing clothes between the mourners and the skin-diseased persons further suggests that the former also enter into a ritually unclean state.

With this understanding of ritual mourning as both honoring the dead and entrance into a liminal (and unclean) state associated with death involving self-humiliation, Moses' commands to avoid ritual mourning (10:6) illuminate the relationship between holiness and honor in 10:3. Because the priests are in a state of ritual holiness, it is inappropriate to enter into a ritual state of impurity associated with mourning the dead. But maintaining ritual holiness and not mourning violates family and communal expectations about mourning and signals that Aaron and his sons have chosen to honor Yhwh above his family. Aaron's silence in 10:3 may already foreshadow his willingness to honor Yhwh before instruction is given.[69] The cultic system of distinctions of holy/common and clean/unclean are kept when Yhwh is honored above all (cf. 10:3). In contrast to those who see 10:8–10 as a jarring intrusion, Aaron's honoring of Yhwh (over family/community expectations) by guarding the sancta against impurity leads directly to Yhwh honoring Aaron[70] by authorizing him to make distinctions and teach the difference between the

[68] Wenham, *The Book of Leviticus*, 200.
[69] In this context, Aaron's silence in 10:3 may already anticipate the commands and obedience to not mourn in 10:6–7 and be a more culturally and textually fitting motivation than Watts' modern description of "professionalism" (Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, 524).
[70] Jumper, "Honor and Shame in the Deuteronomic Covenant,"146–47, expounds well how the honor for honor and shame for shame may also be found in the cultic context of 1 Sam 2:29–30 as well as Mal 1:6–2:9.

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holy and profane, pure and impure. Indeed, Aaron exemplifies maintaining the distinctions of holiness in a difficult situation, which makes it fitting for him to teach others on how to uphold these distinctions in the midst of life's varied circumstances, which characterize the many aspects of life that the purity instructions cover in Leviticus 11–15.

This honorable grant that Aaron receives has parallels to the ordination of the Levites after the Golden Calf incident. In Exodus 32:25–29, following cultic failure, the sons of Levi choose to honor Yhwh over family in "joining Yhwh's side" and slaughtering other sons of Israel, for which they are ordained to service as Yhwh's representatives. The pattern of cultic failure followed by Aaron's honoring of Yhwh over family in Leviticus 10 suggests a basis for his honorable grant of cultic authority that follows. Thus, 10:6–7 illustrates the parallel nature of holiness and honor in 10:3 and anticipates 10:8–11. While Houston suggests that Aaron is dishonored in the chapter, in fact, Aaron ultimately ends this chapter with honor granted because he has honored Yhwh in contrast to Nadab and Abihu.[71] Aaron's honoring of Yhwh also prepares the reader to understand Aaron's exercise of cultic interpretative authority later in the chapter, when he again allows honoring of Yhwh to guide his decisions.

4.5.4 Leviticus 10:6–7 and Narrative Tension

The threat of death in the presence of Yhwh is illustrated in the example of Nadab and Abihu, but Yhwh's assessment, presented in parallel lines, extends the requirements of holiness and honor from the priests to the people. Leviticus 10:6–7 also heightens the tension of life and

[71] Houston, "Tragedy in the Courts," 34. Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, 523–24, also notes that in contrast to the theme of errant sons throughout the Hebrew Bible that many, including Houston, reference, Aaron does not suffer his sons' fate.

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possible death in the presence of Yhwh. The command not to mourn is motivated by “lest you die, and wrath come upon the congregation” in verse 6, and obedience is compelled with the threat “lest you die” repeated in verse 7. This threat not only heightens the narrative tension developed in 10:1–5; it also extends the threat to the people, as priestly disobedience will have consequences for the entire congregation. While this tension rises, we note that the tension of priestly reliability begins to be mitigated by notes of priestly obedience in verses 5, 7.[72]

4.5.5 Leviticus 10:8–11: Purity and Tension

A. Ambiguous Ritual Failure/Judgment and Aaron and Moses’ response (1–5)
B. Moses Instructs Aaron, Eleazar, and Ithamar (6–7)
C. **Yhwh’s instructions to Aaron (8–11)**
B´. Moses Instructs Aaron, Eleazar, and Ithamar (12–15)
A´. Ambiguous Ritual Disagreement and Aaron and Moses’ response (16–20)

Leviticus 10:8–11 present a unique address from Yhwh directly to Aaron—one of only two times this occurs in the Pentateuch[73]—that grants him the interpretive authority to distinguish between the holy and common, pure and impure and the responsibility to teach Israel. As noted above, this authorization occurs directly in the middle of the narrative and divides the chapter into two parallel parts—each of which contains an ambiguous cultic situation involving Aaron’s sons. The uniqueness of this address and its centrality within the passage lend credence to the argument that the chapter emphasizes the priestly authority granted to Aaron, which he exercises even over Moses in the second half of the chapter. In the face of a dangerous job,

[72] Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, 508.
[73] Yhwh also address Aaron in Num 18 (vv. 1, 8, 20). In Num 16–18 priestly authority is contested, an inappropriate approach with censers full of incense also lead to death. This leads to speculation that Lev 10 also addresses priestly power, although it is unclear exactly how. See Meyer, “Getting Bad Publicity and Staying in Power,” 1–7.

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ongoing success in the cult and the successful exercise of that authority build confidence in Aaron and his sons.

In my reading, this section flows smoothly *from* Aaron's honoring of Yhwh in maintaining purity in the sancta (10:6–7) *to* the honor of his authorization (10:8–11). This section also continues to develop the relationship between priest and people and raises the tension of the possibility of death for both parties in the presence of the Holy One. This possibility of death illustrated in the priesthood before the people (10:1–3) is heightened by the repeated reference to death—"lest you die" (מות)—in 10:6–7 and extended from both priest to people, and continues here implicitly as the *raison d'etre* of what Aaron is to teach the people. The purity instructions that follow in Leviticus 11–15 essentially conclude in 15:31, where priests must help the community maintain purity in approaching the tabernacle "lest they die" (מות) by approaching the sancta in a state of impurity. The chapter, which began with Nadab and Abihu's punishment, has steadily developed the necessary relationship between priests and people as well as the potential threat of death extended from both priests to people (esp. 10:6 and 10:11 vis-à-vis 15:31).

Although the narrative and Yhwh's oracle increase his awe and honor before the people, the threat of death that has arisen could potentially paralyze those intending to draw near. This threat is heightened by the necessity of adjudicating black and white regulations when they come into contact with the ambiguous circumstances that arise in daily life (e.g., how fresh does the fresh water for washing need to be? [Lev 14:5]). I raise this issue not out of some common-sense reasoning of the practicalities of maintaining purity but because of how the remainder of the chapter unfolds with Aaron exercising his authority to make a purity "judgment call." How does the text address a need to make judgment calls when the situation is ambiguous? Bibb suggests

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that systems of law appear complete but actually have gaps, and Nadab and Abihu fell into such a gap, which necessitated the additional legislation that follows in Leviticus 11–15.[74] As mentioned above, it is telling that Bibb's argument moves from the ambiguity of Nadab and Abihu to the purity instruction (that fills some gaps) in Leviticus 11–15 while skipping over the conclusion of the chapter, which contains another ambiguity. In contrast to Bibb's paradigm, the solution to ambiguity in the second half of Leviticus 10 is not additional legislation but authorized interpretation (so Watts) aimed at honoring Yhwh (my emphasis). Complementing Watts's argument, I will now argue that the issues are not just priestly reliability and reestablished obedience but confidence that the priest can enable acceptable adjudication to ambiguous situations and provide confidence to approach Yhwh in the face of potential death.

4.5.6 Leviticus 10:12–15, 16–20

A. Ambiguous Ritual Failure/Judgment and Aaron and Moses' response (1–5)
B. Moses Instructs Aaron, Eleazar, and Ithamar (6–7)
C. Yhwh's instructions to and authorization of Aaron (8–11)
B´. **Moses Instructs Aaron, Eleazar, and Ithamar (12–15)**
A´. Ambiguous Ritual Disagreement and Aaron and Moses' response (16–20)

I will treat the final two sections of the story (B´, A´) more quickly, keeping in mind how they build off of Aaron's authorization found at the center of the concentric structure (C) and how they compare and contrast with the parallels found in the first half of the chapter (A, B). Verses 12–15 parallel verses 6–7 most obviously in that Moses commands the same three people—Aaron, Eleazar, and Ithamar—and in each case gives instructions about how to deal with the aftermath of Nadab and Abihu's death. But in contrast to their obedience in verses 6–7,

[74] Bibb, *Ritual Words*, 111–31.

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the remaining sons of Aaron do not follow Moses' instructions to eat the grain offering in the holy place. This introduces a situation parallel to 10:1–2, where two sons of Aaron do something, or in this case do not do something, for reasons the text does not make clear. The narrative ambiguity in the "act of commission" in verses 1–2 raises the question: *what* command did they break? Here the commands of Moses are very clear, so the "act of omission" raises a question of *why* the sons ignored them. Like the ambiguity in Nadab and Abihu's actions, there are no shortage of attempts to "solve" the problem.[75] While I agree with Watts' idea that the lack of narrative detail addressing the particulars suggests that the rhetorical interest lays elsewhere, I disagree with him about what that interest is. Watts suggests Aaron's response is ambiguous and that it is not what Aaron says that is important, but it is the fact that he is the one saying it and asserting cultic interpretive authority over Moses that has the rhetorical effect.[76] However, in contrast to Watts, who suggests *both* the situation and Aaron's response are ambiguous, it is more natural to see the ambiguity of the cultic situation leading to Aaron's statement as a clarifying response. While Aaron doesn't resolve the ambiguity by stating his cultic reasoning (just as Yhwh didn't specify what command was violated in 10:3), Aaron's statement clearly reveals *how* he arrived at his conclusion, which I will argue resolves the tension of interpreting holiness distinctions in relation to ambiguous situations that could lead to death.

[75] It is possible that Aaron and his sons didn't want to eat because they were fasting while mourning. However, given the way this section parallels 10:6–7, which proscribes mourning while in a state of holiness, it seems unlikely they would participate in one aspect of ritual mourning while eschewing others. More likely the priests thought that despite starting the ritual according to the regulations for an individual sin offering, the circumstances warranted following the instructions for the communal sin offering (cf. Lev 4:11–12, 21, as opposed to 6:24-30). Or perhaps they thought the strange fire that resulted in corpse defilement had defiled the altar (Lev 5:2–3; cf. Lev 21:11; Num 6:9; 19:14) and the offerings on it. For a helpful, succinct overview of options see Awabdy, *Leviticus*, 260.
[76] Watts, *Leviticus 1–10*, 509–10, 514, 531.

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> And Aaron said to Moses,
> “Behold, today they have offered their sin offering and their burnt offering before Yhwh,
> and yet such things as these have happened to me!
> If I had eaten the sin offering today,
> would it be good in the eyes of Yhwh?” (10:19, author’s translation)

In response to Moses’ anger for not complying with his command, Aaron speaks. This speech contrasts with his silence in the first half of the narrative (10:3) and demonstrates his newly granted authority (10:8–11). However, it also verbally expresses honor in continuity with his actions that honored Yhwh in 10:6–7, which in turn led to his authorization. The first half of Aaron’s statement rehearses Nadab and Abihu’s failed offering and glosses their death relative to his grief. Against this background, he presents a rhetorical question indicating that his consideration of eating the sin offering is made in light of what would be good in the eyes of Yhwh. The implied answer to the rhetorical question is that it would not be *good in the eyes of* Yhwh, and the narrative uses this catch phrase to state this this was *good in the eyes of* Moses (v. 20). Aaron’s rhetorical question demonstrates he has given weight (read: honor) to Yhwh’s perspective and implies it would not be good. The concluding verse is voiced by the narrator who reports Moses’ approval in response to Aaron’s judgment, thus affirming Aaron’s interpretation that honored Yhwh and also honoring Aaron’s interpretive authority.

Aaron’s statement in 10:19 parallels Yhwh’s statement in 10:3 in that neither clarifies the precise cultic particulars that may interest us but instead direct our attention to whether Yhwh was honored or not. Aaron’s giving weight to the wishes of Yhwh repeats his honoring of Yhwh in 10:6–7 and aligns with Yhwh’s call to be honored in 10:3 in a cultic context. Honor undergirds Aaron’s navigation of the cultic distinctions of holiness, and in an ambiguous situation when legal compliance is hard to discern, honor is accepted. This acceptance by Yhwh provides relief from the increasing tension created by the “lest you die” statements throughout the first half of the chapter. The clear contrast is between Nadab and Abihu, who did not honor

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Yhwh and died, and Aaron, whose actions and interpretation honor Yhwh. The rhetorical effect is to enhance the honor of Yhwh upon pain of death but not paralyze listeners. Honor is both necessary and enables navigation through the distinctions of holiness even in the face of ambiguity. This, in turn, confers status upon the priesthood in relationship to the honor of Yhwh.

4.5.7 Conclusions

Lev 10 provides a good entry into honor in a cultic narrative context, which allows the narrative to highlight how honor mediates relational transactions in a cultic setting. This socio-rhetorical investigation into Leviticus 10 began with the thesis that a social science model of honor could provide a suitable context against which to read Leviticus 10 and result in a coherent reading. I've argued that Yhwh's narrated response to Nadab and Abihu's actions imply that amidst the people he will ensure his sanctity and honor. In contrast to the dishonor of Nadab and Abihu, Aaron honors Yhwh and maintains holiness by avoiding ritually impure, although culturally expected, mourning. This in turn explains why Yhwh honors Aaron in 10:8–11 by granting him authority to make and teach these distinctions, which he in turn exercises later in the chapter using honor as his guide. Besides illuminating how verses 1–5, 6–7, and 8–11 are more tightly linked than commonly presumed, honor also provides insight into a layer of tension and resolution within the chapter. Namely, the first half of the chapter raises the possibility of death for disobedience in 10:1–3, which is extended to the listener in 10:6–7 explicitly and then implicitly in 10:8–11 and 15:31. However, Aaron's interpretation in the second half illustrates how honor enables the system of holiness distinctions to be navigated, even in the face of life's ambiguities, in a way that affirms the status of the priesthood ultimately in light of their honor of

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Yhwh. This reading accents the oracle of Yhwh (10:3) and speech of Aaron (10:19) instead of minimizing them as ambiguous and unimportant.

The results of this analysis confirm the predominant view that Leviticus 10, although complex, is organized into a coherent narrative that affirms priestly authority. However, it establishes priestly status, not on the basis of the implied reliability of the priesthood in undertaking normal operations in a dangerous context but on the basis of the honor of Aaron granted in response to his honor of Yhwh. Honor more tightly coordinates the status of the priesthood relative to the supreme status given to Yhwh in the chapter. Watts argues that the rhetorical interest focuses on elevating the status of the priesthood in a postexilic setting when cultic authority was contested. However, within this setting the honor of Yhwh was also in question[77] and this threatened the cult (cf. Mal 1:6–2:9), since a cult will only function if the deity is honored.

The rhetorical effect of the chapter is to uphold the honor of Yhwh and demonstrate the necessity of honor in approaching Yhwh in his holiness upon threat of death. Simultaneously it demonstrates how priests, through honoring Yhwh, can interpret ambiguous life circumstances when they come into contact with the distinctions of holiness, which relieves the tension of death and gives confidence that Yhwh may be approached in his holiness through honor. Aaron's honoring of Yhwh leads to the honorable grant he receives, which leads to his interpretive act that explicitly honors Yhwh. Thus, honor undergirds the maintenance of distinctions in the system of holiness and coordinates the status of Yhwh, priests, and people.

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[77] Israel was still in servitude to foreign powers. Ezekiel reports (Ezek 36:20, 23–24; 39:7) that Yhwh's name has been defiled among the nations by the actions of the people, damaging his reputation. See Pohlmann, *Hesekiel 20–48*, 486–87.

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4.6 Leviticus 24 Issues Overview

With a coherent reading of Leviticus 10 in hand, we now turn to the narrative pericope in Leviticus 24:10–23 commonly known as the story of the Blaspheming Son. We recall here that Luciani, building on Douglas, argued persuasively that beyond surface parallels of two narratives moving from transgression → death → further legal reflection, the broader context of Leviticus 8–10 and Leviticus 23–24 have structural similarities of a consecration of seven rites followed by a bipartite liturgy.[78] I argued above that Leviticus 10 can be coherently read through a lens of honor, which warrants an examination of Leviticus 24:10–23 through a lens of honor. Further confirmation that the honor of Yhwh may be at stake comes from the use of קלל (the antonym of כבד found in Lev 10) and the concept of Name. So, we will again proceed with a socio-rhetorical approach, looking to see if it leads to a coherent, thick reading that explains the story relative to a network of underlying cultural presuppositions. This analysis will be the basis for a further investigation of the location of this pericope, which recall from chapter 3 is often considered poorly placed.

Leviticus 24:10–23 contains a short narrative followed by an oracle. The surface of the narrative is fairly simple—the son of an Israelite mother and Egyptian father fights an Israelite man, misuses the name of God in some way, and is arrested. Moses seeks instruction from God, receives it, and the man is stoned. But under the surface this text is quite complex. Much like

[78] In Lev 8–9 the sanctuary space is consecrated with seven rites followed by a bipartite liturgy—a sacrifice for the clergy and a sacrifice for the people before the Nadab and Abihu narrative. While in Lev 23–24 there is the consecration of sacred time (as opposed to space) that takes the form of seven feasts followed by a bipartite inauguration of the lighting of the lamps and presentation of the loaves before the Blaspheming Son narrative. Luciani, "Une Autre Intention Pour Lv 24," 594–99, notes that the bipartite inauguration is strengthened further by noticing that in Lev 9 it is a sacrifice for the clergy and people, and in Lev 24 the menorah belongs to the tent of worship on the side of the priests while the twelve loaves likely stand for the people.

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Leviticus 10, it is ambiguous as to what the man actually said that the narrator describes by the verbs נקב and קלל.[79] The semantic range of the verbs admits several possibilities, as does the syntactic relationship between the two verbs, which could describe one action or two. Then the instruction Moses receives following his arrest is woven into an extensive concentric structure that mixes injury, property damage, and homicide in with blasphemy, whose connection with the story is not immediately apparent.

To interpret this complex passage, we will first consider the form of the text to establish the expectation that the narrative and casuistic legal material are integrated and mutually interpretive. Next, we will examine its intertexts in the Covenant Code to provide further appreciation of how the author reshaped elements from the Covenant Code into a distinctive message. Then we will examine the various cruces of narrative by articulating the semantic domain of the two verbs involved, enumerating their possible syntactic relationships, considering historical concerns that affect their interpretation, and noting how they are used again in this casuistic law. Finally, we will examine the oracle that follows, noting its extensive concentric structure, and argue for a view that integrates the narrative with the particularity of the oracle. To adumbrate the complex argument, I will argue that the concentrically arranged oracle creates a cosmology organized around the Name of Yhwh at its pinnacle, which provides insight into the nature of the offense that precedes it. This will prepare the way for the investigation of the "seeming misplacement" of this text.

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[79] Mark Leuchter, "The Ambiguous Details in the Blasphemer narrative: sources and Redaction in Leviticus 24:10–23," *JBL* 130.3 (2011): 434. Similarly Bernon Lee, "Unity in Diversity: The Literary Function of the Formula of Retaliation in Leviticus 24.15–22." *JSOT* 38.3 (2014): 352.

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4.7 Introductory Issues

4.7.1 Form and Expectation

Leviticus 24:10–23 shares the same form as three "oracular novellae"[80] in Numbers: the Missed Sabbath dilemma (Num 9:6–14), the Sabbath Stick Gatherer dilemma (Num 15:32–36), and the Daughters of Zelophehad dilemma (Num 27:1–11). In each passage a "hard case" necessitates that Moses inquire of Yhwh to resolve the issue.[81] Comparing the Blaspheming Son to these other oracular novellae yields two insights that are helpful in understanding our text. First, the Blaspheming Son in Leviticus is most similar in narrative and conclusion to the Sabbath Stick Gatherer. In both narratives an offense leads to a community arrest, inquiry of Yhwh by Moses, and stoning by the community outside the camp. Both the Sabbath Stick Gatherer and the Blaspheming Son conclude with a similar command and compliance of stoning (Lev 24:13–14, 23–24; Num 9:6–14) that is presented in a tight concentric structure. But where the Sabbath Stick Collector's concentric structure contains only command and compliance of stoning, the Blaspheming Son concentric structure also incorporates legislation on injury, property damage, and homicide alongside blasphemy. This raises the question of how such diverse material in the concentric structure relates to the narrative, which I will seek to answer

[80] Chavel, *Oracular Law and Priestly Historiography in the Torah*.

[81] Johnson considers that the appeal to Yhwh is in the form a rescript, a concept he borrows from the later Roman world, where the king is appealed to in a hard case, and his decision becomes a source of law. This pattern is apparent in Old Babylonian texts (e.g. Hammurabi). Johnson's conclusion about this pattern, is that it fits the form of lèse-majesté, where speaking poorly of authority, usually kings but also by association gods, is cause for capital offense. This aligns with my argument, even as he argues that קלל means to curse rather than the dishonor (make light of). While this comparison in form is interesting, I will argue along other lines, noting how Leviticus 24 clearly borrows from and transforms the Covenant Code in a structure that emphasizes Yhwh's status in a alignment with the narrative. In my view, this is a stronger avenue of interpretation than taking one of the latest texts of the HL and comparing it to Old Babylonian forms. On this, see the critique of Eckhart Otto, "Review of Dylan R. Johnson, Sovereign Authority and the Elaboration of Law in the bible and the Ancient Near East," in *Theologische Leteraturzeitung* (146) 2021, 42-45.

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below. Second, in this genre, the enduring casuistic laws of the oracles are a natural outgrowth of the dilemma in the narrative.[82] While it may not be immediately apparent how injury, property damage, and homicide relate to blasphemy, the form leads us to expect that there will be a tight relationship between the narrative and the law that follows.

4.7.2 Leviticus 24:10–23 and the Covenant Code

Besides the similarity in *form* to the oracular novellae, Leviticus 24:10–23 contains remarkable similarities to the *content* in the Covenant Code. Following the Ten Words and altar laws, Vroom notes that the categories of law in Exod 21:1–22:16 are carefully followed in Leviticus 24 and 25.[83]

Manumission laws	Exod 21:1–11	→	Lev 25
Capital offenses between humans	Exod 21:12–17	→	Lev 24:17, 21b
Bodily injury between humans	Exod 21:18–27	→	Lev 24:19–20
Property related offenses	Exod 21:28–22:16	→	Lev 24:18–21a

The similarities don't just end with the categories used. The *talion* is quoted exactly from Exodus 21:23b–25[84] and it is matched by the verb שלם in the *piel* in both texts, which show the underlying purpose of restoration and compensation.[85] Nihan further notes that the brawl between the two men in Leviticus 24:10–11 is the same situation recounted in Exodus 21:22 with the same verb, נצה, used to describe it. Significantly, in each case the brawl is the impetus of the *talion* that follows in each text.[86] Finally, Lee notes that each code brings murder, injury, and

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[82] Vroom, "Recasting *Mišpāṭîm*," 29.
[83] Vroom, "Recasting *Mišpāṭîm*," 38-9. Although this final category includes capital crimes, the basic categorization of cases in the *mispâtîm* is murder, injury, and property.
[84] For an intriguing argument about how the 'displaced' 'life for life' phrase affects the aesthetics and meaning, see Lee, "Unity in Diversity," 297–313.
[85] Vroom, "Recasting *Mišpāṭîm*," 39.
[86] Nihan, *From Priestly Torah*, 513. In a later article, Nihan also argues that a "brawl motif" exists in ANE legal codes to introduce legislation. Besides Lev 24:10–23 and Exod 21:22, this is also found in the Hebrew Bible in Deut

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"cursing" (קלל, *piel*) under the penalty of death, making Leviticus 24 an adumbration of Exodus 21.[87] He also notes this enables the substitution of the deity (Lev 24) for the parents as the victim of verbal assault (Exod 21:17).[88]

The clear borrowing of content is helpful in at least two ways. First, because the author does not simply repeat the material, it draws attention to the selectivity and arrangement into a concentric structure. I will argue the arrangement is crucial to the integration between the oracle and preceding narrative and its overall rhetorical effect. Second, it also provides another context to explore the meaning of some of the verbs used, which we noted above is part of the difficulty of interpreting the text.

4.8 Reading the Text

4.8.1 Story Opening and Lineage

With the context of oracular novella and the Covenant Code in mind, we now turn to the narrative that opens Leviticus 24:10–23. The narrative begins by describing two men who fight and giving their lineage. One is a half-Israelite, half-Egyptian son, and he fights an Israelite man. Besides the lineage of the fighters, the narrative is also interrupted with another nominal clause that gives the name of the mother as Shelomith, the daughter of Dibri, of the tribe of Dan.

When the fight begins, the narrator specifies that the Israelite woman's son was fighting a son of Israel, which, given the sparse nature of Hebrew narratives, is likely a motive in the fight.

25:11–12. See Nihan, "Narrative and Exegesis in Leviticus," 215–16. This is confirmed in a more extensive study of ANE law in Dylan R. Johnson, *Sovereign Authority and the Elaboration of Law in the Bible and the Ancient Near East*, FAT 2/122 (Tübingen: Mohn Siebeck, 2020), 70.

[87] Lee, "Unity in Diversity," 310.

[88] Lee, "Unity in Diversity," 308.

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The oracle that follows twice specifies (vv. 16 and 22) that the same rule applies to the sojourner as well as the native. The tight binding between the narrative and oracle suggests that the ancestry answers the question of the extent of the law and concern for holiness in the land, which is also addressed in Leviticus 17:8, 10, 12, 13, 15; 18:26; 20:2; 22:18. This story serves to emphasize the point that holiness concerns everyone in the land, Israelite and גר.

There is no consensus[89] on the purpose of giving the mother's name and lineage: Shelomith, the daughter of Dibri, of the tribe of Dan. Leuchter attempts to read the title as a royal ascription to a queen meant to indicate Solomon, son of Bathsheba, who is from Lo-Dibar, who built the temple where the Name dwells.[90] This subtle clue is intended to mark a shift between the Name being associated with the temple, per D, and associating it with keeping the law in H. While this proposal is certainly interesting, its complexity rests on fairly slim connections and may account for the tentative language in his proposal.[91]

Another approach is to translate the words directly and note connections to the story. Douglas suggests a translation of the names in the context of the story as: "there was a man (with no name), son of Shelomith-Retribution, grandson of Dibri-Lawsuit, from the house of Dan-Judgement."[92] She associates Shelomith with *shellummat* and Dan with judgment from Gen 49:16. This follows the basic contours of the narrative and oracle that follows.

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[89] Trevaskis, "The Purpose of Leviticus 24 within its Literary Context," 308.
[90] Her title is similar to titles in 1 Kgs 14:21; 15:10; 22:42; 2 Kgs 18:2; 22:2. Also, Leuchter, "The Ambiguous Details in the Blasphemer Narrative," 446, surmises that the exodus context works on the level of the tribes of the north being freed from Solomon and his son.
[91] E.g., "it may be fruitful to consider," "it's not too distant leap to assume." Leuchter, "The Ambiguous Details in the Blasphemer Narrative," 439.
[92] Douglas, *Leviticus as Literature*, 207.

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Trevaskis offers a more straightforward "Peace, the daughter of My Word" of the tribe of Dan, although he concludes that scholars don't really know what the significance is. I conclude that none of these attempts are decisive. I favor Trevaskis' straightforward translation and note that שׁלם appears in the oracle as well in 24:18 and 21 in the sense of making right or repaying. In this way, the narrator frames the story about recompense according to "my word," which accents the justice of the *talion* that follows the narrative. The tribe of Dan may allude the northern kingdom, but that is not developed in the narrative or the HL in general and so remains speculative. More likely, as Chavel has commented, the Danite detail merely serves to match the specificity of the Egyptian background with regards to his identity.[93]

4.8.2 Nature of Offense

Once the characters and their lineage are introduced and begin fighting, the son of the Egyptian blasphemes or invokes the Name (נקב; *qal*) and curses or make light of (קלל, *piel*) Yhwh. We should note at the start that the narrative does not specify precisely what he said, so the particulars of the offense are not made known to the listener.[94] Just as in the Nadab and Abihu episode, we aren't trying to "solve" what the specific words that were spoken that lay behind the text but attending to how the narrator describes their actions. However, this is not a simple task, as there are a variety of meanings of the verbs in the text that need adjudication. To determine their meaning, we will consider their semantic domain, syntactical relationship, the restatement of these verbs in the legislation, and their use in the Covenant Code.

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[93] Chavel, *Oracular Law,* 44.
[94] Leuchter, "The Ambiguous Details in the Blasphemer Narrative," 434. Similarly Lee, "Unity in Diversity," 352.

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נקב by itself has a range of meanings from "pierce" to "invoke."[95] Further, in some forms it is indistinguishable from the geminate verb קבב, which means to curse (which some would take to be a special case of נקב).[96] However, if we assume that the narrative and legislation that follow are integrally related, Leviticus 24:16 uses נקב in participle and infinitive construct forms, so we can rule out קבב and restrict our focus to נקב and its semantic range: to "bore a hole or pierce" and "invoke" (either positively or negatively). One related historical issue to this question is the taboo that developed at some point in Judaism against merely uttering the Name. It is possible that this story reflects that taboo, is the source of that taboo that developed later, or simply suggests a negative use based on the context unrelated to the taboo.[97] Within the oracle of judgment that follows, the two verbs are listed in parallel lines in verses 15b–16. In verse 16, נקב is listed as an offense worthy of death by itself, which might suggest that it means more than just a neutral sense of "invoke" in the narrative pericope.[98] Also, if a mere invocation was intended, it makes much of the rest of the story superfluous. More fitting to the context is Kamionkowski's argument that the meaning should be considered in light of the Name of Yhwh being a sanctum accessible to laity.[99] In this context, "to bore a hole" means to trespass into a sanctum in ways that are suggestive of Nadab and Abihu's entry (cf. Lev 10:1–3; 16:1).[100]

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[95] *HALOT*, 718–19.
[96] *HALOT*, 719, Rodney R. Hutton, "The Case of the Blasphemer Revisited (Lev XXIV 10-23)," *VT* 49.4 (1999): 534, n.9
[97] Hutton, "Blasphemer Revisited," 535–36.
[98] Hutton, "Blasphemer Revisited," 535.
[99] Kamionkowski, "Leviticus 24,10–23 in Light of H's Concept of Holiness," 74. She references Milgrom, *Leviticus 17–22*, 1634–36. Kamionkowski's argument is interesting, and I largely agree with some of her conclusions. However, it is hampered by her claim that the primary meaning of קלל is to curse, then immediately saying it means to lower someone's status (p. 77) and her reliance on a speculative argument of Yhwh's name as "some sort of portal" that expands or shrinks (p. 75).
[100] Johnson

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The second word, קלל, has the idea of "to make light of" (most often in the *qal* or *hiphil*) or "to curse" (most often in the *piel*), the latter of which is the form found in our text (24:11, 14, 15). In general, "all verbal and nominal forms [of קלל] can be understood semantically as reflecting a basic meaning 'be small, light, easy.'"[101] Several contextual and historical issues give additional insight. First, we can examine how קלל is used in the Covenant Code. On one hand, the penalty of death covers murder, injury, and "cursing/making light" (קלל, *piel*) of parents, which, as we saw above, makes 24 an adumbration of Exodus 21.[102] Lee notes this enables the substitution of the deity (Lev 24) for the parents as the victim of קלל (Exod 21:17).[103] Commentators on Exodus also wrestle with how to interpret קלל in Exodus 21:17. Generally, in the context of the Ten Words, where honor (כבד) of parents is required, קלל can be seen as its antonym and interpreted as dishonor.[104]

However, Exodus 22:27 uses קלל with respect to the deity in parallel with curse of the ruler: "You shall not קלל God, nor curse (ארר) a ruler of your people." Johnson notes that in the ANE, the crime of lèse-majesté (speaking poorly of the king), was placed in proximity to blasphemy in law codes, and "it stands to reason that in the ancient Near East they were largely synonymous."[105] Although this parallel is decisive for Milgrom, he also notes that cursing, as

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[101] Josef Scharbert, "קלל," *TDOT,* ed. Johannes Botterweck et. al. trans. David E. Green (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), 5:37-44.
[102] Lee, "Unity in Diversity," 310.
[103] Lee, "Unity in Diversity," 308.
[104] For example, Alexander argues, "[Exodus 21] V. 17 addresses the issue of how (adult) children relate to their parents. The *mishpat* is expressed using the pi. verb *qll* which has the sense 'treat with disrespect, abuse, derogate, denigrate, repudiate' (Sprinkle 1994:77). The verb itself is the antonym of *kvd,* 'to honour,' which is used in 20:12 in the Decalogue. As Brichto (1963:118–177) demonstrates, although *qll* is often translated 'to curse,' its semantic range is not restricted to uttering imprecations: it means 'to treat with disrespect, abuse, derogate, denigrate repudiate.'" T. Desmond Alexander, *Exodus*, Apollos Old Testament Commentary (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2017), 176.
[105] Johnson, *Sovereign Authority,* 93.

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opposed to reviling, employs the name of Yhwh.[106] Leviticus 24:15 makes clear that Yhwh is the object of the curse, not a deity who is being invoked. Hutton and Nihan argue that curses do not operate independently but rely on a deity for effectiveness.[107] For example, in 2 Kings 2:24 Elisha curses (קלל, *piel*) *in the name of Yhwh* youths who heckle him, and Yhwh sends bears to maul them. If we argue for קלל in the sense of curse, we would have to think through, even if it is only implied, what deity is being invoked in the curse. It doesn't make sense for Yhwh being cursed in the name of Yhwh. If Yhwh is the direct object and no deity is invoked, although we translate "curse" in English, the meaning would shade towards meaning "degrade" or "make light of."

4.8.3 Syntactical Relationship

Besides the meaning of each word, the syntactical connection must also be examined. Both verbs are presented in *wayyiqtol* form, which present several options that Hutton outlines:[108]

a. He did "A" and then he did "B" (sequential parallelism)
b. He did "A" in a "B" manner (adverbial modification)
c. He did "A" with the result that "B" happened (resultative coordination)
d. "A" happened when he did "B" (inverse resultative coordination)
e. He did "A"; that is to say, he did "B" (synonymous equation).

While the various options in the semantic domains of the verbs and their syntactic relationship yield twenty permutations, some reflection on the verbs narrows our options. For

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[106] Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 2109.
[107] Hutton, "Blasphemer Revisited," 537. Nihan, "Narrative and Exegesis in Leviticus," 216. Tischenko argues this more extensively in Sergei Tishcenko, "To Curse God? Some Remarks on Jacob Milgrom's Interpretation of Leviticus 24:10–16, 23," *Babel und Bibel* 3 (2006): 545–50.
[108] Hutton, "Blasphemer Revisited," 533.

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example, if נקב and קלל refer to blaspheme and curse, this seems to indicate two distinct actions and option (a) is the most likely option. If קלל refers to "make light of," then options (b) and (c) are more likely, with the invocation of the Name either making light of Yhwh's name or doing so in a way that was degrading. Option (d) could work for a variety of combinations of the meaning of the verbs, while option (e), being grammatically possible, is unlikely in this context, since the two verbs do not seem synonymous.

4.8.4 Options and Initial Conclusion

The semantic range of the verbs, the syntactical coordination, and the restatement of the verbs in the legislation lead to a large number of permutations, which are reflected in the literature and translations of the text.[109] Hutton lists five common options found in the literature:[110]

1. He blasphemed the divine name by using it in an illegitimate manner (*nqb*) and then he cursed (*qll*) God.
2. He invoked the divine name, thereby breaking the taboo against its mere use (*nqb*), and then (or "with the result that") he dishonored God (*qll*).
3. He invoked the divine name (*nqb*), not in itself a problem. But he did so in a curse or in a contemptuous manner (*qll*).
4. He broke the taboo against the mere use of the divine name (*nqb*) and then, as a foreigner (*ger*), he cursed (*qll*) his own native god(s).
5. He blasphemed the divine name by committing two offenses in one: Not only did he break the taboo against invoking the Name (*nqb*), but did so to curse God in the name of God's own self (*qll*).

To this list he adds one more, arguing that he blasphemed the divine name by using it illegitimately in some way (perhaps in a false accusation or a curse), thus breaking the

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[109] Hutton, "Blasphemer Revisited," 534.
[110] Hutton, "Blasphemer Revisited," 533-34. Transliteration in original.

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Decalogue prohibition against such use. In doing so the result was that he "degraded" or "dishonored" (God). That both actions are in themselves punishable offenses is the only possible reading of vv. 15b–16. However, we are not dealing with two distinct actions but rather with one action and its natural result.[111]

In evaluating these arguments for different views represented in this list, the most unlikely are views that see the text asserting a taboo over the mere mention of the Name. It is impossible to discern how early the taboo against invoking the Name began. While the taboo may have grown out of this text, it is unlikely this was the primary intention of the text, because the Name is commonly invoked (e.g., in oaths: "as Yhwh lives," 1 Sam 19:6; 1 Kgs 1:29; etc.). More decisively, if mere invocation is not allowed, the rest of the complex text is superfluous. At a minimum, the context suggests נקב references an understood misuse of the Name. This eliminates views 1, 4, and 5 above. However, in the context of Holiness Legislation, the natural meaning of נקב as "to penetrate" or "bore through" should be considered. The Name is a sanctum in the HL and misuse of it constitutes bringing the common into contact with a sanctum.

Vis-à-vis the relationship between נקב and קלל, along with the latter's meaning, Milgrom's case is plausible and coherent. He argues that קלל means "to curse" based on Exodus 22:27, where it is placed in parallel with not cursing (ארר) a ruler of one's people. The syntax admits of two actions—invoking the name negatively and cursing—which mirror their parallel use in the oracle (15b, 16). And this fits the context of the narrative.

[111] Hutton, "Blasphemer Revisited," 540.

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However, the argument by Hutton and two recent chapters by Nihan make a stronger case, in my estimation, that that קלל means to treat lightly or dishonor.[112] First, based on parallels with how curses are used elsewhere, it doesn't make sense to curse Yhwh in the name of Yhwh. And if he were cursing his own god, the entire story doesn't make sense in context. Second, although one could appeal to Exodus 22:27 for its use of קלל as "to curse," this is apodictic law. The rest of Leviticus 24 draws upon the brawling motif and the casuistic laws of Exodus 21:12–21:32, following the same categories of capital offenses (21:12–17), bodily injuries against humans (21:18–27), and property-related offenses (21:28–32) that Leviticus 24 takes up and reworks.[113] In this context, קלל refers to dishonor of parents that stands in contrast to the honor that is due them according to the Ten Words (Exod 20:12). Finally, as Chavel has noticed, the narrative consistently refers to the criminal condemned to death as המקלל, never as הנקב, which makes קלל sound more drastic than enunciating Yhwh's name.[114]

While I regard this as the stronger argument, it can be strengthened significantly through tighter integration with the oracle that follows and the role the Name plays there as the pinnacle of an "honor hierarchy," to which we now turn.

4.8.5 The Structure and Exegesis of the Oracle

The oracle is more straightforward compared to the many cruces in the narrative. Just as with the other oracular novellae, the narrative creates a problem that requires Moses to receive an

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[112] Hutton, "Narrative in Leviticus," 145–63; C. Nihan, "Murder, Blasphemy and Sacral Law: Another Look at Lev 24, 10–23," *ZAR* 17 (2011): 211–40; idem, "Narrative and Exegesis in Leviticus."
[113] Nihan, "Narrative and Exegesis in Leviticus," 215.
[114] He also argues that the narrator likely points to one violation, not two separate violations. See Chavel, *Oracular Law,* 32.

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oracle of Yhwh to resolve. In this case the oracle is presented[115] as an elaborate concentric structure, and for heuristic purposes we will break the structure into three regions in order to discuss the relationships between the parts. Some have argued that vss. 17-21, being the most tightly constructed structure, are composed from another source and added here.[116] However, as we will see below, this misses the way that all of 15b-22 is borrowed and reworked material from the Covenant Code to address the offense.[117] The additional words in 15b-16 and 22 are necessary break of the tight structure of 17-21 to address the specific offense from the narrative.

Region I

A [13] Then Yhwh spoke to Moses, saying,
B [14] "Bring out of the camp the one who made light of,
and let all who heard him lay their hands on his head,
and let all the congregation stone him.

C [15] And speak to the people of Israel, saying,

Region II
D Whoever makes light of his God shall bear his sin.
E [16] The one who blasphemes the name of Yhwh shall surely be put to death.
All the congregation shall stone him. <u>The sojourner as well as the native</u>,
when he blasphemes the Name, shall be put to death.

Region III
F [17] "Whoever takes a human life shall surely be put to death.
G [18] Whoever takes an animal's life shall make it good, life for life.
H [19] If anyone gives injury his neighbor, as he has done it shall be done to him,
I [20] fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth;
H' whatever gives injury he has given a person shall be given to him.
G' [21] Whoever kills an animal shall make it good,
F' and whoever kills a person shall be put to death.

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[115] This concentric structure follows Timothy Willis, "Blasphemy, Talion, and Chiasmus: The Marriage of Form and Content in Lev 24,13–23," *Bib* 90 (2009): 68–74.
[116] Chavel, *Oracular Law,* 70. Johnson, *Sovereign Authority,* 146-148.
[117] See especially Nihan, *From Priestly Torah,* 511-18.

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Region II'
E' [22] You shall have the same rule for the sojourner and for the native,
D' for I am Yhwh your God."

Region I'
C' [23] So Moses spoke to the people of Israel,
B' and they brought out of the camp the one who had made light of and stoned him with stones.
A' Thus the people of Israel did as Yhwh commanded Moses.

4.8.6 Region I

The concentric structure begins as a smooth transition from the narrative, where the Blaspheming Son was arrested and the people awaited clarity from the mouth of Yhwh. The outer ring is structured in the form of command and compliance:

A [13] Then Yhwh spoke to Moses, saying,
B [14] "Bring out of the camp the one who made light of,
and let all who heard him lay their hands on his head,
and let all the congregation stone him.
C [15] And speak to the people of Israel, saying,

C' [23] So Moses spoke to the people of Israel,
B' and they brought out of the camp the one who had made light of and stoned him with stones.
A' Thus the people of Israel did as Yhwh commanded Moses.

Both the command (A, B), and compliance (A', B') are mediated through Moses' speech (C, C'), and the blasphemer's action is referenced through קלל. The Blasphemer is removed from the camp, the place of life, and taken outside to the place of death—paralleling the scapegoat of Leviticus 16 in "bearing the iniquity away from the people."[118] As we noted above, these sections have a similar concentric form and content as the conclusion of the Sabbath stick collector in Numbers 9:6–14, which Milgrom translates woodenly:

[118] Bibb, *Ritual Words*, 155.

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A Then YHWH said to Moses: (v. 35)
B The man must be put to death
C Shall pelt him with stones
D the entire community outside the camp
X They took him out (v. 36)
D' the entire community outside the camp
C' They pelted him with stones
B' and he died—
A' as YHWH commanded Moses[119]

The parallels between the conclusions of the Blaspheming Son and the Wood Gatherer (Num 15:35–36) reinforce how naturally it would have been to have Leviticus 24:13–14 (command) and 24:23 (compliance) as the conclusion of this episode in Leviticus, which in turn highlights the significance of the *lex talionis* being woven into the structure, applied in ongoing casuistic law, and ultimately applied in the execution of the Blaspheming Son. To understand these linkages, we will examine the *talionic* core at the center (Region III) before returning to how the blasphemy is linked into the *talionic* structure in Region II, II'.

4.8.7 Region III

At the center of the oracle are seven carefully balanced lines with *lex talionis* the prominent feature at the center.

F [17] "Whoever takes a human life shall surely be put to death.
G [18] and one who takes the life of an animal shall make it good, life for life.

H [19] Whoever gives blemish to his neighbor, as he has done it shall be done to him,
I [20] fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth;
H' whatever blemish he has given a person shall be given to him.

G' [21] and one who kills an animal shall make it good,
F' and one who kills a person shall be put to death.

[119] Milgrom, *Leviticus 23–27*, 2130.

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As we noted above, based on the words used and categories covered, it appears that H has adumbrated Exod 21–22 and refashioned it into an artful concentric structure. Moving outward from the center of the structure, the concentric structure applies the *talion* to injuries to humans, death of animals, and death of humans. The *talion* governs each, although in slightly different ways: injuries between humans will be returned in kind, animals killed can be replaced, but the taking of human life will come at the cost of the killer's life. This is likely due to their relative status (cf. Gen 1:26–28; Gen 9:2), a point to which we will return shortly.

We can also note in passing that while each half of the concentric structure uses similar language that makes the parallels easy to identify, the second half of the concentric structure tends to be slightly shortened in various ways.[120] Verse 20b expresses the two phrases in verse 19 as one. Verse 21a reduces "life of an animal" to "animal" and eliminates "life for life." And 21b makes the death penalty for homicide less emphatic than verse 17. This stylistic difference brings into relief the starker difference between the two halves of Region II, to which we now turn.

4.8.8 Region II

We had seen that Region III contains the talionic core that provides the underlying logic of the command and compliance of the stoning found in Region I and I'. Region II stands between them both in space and content, as the *talionic* core is applied to blasphemy, which undergirds the command of stoning. Within the overall structure, Region II also stands out as the only unbalanced portion of the concentric structure. While Region III contains seven perfectly balanced lines, albeit with minor diminutions of the second half, Regions I and I' are matched by

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[120] Willis, "Blasphemy, Talion, and Chiasmus," 72.

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similar language to describe command and compliance, and Region II is significantly longer than Region II'.

D Whoever makes light of his God shall bear his sin.
E [16] The one who blasphemes the name of Yhwh shall surely be put to death.
All the congregation shall stone him. The sojourner as well as the native,
when he blasphemes the Name, shall be put to death.

E' [22] You shall have the same rule for the sojourner and for the native,
D' for I am Yhwh your God."

Three things are especially notable about this text. First, the clearest connection between the two sides of the concentric structure is the repetition of the law being applied to the native and sojourner (16b, 22a). In relationship to the narrative, the lineage of the half-Egyptian man raises an implicit question on the extent of the law and likely motivates the inquiry to Yhwh. Vroom notes that the Covenant Code has a national character meant for a national audience,[121] and the Holiness Legalization reworks the Covenant Code around the sancta and extends concern about purity to all who live in the land. This oracular novella ensures that the land would not be polluted by native or sojourner. However, this is balanced, as Johnson has noted, by the fact that offender is referenced though his crimes, not his ethnicity.[122]

Second, Region II is situated between the concrete command and compliance of stoning the Blaspheming Son and the *talionic* core. Moving out form the *talion* that covers injury, we then see a clear progression of the *talion* applied to animals, humans, and finally to deity. If injury requires a payback in kind, if killing a beast requires restitution in kind, if homicide requires the death penalty, what does denigrating the Divine Name require?[123] The logic of the

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[121] Vroom, "Recasting *Mišpāṭîm*," 35–36.
[122] Johnson, *Sovereign Authority,* 100.
[123] Lee, "Unity in Diversity," 310.

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talion placed within the concentric structure argues for death and signifies the gravity of the blasphemy.[124]

Nihan, drawing on Ruwe, points out that the nature of *talion* is mediated by the status in the hierarchy of relationships.[125] Only the strike against a fellow man is strictly mediated by the *talion*. Taking the life of an animal simply requires שלם, restoring the life that was lost, while קלל of Yhwh's name requires death. "For crimes against God or animals, the very disproportion between the offense and its sanction denotes the asymmetry characterizing the relationship between God, men and animals. Because animals are subordinated to men (Gen 1:28; 9:2–3), the sanction is lighter than the crime; and because men themselves are subordinated to God, the sanction is necessarily heavier."[126]

The third observation is related to the second point. If the concentric structure establishes a taxonomy, several authors have noted that the progression from animal to human to Yhwh constructs a cosmology of sorts.[127] They attempt to articulate this in various ways. Vroom argues that the taxonomy weds the secular offenses of murder, injury, and property damage with the sacral crime of blasphemy, thus forming a merism for all secular and sacral law, thereby accomplishing an agenda of incorporating law into the sacral sphere.[128] Nihan also suggests that the *talion* is shaped here "into a comprehensive reflection on the nature of justice in the context of the relationship of humans to God, to animals and to other humans."[129] He then suggestively

[124] Willis, "Blasphemy, Talion, and Chiasmus," 68.
[125] Nihan, *From Priestly Torah*, 518; Ruwe, *Heiligkeitsgesetz*, 333.
[126] Nihan, *From Priestly Torah*, 518.
[127] Vroom, "Recasting *Mišpāṭîm*," 29. More generally, Feldman persuasively argues how legal discourse is world-creating. See Liane M. Feldman, *The Story of Sacrifice: Ritual and Narrative in the Priestly Source*. FAT 2/141 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2020), 20.
[128] Vroom, "Recasting *Mišpāṭîm*," 31.
[129] Nihan, *From Priestly Torah*, 518.

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concludes that it communicates to the reader “that reverence for life begins with reverence for Yahweh himself, the creator of all creatures.”[130]

Recall that honor is not a reified substance but something discerned in relational transaction. The arrangement of the oracle creates a hierarchy centered on *talion*, and the asymmetric offenses and consequences point to the asymmetrical hierarchy of God, humans, and animals, demonstrating that weight that the Name of Yhwh is intended to have. Therefore, we have social transactions and sanctions that communicate a status hierarchy with Yhwh, more specifically his name, occupying the most honored position.

It is seeing Yhwh’s name at the top of the status hierarchy in terms of honor that strengthens the case that קלל means “to make light of” instead of “to curse.” The weight of Yhwh’s name in the cosmos makes treating his name lightly a capital offense. The *talion* at the core of the concentric structure makes the status hierarchy clear in the oracle that justifies the stoning in response to the offense in the narrative. Although Nihan makes the observation about the asymmetry of offense and consequence making a hierarchy, he does not explicitly use honor to describe it as such and thereby strengthen his argument that קלל means “to make light of.”

4.9 Conclusions: Leviticus 24:10–23

To summarize the argument to this point, the following three points are compelling and coherent. קלל is likely not “curse,” because one can’t curse Yhwh in the name of Yhwh but rather carries the natural meaning “to make light of.” Second, Leviticus 24:10–23 draws on the Covenant Code where the penalty of death associated with קלל is for parents. In the context of

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[130] Nihan, *From Priestly Torah*, 518.

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the Covenant Code, קלל is associated with dishonor, not cursing. And finally, קלל as "making light of" is most strongly confirmed by noting the concentric structure constructs a cosmology that places the Name of Yhwh at the peak of its status hierarchy. Because the narrative and oracle that follow are tightly integrated, the Name being at the peak of the status hierarchy with the *talion* at the center justifies the execution of the Blasphemer. The dynamics of honor in these relational transactions show that Yhwh's name has the most weight, more tightly integrates the two parts of the oracular novella, and gives more evidence that קלל means "to make light of."

Once again, a socio-rhetorical approach leads to a coherent reading of the text, strengthening connections between the narrative and oracle that follows. The rhetorical effect is to take Yhwh's name, already established as holy throughout the HL, and mandate that piercing that sanctum and thus making light of it is a capital offense because of the weight of the Name in the cosmos.

4.10 Conclusions: Leviticus 10 and 24

In this chapter we read two narrative pericopes in Leviticus according to our socio-rhetorical methodology. We began with a model of honor, signaled *prima facia* through language of כבד and קלל and Name, but this was held tentatively. The text itself would have to signal whether this was appropriate through a coherent reading. Coherence is, of course, signaled differently according to genre. In the case of the narrative of Leviticus 10, honor provided a coherent explanation for the transition from 10:6–7 to 10:8–10, an overall layer of tension and resolution in the chapter, and insight into the speeches of Yhwh and Aaron that many consider obscure. In the case of the oracular novella of 24, honor provided a stronger way to show the coherence between the narrative and the oracle that followed.

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Honor becomes another way to also see how Leviticus 10 and 24 are related. Besides the surface parallels of the narrative (transgression → death → further legal reflection) and structural similarities of a consecration of seven rites followed by a bipartite liturgy,[131] both stories are concerned about the honor of Yhwh through the language of כבד and קלל.

We can further argue that each story contains an ambiguous event that is subsequently characterized as a breach of holiness that dishonors Yhwh. Yhwh's oracle in response to Nadab and Abihu's strange fire asserted both his holiness and honor, and allows us to understand their actions as a violation of his sancta that dishonored him. This same pattern also fits the verbs that describe the Blaspheming Son's word. They נקב, which is a breach into the name of Yhwh, a sanctum, violating holiness in the land. This, in turn, made light of (read: dishonored) the Name.

However, for all these similarities, one dissimilarity that surfaced in our discussion of the structure of Leviticus still looms. While Leviticus 10 is so well integrated into its context (mirroring Lev 8–9, introducing Lev 11–15, and being recalled explicitly in Lev 16), Leviticus 24:10 was commonly noted as being out of place. I would like to revisit this question with the insights developed in this chapter to address the particularity of the offense in the context of the Holiness Legislation. Recall that Trevaskis argued that Leviticus 24:10–23 contrasted with a picture of Israel arrayed in worship in Leviticus 24:1–9 in the Sabbath context of Leviticus 23–25. My critique was that he did not address the particularity of the offense, the contrast was general, and he did not address the oracle, only the narrative. With the view developed above about the particularity of the offense being related to the honor of Yhwh that appears both in the narrative and in the status hierarchy/cosmology of the oracle, we are in a position to consider its

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[131] See pg. 107, n. 76.

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relationship to the context of the Holiness Legislation in general. Further, one intriguing insight from the analysis above was how the phrase "I am Yhwh" also appears in the only unmatched part of the structure. In Leviticus 24:13-24, the symmetry of Regions I/I' and Region III stood in sharp contrast to the asymmetry of Region II, repeated below for convenience:

D Whoever makes light of his God shall bear his sin.
E 16 The one who blasphemes the name of Yhwh shall surely be put to death.
All the congregation shall stone him. <u>The sojourner as well as the native</u>,
when he blasphemes the Name, shall be put to death.

E' 22 You shall have the same rule for <u>the sojourner and for the native</u>,
D' **for I am Yhwh your God**."

While the native and sojourner motif is repeated, all the instruction about blasphemy and making light of is matched only by the divine name formula, "I am Yhwh your God." This formula appears throughout the Holiness Legislation in significant ways, and of course it is not insignificant that the Holiness Legislation culminates in this pericope about the Name before it's concluding divine discourse of Leviticus 25:1–26:46.

Since both Leviticus 10 and Leviticus 24 are related so strongly, and Leviticus 10 has such an integral role in the first half of Leviticus, we now turn to consider the Name of Yhwh in the Holiness Legislation through the lens of honor and whether there is a relationship between the narrative pericope and the legislation that precedes it.

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Chapter 5

"I am Yhwh" in the Holiness Legislation

The Divine Name Formula (DNF) in its short form (אני יהוה—"I am Yhwh") and long form (אני יהוה אלהיכם—"I am Yhwh your God") is used forty-seven times in the Holiness Legislation (and twice in Lev 11). It has long been noted as a prominent feature of the text,[1] and this chapter will explore its purpose in the rhetoric of the HL. We will begin by surveying the use of the DNF and confirm that its volume and strategic deployment make it a major structural feature of the Holiness Legislation. Since structure is meaningful,[2] we will then review major theories about the meaning of the DNF. Next, I will argue that the DNF not only signifies the authority of Yhwh but also his honor. Finally, the DNF signifying honor will be used to complete the argument begun in chapter 4 about the location of the Blaspheming Son pericope. I will argue that the Blaspheming Son dishonoring Yhwh's holy name is an archetypical violation that stands in contrast to the DNF that structures the HL and frames obedience in terms of holiness and honor.

5.1 "I am Yhwh" Initial Survey

We will briefly review where the DNF appears in the Holiness Legislation, noting its structuring function and density and secondarily surfacing observations about how it is used for discussion later in the chapter.

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[1] A. Klostermann, "Ezechiel und das Heiligkeitsgestez," 374.
[2] Milgrom, *Leviticus 17–22*, 1322.

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5.1.1 Chapter 17

Chapter 17 does not contain the DNF, which is part of the larger discussion of whether the chapter is an addendum to Leviticus 16, the first chapter of the Holiness Legislation, or a sign of its transitional nature as argued above in §3.9.[3]

5.1.2 Chapters 18 and 20

Chapter 18 opens with a divine address to Moses in verse 1, followed by an opening exhortation (vv. 2–5) and concluding exhortation (vv. 24–30) that frame a legislative core governing sexual relationships and briefly touching on idolatry (vv. 6–23).[4]

It is significant that the entire discourse opens with the command to say to the people, "I am Yhwh your God." This is the only use of the DNF as a preamble to the instruction that follows in the HL,[5] and it roughly parallels the introduction to the Decalogue (Exod 20:2).[6] This is followed by two additional uses of the DNF (18:4, 5) that punctuate the introduction to the instruction that follows, calling Israel to live differently from the nations and to keep Yhwh's statutes to have life. Diesel argues that subsequent use of the DNF in the Holiness Legislation, although sometimes ambiguous, may always be read against this introduction, which undergirds the entire composition.[7]

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[3] See also Anja Angela Diesel, *Ich bin Jahwe: Der Austieg der Ich-bin-Jahwe-Aussage zum Schlüsselwort des alttestamentlichen Monotheismus*, WMANT 110 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukrichener Verlag, 2006), 239.

[4] This structure is common. See, e.g., Wellhausen, *Composition*, 152; Elliger, *Leviticus*, , 231; Klaus Grünwaldt, "Das Heiligkeitsgesetz Leviticus 17–26," In *Das Heiligkeitsgesetz Leviticus 17–26: Ursprungliche Gestalt, Tradition und Theologie*, BZAW 271 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014), 57, 176; Ruwe, *Heiligkeitsgesetz*, 182; Nihan, *From Priestly Torah*, 431–32.

[5] Walther Zimmerli, "I Am Yahweh" in *I Am Yahweh* trans. Douglas W. Scott (Eugene, Wipf and Stock, 1982), 3.

[6] Zimmerli, "I Am Yahweh," 10; Diesel, *Ich bin Jahwe*, 212; Milgrom, *Leviticus 17–22*, 1517.

[7] Diesel, *Ich bin Jahwe*, 248, states, "Die Vorkommen der ʻanî Yhwh-Aussage in Lev 18,2–5 machen deutlich, dass die Aussage im Bewusstsein einer bestimmten inhaltlichen Füllung gebraucht wird. Wenn im Verlauf der folgenden Kapitel mit unter der Eindruck entstehen kann, die Aussage werde sehr schematisch verwendet und ein inhaltlicher Grund für ihre Verwendung nicht immer ausgemacht werden kann, so ist m.E. doch von Lev 18,2–5 her die inhaltliche Füllung stets mitzuhören. See also Zimmerli, *I Am Yahweh*, 179–209.

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The final exhortation in verses 24–30 concludes with the DNF in verse 30. This marks the first of many times that the DNF concludes a section.[8] Within the central legislative core of the chapter, the DNF is placed asyndetically next to the first command in verse 6 and appears asyndetically next to the call to not profane the name of Yhwh through child sacrifice to Molech in verse 21. This last example is not structurally significant but instead accents a particular command and adds rhetorical emphasis. The command not to profane Yhwh's name is often emphasized with the DNF (cf. 18:21; 19:12; 22:2, 32).

Chapter 20 contains similar material as chapter 18: Molech worship and sexual ethics are interspersed with exhortations (vv. 7–8, 22–26). However, in contrast to chapter 18, the laws are given in casuistic form and organized by the severity of penalty,[9] with idolatry leading to death (vv. 2b–6), sexual immorality leading to death (vv. 10–16), and sexual immorality leading to כרת (vv. 17–21).

The opening set of commands that prohibit idolatry in verses 2–6 are mirrored with a positive exhortation to consecration and obedience in verses 7–8, each of which concludes with two DNFs ("I am Yhwh your God"; "I am Yhwh who sanctifies you"). The chapter concludes with an exhortation in verses 22–26 that parallels the exhortations in chapter 18, where Israel is called to be a separate people. Twice in the exhortation the DNF appears as "I am Yhwh your God who has separated you from the peoples" and "I, Yhwh your God am holy and have separated you from the peoples that you should be mine." While this continues the use of the DNF to conclude a section, it also demonstrates how the DNF can be adapted for use in

[8] See Figure 1 below.
[9] Nihan, *From Priestly Torah*, 451.

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particular purposes, here reminding the listener of Yhwh's act of separation as the motivation for Israel to live out this separation through obedience to Yhwh.

To briefly recap, the DNF is used as a preamble to the material that follows. It also appears asyndetically next to some commands for emphasis, such as not profaning the name of Yhwh. Finally, it prominently appears to introduce and conclude material. However, we should note that these introductions and conclusions are often moral exhortations that can be distinguished from the instruction that they frame. This is often called the parenetic frame of the Holiness Legislation.[10] This framework has common themes, such as obedience to Yhwh's commands rooted in the exodus, that we noted above and will continue to note below. Within the HL, the paraenetic frame is commonly understood to be Leviticus 18:2–5, 24–30; 19:2, 19aα, 36b–37; 20:7–8, 22–23; 22:31–33; 25:18–19.[11]

5.1.3 Chapter 19

Whereas Chapters 18 and 20 focus on Israel's holiness set negatively against the practices of Egypt and Canaan, chapter 19 provides a positive, compelling vision of life in the land introduced by the call to "be holy as I, Yhwh am holy." The Divine Name Formula appears with notable density in chapter 19 in both its short form (19:2, 12, 14, 16, 18, 28, 30, 32, 37) and

[10] The term parenesis in relationship to the Holiness Legislation has a long history. Wellhausen, *Composition*, 152, notes, "In Kap. 18 unterscheidet sich die eigentliche Materie v. 6—23, welche meist ganz trocken aufgezeichnet ist (lies. V. 7—17), von der paränetischen Einfassung am Anfang und Schluss." This continues today in modern works (e.g., Ruwe, *Heiligkeitsgesetz*, 13; Nihan, *From Priestly Torah*, 5). This more general formulation is not the same as the form-critical attempt of the mid-twentieth century to define parenesis in the New Testament according to Greco-Roman literature, which has commonly failed. For more background on this, see James Starr, "Paraenesis," in *Oxford Bibliographies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019).

[11] Rhyder, *Centralizing the Cult*, 310, n. 19, lists the parenetic framework as: Lev 18:2b–5, 24–30; 19:2–4, 19aα, 36b–37; 20:7–8, 20–22; 22:31–33; 25:18–19, 38, 42a, 55; 26:1–2. Leviticus 20:20–22 should be 20:22–23. In my judgment, 25:18–19 are the only verses that belong to the parenetic frame after Lev 22. Otto, "Innerbiblische Exegese im Heiligkeitsgesetz Levitikus 17–26," 86, lists the parenetic frame as Leviticus 18:1–5, 24–30; 19:1–4; 20:7f., 22–27; 22:8, 31–33; 25:18f., 38, 42a, 55; 26:1f.

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long form (19:3, 4, 10, 25, 31, 34). While there is agreement that the DNF forms a structural base for the material, there is debate regarding whether the chapter has no overall macrostructure, is structured according to the Decalogue, or whether the Divine Name forms a creative structure.[12] For our present survey it is not necessary to parse the details, but we note the following areas of agreement: First, there is an overwhelming number of commands that end in the DNF, and even if there is no definite macrostructure, the DNF is used as a structural backbone for the chapter.[13] Second, the chapter again begins and ends with the DNF used in the parenetic frame. Finally, the last two uses before the framing device are connected with deliverance from Egypt (19:34, 35), which we will continue to see throughout the Holiness Legislation.

5.1.4 Chapters 21–22

Chapters 21–22 are primarily concerned with guarding the sanctuary and priests from impurity. The chapters are easily divided into four units, each begun by the divine speech formula and each concluded with the DNF expanded to the form "I am Yhwh who sanctifies you/them."[14] Chapter 22 closes with parenesis where the DNF is used three times as noted below:

> 21:1 And Yhwh said to Moses, "Speak to the priests, the sons of Aaron, and say to them
> 21:15 . . . for <u>I am Yhwh who sanctifies him</u>."
>
> 21:16–17a And Yhwh spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to Aaron, saying
> 23b–24 . . . for <u>I am Yhwh who sanctifies them</u>."
> **24** So Moses spoke to Aaron and to his sons and to all the people of Israel.
>
> 22:1–2a And Yhwh spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to Aaron and his sons
> 22:16 . . . <u>for I am Yhwh who sanctifies them</u>."

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[12] See Milgrom, *Leviticus 17–22*, 1596–98, for a review of many options.
[13] Wenham, *Leviticus*, 263.
[14] Nihan, *From Priestly Torah*, 482–83.

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> 22:17–18 And Yhwh spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to Aaron and his sons and all the people of Israel and say to them . . .
> 30 "I am Yhwh.
>
> **31** So you shall keep my commandments and do them: I am Yhwh. **32** And you shall not profane my holy name, that I may be sanctified among the people of Israel. I am Yhwh who sanctifies you, **33** who brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your God: I am Yhwh."

The DNF short form also appears in 21:8 and 22:8–9 in a way that breaks up one of the major paragraphs into smaller subunits. Finally, the DNF appears asyndetically next to commands to avoid profaning the sanctuary (21:12) and profaning the name of Yhwh (22:2).

Thus, the DNF again appears frequently and as a clear structuring device, both marking off four units within Leviticus 21–22 and subunits within the four units. It also appears asyndetically next to certain commands, such as profaning the sanctuary (21:12) and profaning the name of Yhwh (22:2), for emphasis. Finally, much like the conclusion of Leviticus 18–20, the conclusion of Leviticus 21–22 uses the DNF to punctuate the parenetic conclusion that calls Israel to obedience and not profaning Yhwh's name amidst the backdrop of Yhwh's purpose in the exodus to be their God.

5.1.5 Chapter 23

Leviticus 23 has instructions for weekly Sabbaths and holy days throughout the year. In between two opening summary statements (vv. 2 and 4) and two closing statements (vv. 37, 44), the main body is divided into two sections, one for spring festivals (vv. 4–22) and one for fall festivals (vv. 23–43).[15] Each of these two major sections is concluded with "I am Yhwh your God" (vv. 22, 43), which divides the chapter into two logical parts—sorting the holy days by season.[16] We can further note that the concluding use of the DNF is attached to the exodus

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[15] Bryan C. Babcock, *Sacred Ritual: A Study of the West Semitic Ritual Calendars in Leviticus 23 and the Akkadian Text Emar 446*, BBRSup 9 (University Park: Penn State University Press, 2014), 96.
[16] Wenham, *Leviticus*, 300; affirmed by Milgrom, *Leviticus 23–27*, 1950, and noted in Babcock, *Sacred Ritual*, 96.

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(23:43). The use of the DNF is used in lesser density but has a clearer structuring purpose, although not a part of the parenetic frame.

5.1.6 Chapter 24

As we discussed in §4.10 above, the DNF only appears once in Leviticus 24. It marks the conclusion of the only unbalanced section of the chiastic legislative section (Lev 24:13–23) that follows the narrative of the Blaspheming Son. This will be discussed more fully in the conclusion of this chapter.

5.1.7 Chapters 25–26

Chapters 25 and 26 are framed by a notice of Yhwh speaking to Moses on Mount Sinai (25:1; 26:46). Chapter 25 continues the Sabbath theme from chapter 23, outlining instruction about septennial land rest and Jubilee. Chapter 26 concludes the Holiness Legislation with blessings, curses, and restoration. In chapter 25 the DNF appears twice (Lev 25:38, 55), each time tied to the exodus and its purpose to liberate Israel so that Yhwh would be their God. Overall, debt release is tied to Yhwh delivering Israel from Egypt, so that Israelites are intended to serve Yhwh, not be slaves to others. This motivation is spelled out explicitly in the concluding verse that is rooted in the exodus and punctuated with the DNF:

> And if he is not redeemed by these means, then he and his children with him shall be released in the year of jubilee. For it is to me that the people of Israel are servants. They are my servants whom I brought out of the land of Egypt: *I am Yhwh your God*. (Lev 25:54–55, emphasis added)

Chapter 26 has three main sections—an adumbration of the Ten Words (vv. 1–2), covenant blessings for obedience (vv. 3–13), and gradated covenant curses for continued disobedience that conclude with exile with the hope of return after exile (vv. 14–45)—before concluding with a framing device about speech from Mount Sinai that links back to Leviticus 25:1. Each of the three major sections conclude with the DNF (26:2; 26:13; and 26:44–45). The latter two—conclusion of the blessings and return from exile—are linked with the exodus, which

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in turn, connects back to the opening parenesis in 18:2–5 and the parenetic conclusion of 18–20 (20:22–26) and 21–22 (22:31–33).

Like Leviticus 23, the DNF is used with less frequency than in Leviticus 18–22 but with clear structuring purposes apart from a parenetic frame. Like Leviticus 19, 22, and 25, the DNF is strongly linked to the exodus.

5.1.8 Summary

Figure 1 (on the next page) lists all verses containing the DNF in the HL under the appropriate chapter column to visualize the volume of its use and highlight several notable features. First, the verses enclosed in a square indicate conclusions of sections and subsections, which demonstrates its structuring function. It is often used in density as a key feature of broader sections of material (18–20; 21–22; 25–26). In chapters 21–22 and 23 it also delineates subsections. Second, in relationship to structure, the DNF appears in high density in the parenetic frame, which is shown in the chart in boldface. Third, the DNF often appears in key conclusions in relationship to the exodus, which are indicated with circles. Finally, the chart also makes apparent the density of use in Leviticus 19, where the DNF may initially appear to be placed asyndetically next to commands but in fact delineates small subsections throughout.

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Chap.	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	2, 4, 5	**2**			2				1, 2
	6	3			3				
			7, 8	8					
		10		12	8				13
		12			9			17	
		14							
		16							
		18		15	16	22			
Vv.									
		25							
	21	28							
		30						38	
		31							
		32					22		
		34							
					30				
	30	**36b–37**	24,26	23	**31,32,33**	43		55	44,45

Figure 1: The Distribution of the DNF in the HL

This brief survey confirms that the DNF 1) fulfills the role of a structuring device throughout the HL, often concluding major sections and subsections,[17] 2) is commonly used in the parenetic framework, 3) is commonly linked with the exodus, and 4) is sometimes used asyndetically to accent individual commands, such as actions that would profane the name of Yhwh (e.g., 18:21, 19:12). Its structural usage and volume invite the question as to its rhetorical effect.

5.2 Proposals for What the Divine Name Formula Indicates in the Holiness Legislation

The density and structuring use of the DNF have generated a variety of theories about its rhetorical function in the text. The first approach argues that its rhetorical function can be understood in terms of its rhetorical setting. Namely, Leviticus would have been read by the

[17] On this, see Ruwe, *Heiligkeitsgesetz*, 71–72.

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priests to the people, so the DNF makes Yhwh's voice directly present to the people[18] in a way that is even more immediate than a prophet referring to Yhwh in third person "*nĕʾûm* Yhwh."

This understanding of its function within the setting is helpful, but what effect does it have within the text? One prominent argument is that Yhwh's voice "reveals the authority that is the source of parenetic exhortation."[19] Yhwh's name is attached in the parenetic framework to calls to obedience, so the DNF denotes Yhwh's authority and compels obedience to the law. This view is common. Hartley states, "these self-introduction formulae function to locate the authority of a passage, law, or summons to obedience in the name of the giver of that word, namely Yahweh."[20] Ruwe similarly argues that the DNF serves as a structuring device that has the parenetic effect of vesting its argument in the authority of the "I."[21] Milgrom thinks it is similar to the prophetic "*nĕʾûm* Yhwh" used to certify Yhwh has spoken and "is certain to punish if his words are not fulfilled."[22]

While the DNF in the parenetic framework is linked to a call to obedience that suggests authority, the same parenetic sections have other interests that are also marked by the DNF. For example, Leviticus 22:21 calls Israel to obedience, punctuated by the DNF, but then the next two verses use the DNF to call Israel not to profane Yhwh's name but to sanctify him among Israel (e.g., Lev 22:32–33). This suggests a broader purpose than just authority, which can be confirmed by major studies on the DNF by Zimmerli and Diesel.

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[18] Reinhard Müller, "The Sanctifying Divine Voice: Observations on the אני יהוה–Formula in the Holiness Code," in *Text, Time, and Temple: Literary, Historical and Ritual Studies in Leviticus*, ed. Francis Landy et al. (Sheffield: Sheffield, Phoenix Press, 2015), 76–79; Zimmerli, "I Am Yahweh", 13; Diesel, *Ich bin Jahwe*, 360, 376.
[19] Müller, "The Sanctifying Voice," 77.
[20] Hartley, *Leviticus*, 292.
[21] Ruwe, *Heiligkeitsgesetz*, 71.
[22] Milgrom, *Leviticus 17–22*, 1517–18.

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5.2.1 Zimmerli

Zimmerli, in a landmark 1963 article,[23] reads the DNF as a formula of self-presentation (*Selbstvorstellungsformel*) and sees its use in Leviticus in relationship to its founding use in Exodus 6. As Yhwh makes himself known to Moses at Sinai and then throughout the exodus narrative, "a previously unnamed person emerges from his unknown by making himself recognizable and nameable in his own name, and the establishing the relationship as 'your God,'" as is suggested in the long form ("I am Yhwh your God"), which he also argues is not significantly different in use than the short form.[24] The formula is reinforced further by participial phrases that tie Yhwh's name to the work of exodus in the past, what Yhwh is doing in the present (sanctifying his people and priests), and what he will do in the future (give them the land). Everything he says is an "amplification of the fundamental statement, 'I am Yhwh,'" and "the most profound intention of the divine action on behalf of the people will be fulfilled [in] 'you shall know that I am Yhwh.'"[25]

He furthers his argument by looking to Ezekiel, especially chapter 20, where the DNF is again used, as in Exodus, where the people will come to know "I am Yhwh" in judgment, just as they came to know Yhwh in redemption.[26] Thus, "I am Yhwh" is at the heart of all that Yhwh says, so the repetition in the Holiness Legislation is not random but comes out of the "heart of the Old Testament revelation of Yahweh."[27] Zimmerli briefly alludes to the rhetorical effect of vesting the priest with authority to communicate divine saving actions and legal maxims under

[23] Zimmerli, "I Am Yahweh," 16.
[24] Zimmerli, "I Am Yahweh," 4.
[25] Zimmerli, "I Am Yahweh," 9–10.
[26] Note that he traces this phrase back to Exod 6 (Zimmerli, "I Am Yahweh," 5–7).
[27] Zimmerli, "I Am Yahweh," 12.

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the introductory and concluding formula of Yhwh's self-introduction.[28] He also traces its various uses through the Hebrew Bible, arguing the prophetic uses grow out of a priestly heritage.[29]

Zimmerli's argument does have explanatory power, particularly in Exodus 6 and passages in Exodus and Ezekiel about Yhwh making himself known. His analysis makes apparent that the DNF is used for a larger relational purpose to make himself known and not simply to compel obedience. At a minimum this suggests that the use of the DNF is not an impersonal authority but a means of establishing a more encompassing relationship. However, he is often critiqued for fitting the DNF into too small of a box.[30] Diesel's work in this area makes this especially clear.

5.2.2 Diesel

Zimmerli's article stood as the standard point of reference until Anja Angela Diesel's 2006 monograph, *Ich bin Jahwe: Der Austieg der Ich-bin-Jahwe-Aussage zum Schlüsselwort des alttestamentlichen Monotheismus*. Her work is a much more detailed analysis that affirms Zimmerli's work in a number of key areas while disagreeing that the main idea of the DNF is "self-introduction," which she finds to be a minority use.

The foundation of Diesel's exploration is her use of Michel's extensive study of nominal phrases in Northwest Semitic languages to examine the phrase "I am Yhwh."[31] Her basic finding

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[28] Zimmerli, "I Am Yahweh," 13.
[29] Zimmerli, "I Am Yahweh," 22.
[30] Nihan, *From Priestly Torah*, 398, n. 10; Milgrom, *Leviticus 17–22*, 1517; Grünwaldt, "Das Heiligkeitsgesetz Leviticus 17–26," 209–10.
[31] Michel was dissatisfied with the categories of subject and predicate that tended to import logical and morphological categories from a verbal clause and carried baggage from Latin-based linguistics. He instead resorted to the categories of Mubtada and Chabar from Arabic grammar, which functioned a bit differently but gave him fresh categories to work with. His extensive work led to three categories that depend on the definiteness of the constituent parts: determination imparity, where one constituent part is determinant and the other isn't;

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is that this formulation allows for two poles of meaning with a gradient of meaning between them. One pole emphasizes "I am *Yhwh*" (i.e., not another god) as a means of distinction. The second pole emphasizes "*I* (alone) am Yhwh," which becomes a significant point in her argument about the development of monotheism within the Hebrew Bible, as the subtitle of her monographs suggests.[32] Diesel traces parallel forms in texts through the ANE,[33] finding varied uses depending on the context but noting that self-presentation is rare. She does find that "I am Name" is a means of distinction, as it is in the Hebrew Bible. And she also affirms in her ANE parallels that "'I am' statements are an expression of weighty, powerful speech, ensuring the present power of someone who is not (bodily) present."[34]

In synthesizing the significance of the DNF, she relies on the idea of "meaning formula" from the work of Geideck and Leibert,[35] in which phrases are used in contested situations to answer the questions in the community, "Who are we?," "Where do we come from?,' and "Where are we going?'[36] She argues that the DNF is a meaning formula applied to varied

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determination parity, where both parts are determined; or indetermination parity, where neither part is definite. With this basic classification he set out to examine word order and meaning in different parameters of hypotaxis, which he extensively classified. See Diesel, *Ich bin Jahwe*, 37–93. Michel died an untimely death before publishing his expected grammatical works. His academic scion also has a helpful introduction. See Reinhard G. Lehmann, "'Since, While, Whilst I Am a Poor Man': The Legacy of Diethelm Michel's Nominal-Clause Syntax as Applied to the Wider Field of First-Millenium BCE Northwest Semitic," in *Strategies of Clause Linking in Semitic Languages: Proceedings of the International Symposium on Clause Linking in Semitic Languages, Kivik, Sweden, 5–7 August 2012*, ed. B. Isaksson et al. (Wiesbadan: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2014), 143–77.

[32] Diesel, *Ich bin Jahwe*, 388.

[33] Diesel, *Ich bin Jahwe*, 119–186.

[34] Diesel, *Ich bin Jahwe*, 360, 376.

[35] Susan Geideck and Andreas Liebert-Wolf, eds., *Formulas of Meaning: Linguistic and Sociological Analyzes of Models, Metaphors and Other Collective Patterns of Orientation, Linguistics—Impulse & Tendencies* (New York: de Gruyter, 2003).

[36] Part of the hypothesis of "meaning formula" is that its frequent use is part of a period where identity is contested, but then once things are settled the formula disappears, which Diesel, *Ich bin Jahwe*, 371–73 argues matches the disappearance of I am Yhwh in the intertestamental period.

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circumstances, not just self-introduction, and distinguishes life in relationship to Yhwh, eventually affirming that Yhwh alone stands behind their story.

With regards to the Holiness Legislation, she argues that Deutero-Isaiah disambiguated *ʾănî Yhwh* to mean that Yhwh alone is God and that the priestly writers employ this knowledge in filling the meaning of who Yhwh is. Here she follows Zimmerli in seeing Exodus 6:2–8 as foundational. Also, like Zimmerli, she sees that in the Holiness Code, "Yahweh brings himself (I!) as (powerfully) *present* to the language. The *ʾănî Yhwh* statement guarantees something like a 'real presence' of Yahweh."[37] However, she goes beyond Zimmerli in seeing that the DNF functions as more than self-introduction, which she argues is already presumed in the opening use of Leviticus 18. Instead of self-introduction, the DNF is a part of a delimiting effort aimed at creating an identity. "All customs, commandments, etc. that distinguish Israel from the peoples have their origin in the God of Israel, he is the source of the identity of the people. Yahweh is the center of the community, the origin and source of its identity. The behavior within the community thus becomes a question of the relationship to God."[38] The use of *ʾănî Yhwh* is an effort to forge part of the overall (religious) identity that emphasizes the difference from others."[39]

5.3 Name and Honor

Diesel is right, in my opinion, that the DNF is used for more than just self-introduction but has a broader relational effect. It is especially significant that the "behavior of the community thus becomes a question of the relationship to God" and that the DNF stands at that nexus. But

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[37] Diesel, *Ich bin Jahwe*, 207.
[38] Diesel, *Ich bin Jahwe*, 257.
[39] Diesel, *Ich bin Jahwe*, 250. See also Rhyder, *Centralizing the Cult*, 312–16.

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how does the DNF govern that relationship? Hartley, Milgrom, and Ruwe suggest it does so through authority. Diesel accents the idea of meaning and identity. I'd like to argue now that both authority and identity are part of a larger category of honor that is captured in the text through the use of "name."

This argument will begin by establishing the plausibility of name indicating honor by revisiting the Mediterranean Model, looking at name as honor in the ANE, and examining name as honor in the Hebrew Bible. Then I will argue that the Name implies honor in the Holiness Legislation by looking more carefully at Leviticus 18 and Leviticus 22:21–23. I will argue that the use of name is not only personal (as Zimmerli and Diesel have shown) but also public and concerned with reputation.

5.3.1 The Plausibility of Name as Honor

First, we briefly recall the insight from the Mediterranean Model that name is one way that honor can be symbolled (along with, for example, face and blood).[40] A person's status that governs relational transactions can be attached to a person's name, which is attached to the named. This may be recognized in the common phrases "sullied his good name" or "made a name for himself." However, we may not simply assume honor but must see how the text speaks particularly of name in context.

Next, further plausibility is lent to Leviticus using name to signify honor through the recognition of how this was a common practice in the ANE. Diesel points out that one aspect of name is to differentiate the person named from others,[41] and Hundley argues that one reason for

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[40] Malina, *The New Testament World*, 33–34.
[41] Diesel, *Ich bin Jahwe*, 388; Michael Hundley, "To Be or Not to Be: A Reexamination of Name Language in Deuteronomy and nthe Deuteronomistic History," *VT* 59.4 (2009): 535.

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this is to be able to ascribe to one and not another "character, deeds, honor, and authority," and "since they are ascribed to a person who is individualized by his name, they are also ascribed to the name itself."[42] "In the ANE the name is inextricably linked to the named."[43] Thus, when a name is attached to something or someone, their character and reputation are linked to that which it is attached. This is significant because Yhwh has put his name on Israel (cf. Num 6:22–27) and calls them not to bear it in vain.[44]

Finally, plausibility is lent to this argument by recognizing that name signifies reputation in the Hebrew Bible, and we can note this especially in priestly texts. For example, in Malachi 1 Yhwh asserts that honor is due a father from a son, yet he asks where his honor is when castigating priests "who despise my *name*" (Mal 1:6, emphasis added) by offering blemished sacrifices. By contrast, Yhwh twice pictures his name being great among the nations in the context of offerings: "For from the rising of the sun to its setting *my name will be great among the nations*, and in every place, incense will be offered to my name, and a pure offering. *For my name will be great among the nations*, says Yhwh of hosts" (Mal 1:11, emphasis added). Achtemeier helpfully notes that name is at the core of this section: "Malachi's central charge

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[42] Hundley, "To Be or Not to Be," 535.
[43] Hundley, "To Be or Not to Be," 549.
[44] Imes argues persuasively that the traditional understanding of the third word (Exod 20:7), "do not take the name of Yhwh (upon your lips) in vain," requires the assumption of verbal activity that is not indicated. Instead, literally the command is to not bear (נשא) the name in vain, and the nearest usage of this verb in this manner is illuminating. Namely, the high priest bears the name of the people before Yhwh (Exod 28:12, 29) and bears the name of Yhwh before the people (Exod 28:36–8) as a representative. Because the name of Yhwh is placed on the people (Num 6:22–27), they are "branded" as representatives of the name as a royal priesthood. The traditional understanding of verbal misuse of the Name is merely a subset of the larger call to represent Yhwh and his name well. See Carmen Imes, *Bearing God's Name at Sinai: A Re-examination of the Name Command of the Decalogue*, BBRSup 19 (University Park, PA: Eisenbrauns, 2018).

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against the priesthood is that they have 'despised' the Lord's name, and in the indictment in this court case . . . the particulars of that charge are spelled out."[45]

Similarly, throughout Ezekiel Yhwh acts on behalf of his name that it should not be profaned in the sight of the nations. In Ezekiel 20:5–26 the prophet retells the history of Israel in three stages.[46] Verses 5–9 tell the story of Israel in Egypt ("on the day . . . I became known to them in the land of Egypt"). Verses 10–17 tell the story of the first generation in the wilderness ("So I took them out of the land of Egypt, and brought them to the wilderness"). And verses 18–26 tell the story of the second generation ("Then I said to their children . . . 'do not follow the decrees of your fathers'"). In each case Yhwh makes himself known to Israel (vv. 5, 12, 20). In each case he announces his identity in terms of the DNF (vv. 7, 12, 20). But in each case they are chastised for not having kept Yhwh's statutes and rules, "by which, if a person does them, they will live" (Ezek 20:11, 13; cf. Lev 18:5). Specifically, they rejected the Sabbaths (Ezek 20:13, 16, 20, 24) and chased after idols (Ezek 20:16, 18, 24). In doing so they had profaned the name of Yhwh before the nations, which in each of the three panels Yhwh acts to remedy.

> **But I acted for the sake of my name**, that it <u>should not be profaned in the sight of the nations</u> among whom they lived, in whose sight I made myself known to them in bringing them out of the land of Egypt. (Ezek 20:9)
>
> **But I acted for the sake of my nam**e, that it <u>should not be profaned in the sight of the nations</u>, in whose sight I had brought them out. (Ezek 20:14)
>
> But I withheld my hand and **acted for the sake of my name**, <u>that it should not be profaned in the sight of the nations</u>, in whose sight I had brought them out. (Ezek 20:22)

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[45] E. Achtemeier, *Nahum–Malachi*, Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching (Atlanta: John Knox, 1986), 178.
[46] Daniel I Block, *The Book of Ezekiel, Chapters 1–24*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 622.

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Block notes that "instead of accepting their role as covenant benefactors and agents of Yahweh's honor, they had brought shame to the divine name by running after other gods."[47] Blenkinsopp concurs, noting that Yhwh's forbearance in judgment of Israel is on account of his reputation among the nations, but not simply in terms of "naïve self-interest," as in Moses' intercession (Exod 32:12; Num 14:13–16). Instead, "It is rather more than that here. For Ezekiel, it is one way of expressing the intense reciprocal involvement of Israel and its God. To speak of the name in this context is to say that Israel exists not for itself but to fulfill the divine purpose in history. That is why Israel must on all occasions sanctify the name."[48] This reciprocity in the relationship is significant. Instead of authority, where power runs in one direction, honor tracks the reciprocal nature of the relationship, where Yhwh's status affects Israel's behavior and Israel's behavior can affect Yhwh's status *in the eyes of the nations*. This accords with the Mediterranean Model and ANE examples, where Yhwh's reputation expressed in his name is bound up in the actions and fate of the people upon whom he placed his name.

Many of the themes in the telling of Israel's history in Ezekiel 20 are picked up in a picture of restoration in Ezekiel 36, especially Yhwh's actions being motivated by his name. Here Israel is punished for their impurity and exiled. But their exile cause Yhwh's name to be defiled, because

> But when they came to the nations, wherever they came, they profaned my holy name, in that people said of them, "These are the people of Yhwh, and yet they had to go out of his land." But I had concern for my holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations to which they came. (Ezek 36:20–21)

What is especially interesting is the expansion in verse 20 that explains profaning Yhwh's name in terms of the people talking about Yhwh based on the plight of his people who

[47] Block, *Ezekiel 1–24*, 614.
[48] Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Ezekiel* (Philadelphia: Westminster John Knox, 2010), 88.

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had to go out of the land. The actions of the people and the plight of the people reflected on the character of Yhwh. This aligns with both the Mediterranean Model that name symbols reputation and the ANE studies of Richter and Hundley that specify that attaching your name to someone also attaches your reputation.[49]

In response to Israel's disobedience and exile, Yhwh makes clear that he is acting not because of Israel's goodness but for the sake of his own reputation.

> Therefore say to the house of Israel, "Thus says the Lord Yhwh: It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for the sake of my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations to which you came. And **I will vindicate the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, and which you have profaned among them**. And the nations will know that I am Yhwh, declares the Lord Yhwh, when through you I vindicate my holiness **before their eyes**." (Ezek 36:22–23)

So Yhwh will act not for their sake but for the sake of his own name before the *eyes* of the nations. Similar themes may be found in Ezekiel 39:7, 25, and 43:7. The examples in Ezekiel are especially relevant, because no matter which way the directional influence goes between Ezekiel and Leviticus,[50] or whether a complex relationship exists between the two, the texts are linked. Either Ezekiel expanded the idea of profaning the Name of Yhwh to the nations and made explicit the implications of honor, or Leviticus built developed Ezekiel and, as we'll argue below, used it to shape the honor of Yhwh in the Public Court of Recognition of Israel.

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[49] Richter argues from a variety of monumental inscriptions that *šuma šakānu* should be translated literally as 'to place his name there,' with a symbolic understanding of possession. Only when these two senses are recognized does she allow that in some contexts, certain metaphorical meanings of fame and reputation can be considered. Hundley argues that in the Akkadian one usage dominates all others, and that is that inscribing a name ensures that credit is given to the named party. That is the victory and heroic deeds are ascribed to the named and no other, thus ownership and credit/glory/reputation are closely associated. See Hundley, "To Be or Not to Be," 535, 544. S. L. Richter, "The Place of the Name in Deuteronomy," *VT* 57.3 (2007): 343–46. And S.L. Richter, *The Deuteronomistic History and the Name Theology: l^{e}šakkēn š^{e}mô šām in the Bible and the Ancient Near East. ZAW* 318 (New York: de Gruyter, 2002), 165-66, 181.

[50] See especially Christophe Nihan, "Ezekiel and the Holiness Legislation—A Plea for Nonlinear Models," in Levinson et al., *The Formation of the Pentateuch*, 1015–40. For an historical overview that traces models, shortcoming, and development, see also Lyons, "How Have We Changed?," 1055–74.

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As we now turn to examine Leviticus in particular, we conclude that it is very plausible, as our social science model suggests, that name could indicate honor, a use it has in ANE contexts. And closer to our study, in the cultic situation of Malachi 1, name is explicitly tied to honor through direct reference to the honor due to fathers by sons. And in a text directly related to Leviticus, Ezekiel uses name to indicate reputation among the nations. In each of these situations, name is more than just a marker of authority that flows from Yhwh to Israel, but rather name demonstrates how in the relationship signaled by "I am Yhwh your God," the behavior and plight of Israel reciprocally affects the status of the name in the Public Court of Recognition.

5.3.2 Name and Honor in Leviticus 18

While name signifying honor is plausible, the question remains as to whether name signifies honor in the Holiness Legislation as expressed in the DNF. I will now argue that the DNF indicates a relationship that is personal, public, and concerned for Yhwh's reputation, especially in the eyes of Israel. We will demonstrate this by examining several passages more carefully, beginning with Leviticus 18.

As mentioned above, after verse 1 begins with the Divine Address Formula ("And Yhwh spoke to Moses"), Leviticus 18 proceeds with a parenetic frame (vv. 2–5, 24–30) that surrounds a legislative core (vv. 6–21). The parenesis begins with a call to tell Israel, "I am Yhwh your God." This forms an introduction to the Holiness Legislation that follows in a way that recalls

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the introduction to the Decalogue.[51] The use of the long form at the beginning defines Yhwh's relationship and gives context to all that follows.[52]

The parenetic frame also introduces a contrast that they are not to walk in the ways of the Egyptians and Canaanites, which leads to the positive exhortation that they are to walk and live by the statutes and rules of Yhwh. This is matched by the conclusion of Leviticus 20, where Yhwh has separated the people unto himself so they are to be holy unto him and express that holiness through obedience to this instruction (Lev 20:22–26). This conclusion tightly binds holiness, separation, and law observance. Yhwh has separated (בדל) Israel from the peoples, to be his people, such that he can call Israel his own, forming what Rhyder calls a patron-client relationship.[53]

The core of Leviticus 18 moves from law that governs sexual morality in the immediate family (6–17), clan (18–20), and nation (21–23).[54] The preservation of family structures with concern for seed is designed to preserve Israel's distinct status as Yhwh's people.[55] As Mohrmann helpfully argues, the internal boundaries of Israel are fitted negatively against external boundaries of walking in the ways of Egypt and Canaan and positively as an implication of "I am Yhwh your God." The instruction as an implication of the DNF conforms well with Diesel's conclusions that "Yahweh is the center of the community, is the origin and source of its identity. The behavior within the community thus becomes a question of the relationship to

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[51] Diesel, *Ich bin Jahwe*, 246–47; Zimmerli, "I Am Yahweh," 3.
[52] Zimmerli, "I Am Yahweh," 4.
[53] Rhyder, *Centralizing the Cult*, 77, 128, 144, 269, 270, 271, 315. Rhyder never defines what she means by patronage or how it relates to broader theory on the concept. But patron-client relations work as a reciprocal exchange of honor for provision and protection. For a nuanced discussion of this, see Zeba A. Crook, "Reciprocity: Covenantal Exchange as a Test Case." *Ancient Israel* (2006): 78–91.
[54] Doug C. Mohrmann, "Making Sense of Sex: A Study of Leviticus 18" *JSOT* 29 (2004): 73–76.
[55] Nihan, *From Priestly Torah*, 442.

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God."[56] The instruction negatively contrasted against Egypt and Canaan also fit Diesel's conclusion that "the use of *ʾănî Yhwh* is an effort to forge part of the overall (religious) identity that emphasizes the difference from others."[57]

The DNF not only governs the relationship, but it does so publicly—implicitly before the nations but explicitly among the people of Israel. Although the exodus is not explicitly mentioned, references to Egypt and Canaan refer to this specific history.[58] The exodus is prominent in the root cause in the parenetic frame (cf. Lev 22:31–33), and just as Yhwh's reputation was at stake in Exodus 33:12, so also in Leviticus the exodus was understood to happen before the watching eyes of the nations (Lev 26:45). This is related to Ezekiel's critique that idolatry had profaned the name of Yhwh before the nations. However, in context, while the nations are in the background and their "eyes" make occasional appearance (cf. Lev 26:45), I will argue below that the primary Public Court of Opinion is Israel itself (cf. Lev 22:32)

Bibb astutely notes that not profaning Yhwh's name in Leviticus 18–20 punctuated by the DNF are attached *public* acts—offering children to Molech (18:21; 20:3) and swearing falsely using Yhwh's name (19:12)[59]—and as public relational acts, they will shape the perception about the honor of Yhwh. And while Leviticus 18 makes clear through the DNF that Yhwh's name and status as their god govern the relationship, it also shows how Israel's behavior affects the name in relationship to the DNF. In verse 21, the giving of seed up to Molech could "profane the name of Yhwh." This is further accented by the only place in chapter 18 where a command has the DNF placed asyndetically next to it. Not only does Yhwh's name define Israel

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[56] Diesel, *Ich bin Jahwe*, 257.
[57] Diesel, *Ich bin Jahwe*, 250. See also Rhyder, *Centralizing the Cult*, 312–316.
[58] Diesel, *Ich bin Jahwe*, 247.
[59] Bibb, *Ritual Words*, 143.

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and circumscribe their action, but, as in Ezekiel, Israel's action could affect the name of Yhwh. We will defer a full exploration of what profaning the name of Yhwh means in Leviticus to our discussion of Leviticus 22:31–33 below, but it is sufficient at this point to note that Israel's actions affect Yhwh—not profaning the holiness of Yhwh but profaning the holy name of Yhwh.

To summarize, chapter 18 begins by placing everything under the relationship "I am Yhwh your God." This relationship is not only personal but public, acted out before Israel and the nations. And not only does Yhwh's name govern Israel's behavior, but Israel's behavior affects Yhwh's name, and I will argue this concerns Yhwh's reputation among Israel.

5.3.3 Introduction to Leviticus 22:31–33

To understand profaning the name as a concern for reputation, we will now look more carefully at Leviticus 22:31–33. This text is significant as it is the conclusion to Leviticus 21–22, and as we will explore, summarizes the parenetic frame developed in Leviticus 17–22 in the context of the DNF.

As we discussed above in §5.2, Leviticus 21–22 is a well-structured unit. It has four units framed by four divine addresses to Moses (21:1, 16; 22:1, 17) and four conclusions that use the DNF (21:15, 23; 22:16, 30).[60] These four sections focus on dealing with threats to the sanctity of the tabernacle,[61] and they are followed by a conclusion punctuated by three uses of the DNF:

> So you shall keep my commandments and do them: I am Yhwh.
> And you shall not profane my holy name,
> that I may be sanctified among the people of Israel.
> I am Yhwh who sanctifies you,
> who brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your God: I am Yhwh. (Lev 22:31–33)

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[60] A note of compliance by Moses at the end of Lev 21 (v. 24) and several subsections are also present (e.g., 22:26–30), but their presence does not negate the four major sections plus conclusion noted above.
[61] Nihan, *From Priestly Torah*, 484.

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The first and last lines of this conclusion are generally straightforward and can be understood in terms of themes previously developed in the parenetic frame. We will briefly review them before spending a longer time looking at what it means that "you shall not profane my holy name, that I may be sanctified among the people of Israel."

The first exhortation is a call to "keep commandments and do them, I am Yhwh" (v. 31). This repeats the call to obedience commonly found in the paranetic frame and commonly concluded with the DNF (cf. 18:4–5, 26; 19:19, 37; 20:8, 22). It is often noted that here Israel is called to keep Yhwh's מצות, which is used here instead of חקה and משפת as previously. This is only seen in Leviticus 26:3, 14, and 15, which may indicate its summary nature. If this were the only use of the DNF, to buttress a call to keeping and doing commandments, it might be justified to think that the DNF is used to mark authority. However, that the DNF is used two more times in ways that indicate more than just authority tied to obedience.

The second exhortation is not to profane Yhwh's holy name followed by a purpose clause: that Yhwh would be sanctified among the people of Israel. Yhwh's being sanctified by Israel is linked to a concluding assertion:

32b אֲנִי יְהוָה מְקַדִּשְׁכֶם׃
33 הַמּוֹצִיא אֶתְכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לִהְיוֹת לָכֶם לֵאלֹהִים אֲנִי יְהוָה׃

This again may be understood within the parenetic frame already developed in Leviticus 18–20. The DNF is the subject followed by two parallel participial phrases that link sanctification and the exodus as one in the same act.[62] And second, sanctification has a second-person plural ending, addressing the people. This is similar to Leviticus 20:26, where Yhwh's

[62] Rhyder, *Centralizing the Cult*, 321; Frank Crüsemann, *The Torah: Theology and Social History of Old Testament Law*, trans. Allen W. Mahnke (Edinburgh: T&T Clark: 1996[1992]), 302.

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definitive act of separating Israel from the nations was the basis for Israel seperating themselves from sources of uncleanness. Here, Israel's sanctification through obedience to Yhwh's instruction is rooted in living out the sanctification Yhwh enacted through the exodus.

Thus, the opening call to keeping and doing Yhwh's commands and the concluding identification of Yhwh's sanctifying of Israel with the exodus are familiar themes already developed. In between these lines are two phrases that provoke more discussion, to which we now turn.

5.3.4 Leviticus 22:32: Profaning Yhwh's Name

Verse 32 introduces two potent clauses worth considering more clearly: "And you shall not profane my holy name, that I may be sanctified among the people of Israel." We will examine each in turn by interacting with the arguments of Milgrom and Rhyder.

We begin with trying to understand what it means to profane Yhwh's name. This phrase is found six times in the Holiness Legislation, with four of the six references being punctuated with the DNF. In Leviticus 18–20, profaning the name is set against Molech worship (18:21; 20:3) and swearing by Yhwh's name falsely (19:12). The command to not profane Yhwh's name is also directed at the priests as a summary of a variety of violations of their holy status (Lev 21:6). Similarly, offerings are to be handled correctly so as not to profane the name of Yhwh (Lev 22:2). And Leviticus 22:31–32 links obedience to not profaning Yhwh's name, which is set in contrast to Yhwh being sanctified among the people of Israel. The complete list in Leviticus is here:

> You shall not give any of your children to offer them to Molech,
> and so profane the name of your God: **I am Yhwh**. (18:21)

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> You shall not swear by my name falsely, and so profane the name of your God: **I am Yhwh**. (19:12)
>
> I myself will set my face against that man [who gives his children to Molech] and will cut him off from among his people, because he has given one of his children to Molech, to make my sanctuary unclean and to profane my holy name. (20:3)
>
> They shall be holy to their God and not profane the name of their God. (21:6)
>
> Speak to Aaron and his sons so that they abstain from the holy things of the people of Israel, which they dedicate to me, so that they do not profane my holy name**: I am Yhwh**. (22:2)
>
> So you shall keep my commandments and do them: **I am Yhwh**. And you shall not profane my holy name, that I may be sanctified among the people of Israel. **I am Yhwh who sanctifies you**, who brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your God: **I am Yhwh.** (22:31–33)

Milgrom's exhaustive study on חלל את־שם יהוה will guide our discussion.[63] In Leviticus, he provides brief explanatory notes from his Anchor Bible commentary to explain each usage in H (all in Leviticus). Along the way he notes that divine name is a sanctum (cf. 20:3) and argues that H abandons P's use of מעל, "sacrilege," in favor of חלל, so it can be used as an antonym of קדש.[64] He concludes that "when Israelites violate a divine commandment, they desecrate (desanctify) their own sacred status, as well as Yahweh's sacred status in the community."[65]

When he shifts to exploring uses in Ezekiel, he notes the introduction of elements of honor that we examined above. He avers that Ezekiel draws from Moses's intercessory prayer that appeals to Yhwh's reputation among the nations (Exod 32:12).[66] Also, in Ezekiel 36, he argues that Yhwh will act "to sanctify his name, that is, enhance his reputation among the nations, by returning the people of Israel to their soil."[67]

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[63] Jacob Milgrom, "The Desecration of Yhwh's Name: Its Parameters and Significance," in *Birkat Shalom: Studies in the Bible, Ancient Near Easter Literature and Postbiblical Judaism Presented to Shalom M. Paul on the Occasion of His Seventieth Birthday*, ed. Chaim Cohen et al. (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2008), 69. Milgrom also includes remarks about 19:8, which does not deal with profaning the Name but holy objects.
[64] Milgrom, "The Desecration of Yhwh's Name," 69.
[65] Milgrom, "The Desecration of Yhwh's Name," 69–70.
[66] Milgrom, "The Desecration of Yhwh's Name," 72.
[67] Milgrom, "The Desecration of Yhwh's Name," 73.

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He briefly reviews the five remaining uses outside H and Ezekiel. He addresses Amos 2:7b that labels a father and son's cohabitation with the same maiden as desecrating Yhwh's name. Intriguingly, while he says this passage is ambiguous, he appeals to Shalom Paul's explanation that bifurcates legality and shame: "it is not a legal but a moral offense, a matter of shame," a point we will return to momentarily.[68] He also notes how in Malachi 1 both priests in offering lame sacrifices (vv. 6–8) and people in muttering about their effectiveness (vv. 11–14) are set in contrast to honor that sons are to have for fathers (1:6) and against Yhwh's expectation that his name will be great among the nations. Instead, among Israel, the name is profaned, which he interprets as a degradation to Yhwh's reputation.[69]

Milgrom concludes that one must reject the view that Israel's obedience contributes or detracts from Yhwh's holiness but rather his reputation. "There is no doubt that the term שם 'name' *is* a euphemism, used to prevent saying that God himself is desecrated."[70] He uses Leviticus 22:32 as evidence of this, stating, "when Israel refrains from violating God's commandments, God becomes acknowledged by more Israelites. Conversely, when God's name is desecrated, he becomes discredited by more Israelites."[71] This description of acknowledgement and discredit sounds very much like the social credit that honor is. But he then bafflingly concludes the following:

> Thus, the functions of "the name" can be grouped in two main categories: power (authority) and reputation. When these categories are studied in relation to the phrase חלל את־שם "to desecrate the name," it becomes apparent that the category "reputation" does not apply to the formula's appearances in Leviticus (nos. 2–7).

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[68] Shalom M. Paul, *Amos*, Hermenia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 83.
[69] Milgrom, "The Desecration of Yhwh's Name," 75
[70] Milgrom, "The Desecration of Yhwh's Name," 76. He also argues name was convenient because it connotes existence and authority.
[71] Milgrom, "The Desecration of Yhwh's Name," 76..

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> This category only begins to surface in Ezekiel (nos. 8–10, 12–13). This leaves "power (authority)" as the only category that fits Leviticus.[72]

This bifurcation between authority and reputation is baffling because he just used Leviticus 22:32 (which he assigns to authority) as evidence that when Israel was disobedient it was Yhwh's reputation that suffered, not his holiness.[73] Milgrom's own analysis of Malachi 1:11 shows that within the cult, how Israel treats him relates to the honor that is due him, symbolled by his name. This is likely related to why Milgrom understands the DNF narrowly in terms of authority, a certification that Yhwh has spoken and "is certain to punish if his words are not fulfilled."[74]

One need not bifurcate authority and the possibility of sanction from sensitivity to how personal instruction in a public setting brings the dynamics of public evaluation (aka honor) into question. The key issue is public evaluation.[75] Interestingly, Bibb comes to this conclusion even without referencing honor in a section devoted to exploring the profaning of Yhwh's name:

> In these three references [18:21, 19:12; 20:3] the implication is that the disobedience of the people actually detracts from the holiness of Yahweh. This priestly text is certainly not saying that human sin in reality takes away from God's real, life-giving power. What could profanation mean, then? Both of these transgressions [Molech worship and swearing falsely by Yhwh's name] *imply a public setting*. In performing the public acts of Molech sacrifice or a false oath, the offender calls into question the lordship of Yahweh. These acts profane Yahweh's name because they *publicly* declare that Yahweh has no authority over that person's actions. These sins show flagrant malice toward Yahweh and his rule in the community. *In the eyes of the community, then, Yahweh's' authority is denigrated*. The person has profaned the name of Yahweh; for she has taken away from Yahweh's holiness, a serious offense.[76]

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[72] Milgrom, "The Desecration of Yhwh's Name," 77.
[73] Milgrom, "The Desecration of Yhwh's Name," 76.
[74] Milgrom, *Leviticus 17–22*, 1517–18.
[75] A personal example may clarify. If a child disobeys a parent at home, the accent may be on authority with honor being present. However, if a child disobeys a parent in a public setting, honor is accented, because how a child responds to a parent and vice versa, as every parent has experienced, is being evaluated by those watching. The parent has authority, but the relational interaction also is affecting people's perception of the parent.
[76] Bibb, *Ritual Words and Narrative Worlds*, 143, emphasis added.

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While I would disagree with the last statement that Yhwh's holiness is diminished (rather the holiness of his name), Bibb is right to emphasize the public nature of the offenses in the instruction and the result of the public evaluation that follows: "In the eyes of the community, then, Yahweh's authority is denigrated." Bibb never mentions honor, but he clearly describes its dynamics. Pace Milgrom, and according to Milgrom's own argument about Leviticus 22:32, it is most likely that, as Nihan concludes, "Leviticus' usage of the phrase recalls Ezekiel's notion of public concern for name."[77]

Further, within the parenetic conclusion of Leviticus 21:31–33, concern for Yhwh's name not being profaned occurs in parallel to a call for obedience. This raises the question as to whether profaning Yhwh's name is a general concern related to obedience or whether it only relates to specific offenses (e.g., Molech worship, mishandling of offerings, etc.). Knohl takes a maximalist approach to this question when he generalizes from this passage that "in [the Holiness School], any violation of a commandment is considered a defilement of his name."[78] He further argues that the basis and rationale of the law is the DNF and that "every violation is a breaking faith with God and an insult to the name of the one who empowers the law."[79] Whether this verse implies this global statement about the HL requires a closer look at its role in Leviticus 21–22, Leviticus 17–22, and the HL in general.

[77] Nihan, *From Priestly Torah*, 495.
[78] Knohl, *The Sanctuary of Silence*, 184. Especially note his justification in n. 45, where he draws on Lev 22:31–33 and notes its broader relationship via inclusion with Lev 19.
[79] Knohl, *The Sanctuary of Silence*, 184.

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5.3.5 Leviticus 22:32 and Sanctifying Yhwh Among the People

The negative call not to profane Yhwh's holy name is immediately followed by a purpose clause: "that I may be sanctified among the people of Israel." How are these two clauses related, and do they narrow the discussion to Leviticus 21–22 or expand it? Rhyder argues that this conclusion is strongly tied to Lev 21–22.

She ties the first three phrases together easily: "Israelites must keep the law not only to avoid profaning his name but also to ensure that he might be sanctified among the Israelites."[80] After acknowledging that Yhwh being sanctified does not mean that Israel directly affects Yhwh's holiness, which is intrinsic to his being as a deity, she articulates an argument of how this relates to Leviticus 21–22. First, she says profaning Yhwh's name arguably refers to the concern articulated previously about the handling of offerings and possibility of Yhwh's name being profaned through various threats to the sanctuary.

But then she argues more strongly that the prepositional phrase "among the Israelites" (בתוך בני ישראל) explains how the holiness of Yhwh's name may be affected, because it references P's language in Exodus 25:8b and 29:45, where Yhwh says he will dwell in the tabernacle "among the Israelites." "Where else within the community would Yhwh dwell in a manner that allowed him to be 'sanctified'—that is, set apart from profaning elements and venerated by his chosen client?"[81] This is strengthened by the content of Leviticus 21–22 which deals with threats to the sanctuary.

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[80] Rhyder, *Centralizing the Cult*, 322.
[81] Rhyder, *Centralizing the Cult*, 322.

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It is also strengthened by the use of the phrase “I am Yhwh who sanctifies you” that structures the two chapters, which can be shown in the following list:[82]

21:8b	כי קדוש אני יהוה מקדשכם	For I Yhwh, the one who sanctifies you, am holy (2pl)
21:15b	כי אני יהוה מקדשו	For I am Yhwh who sanctifies him (priest, 3sg)
21:23b	כי אני יהוה מקדשם	For I am Yhwh who sanctifies them (alter and veil, 3pl)
22:9b	כי אני יהוה מקדשם	For I am Yhwh who sancifies them (priests, 3pl)
22:16b	כי אני יהוה מקדשם	For I am Yhwh who sanctifies them (the priests, 3pl)
22:32b	כי קדוש אני יהוה מקדשכם	For I am Yhwh who sanctifies you (2pl)

The use of the second-person plural in Leviticus 22:32 indicates that this conclusion is addressed to all Israel. As we discussed above, the third-person plural referencing the priests likely indicates that they are the readers of the text to the people. Finally, the meaning of the phrase in Leviticus 22:32 must be found in conversation with how Yhwh’s actions of sanctification of priests and people work together as expounded in these chapters in a process of mutual sanctification. Yhwh sanctifies Israel through the giving of the law, and Israel through obedience sanctifies Yhwh. Rhyder references Müller, who more fully explains mutual sanctification and the role of the DNF.[83] Müller also argues that the DNF makes Yhwh’s voice immediately present. And protecting and maintaining the priesthood and sanctuary as holy preserves the means through which they hear God’s voice and through the law given by that voice, they are sanctified. The priests are set apart, and as they invoke the DNF, Yhwh speaks through their speech and continues to sanctify Israel by his word, a process begun in the exodus.

[82] This chart is slightly modified from Rhyder, *Centralizing the Cult*, 323. For similar point see Nihan, *From Priestly Torah*, 328; Milgrom, *Leviticus 17–22*, 1793.
[83] Here Rhyder draws on Müller, “The Sanctifying Divine Voice,” 82–84.

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5.3.6 Sanctification Near and Far

Thus far, I have argued that the call not to profane Yhwh's name in Leviticus relates to his reputation, in a similar way to Ezekiel. In the parenetic conclusion, Leviticus 22:31–33 attaches obedience to not profaning Yhwh's name (negatively) and sanctifying Yhwh's name (positively). Knohl took this as a general maxim that governs the Holiness Legislation. Rhyder shows quite nicely how this relates to Leviticus 21–22 in particular, making a strong case of how they are textually and logically integrated.

While I affirm all that Rhyder argues, it's also possible to argue textually that Leviticus 22:31–33 is a parenetic conclusion not just to Leviticus 21–22 but also to Leviticus 17–22 and logically connects Yhwh's sanctity in the sanctuary and in the land.

Textually, besides the links to Leviticus 21–22, we can also see that the conclusion of Leviticus 21–22 reaches back to the beginning of the HL. The fourth major section (Lev 22:17–30) forms an inclusion with material from Leviticus 17. Nihan notes, "The inclusion is shown by the commission formula of 22:18aa, which is identical to the one introducing Lev 17 (see 17:2a), as well as by the content of the first two laws (v. 18–25 and 27–28) returning to the issue of legitimate offerings, exactly as in Lev 17; the parallel between the formulation of 17:3ff. and 22:18ab–25 is particularly obvious."[84] Similarly, the parenetic conclusion of Leviticus 22:31–33 includes a call to obedience and rooting the parenesis in the exodus, each marked by the DNF, that must be read in conversation with the broader parenetic frame. The parenesis is placed under the opening DNF, it repeatedly calls Israel to obedience, and its calls to obedience are rooted in the exodus story (cf. Lev 20:22–26).

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[84] Nihan, *From Priestly Torah*, 493.

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Next, while Rhyder's argument that "among the Israelites" does connect with P texts in Exodus about the sanctuary, its nearest use in the Holiness Code is in the Blaspheming Son pericope concerning life in the land. Here the Blaspheming Son went out "among the Israelites," which leads to a fight "in the camp" that leads to Yhwh's name being misused—a piercing of a holy sanctum—and made light of. The holy sanctum of Yhwh's name is accessible in the land, and similarly, Leviticus 19:12 suggests that swearing by Yhwh's name leads to profanation, and it would seem unlikely such swearing profanes Yhwh's name only if it is done at the sanctuary.

Finally, Rhyder herself and others connect Yhwh's being sanctified among the Israelites as a positive expression to the negative call to not profane the Name. Reading "among the Israelites" provides the context in which profaning Yhwh's name and sanctifying him takes place. Each is relative to a public audience. This reading tightly integrates the first three lines of the parenetic frame: Israel is called to obedience, this obedience prevents Yhwh's name—thereby reputation among the people—from being profaned, and it leads to Yhwh being sanctified among the people in the land.

So, while Rhyder's argument is correct in noting how Yhwh being sanctified among the Israelites fits into the call to protect the sanctuary in Leviticus 21–22, there are also connections more broadly in 17–22. And while Yhwh is sanctified in the sanctuary in a special way that Leviticus 21–22 seeks to protect, he is also to be sanctified in life in the land as covered in Leviticus 18–20. And actions in the land also serve to sanctify his name or profane it.

5.3.8 Conclusions on DNF, honor, and Leviticus 22:31–33

We are now in a position to read Leviticus 22:31–33 as a whole. The initial call to obedience punctuated by the DNF is familiar in the parenetic frame and recalls the development

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of this theme throughout the parenetic frame as an implication of "I am Yhwh your God" (18:2). While this does communicate authority, the next verse expands the DNF from mere authority to the dimension of honor. Obedience is necessary because it leads to Yhwh's name not being profaned. I argued using Milgrom's exhaustive study on the subject that in both Leviticus and Ezekiel profaning Yhwh's name was a sign that his reputation was damaged in the eyes of an audience. Ezekiel makes explicit that Yhwh's reputation, as signified by his name, suffers in the eyes of the nations. Leviticus implies the public gaze of the nations in the context of the exodus story (cf. Lev 26:44–45), but the HL focuses on Yhwh's reputation within Israel. Profaning Yhwh's name is attached to public acts that would directly question Yhwh's status as Israel's god, and these acts affect his sanctification *among the people of Israel*. In turn, sanctifying Yhwh among the people is integral to Yhwh's work of sanctifying Israel through his speech, given by priests, where Yhwh's "real presence'" is communicated through the DNF. This act is expressed as a participial phrase that is placed in parallel with Yhwh leading Israel out of Egypt to be their God and closed again with the DNF.

While not profaning Yhwh's name and sanctifying Yhwh takes on a specific meaning in Leviticus 21–22 in protecting the sancta, it also takes on meaning in the broader HL. Obedience in the sanctuary and the land are related. It is governed by the name of Yhwh, and in turn, Israel's obedience or lack thereof can affect Yhwh's name. Therefore, Knohl's statement is justified when he argues that "in HS, any violation of a commandment is considered a defilement of his name,"[85] the basis and rationale of the law is the DNF, and "every violation is a breaking faith with God and an insult to the name of the one who empowers the law."[86]

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[85] Knohl, *The Sanctuary of Silence*, 184. Especially note his justification in n. 45, where he draws on Lev 22:31–33 and notes its broader relationship via inclusion with Lev 19.
[86] Knohl, *The Sanctuary of Silence*, 184.

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5.3.9 Excursus: The DNF and Leviticus 19

While the preceding section emphasized the use of the DNF in the paraenetic frame, especially in Leviticus 18, 20, and 22, the notable density of the DNF in Leviticus 19 also deserves attention. As discussed above, it appears sixteen times in the chapter both in its short form (19:2, 12, 14, 16, 18, 28, 30, 32, 37) and long form (19:3, 4, 10, 25, 31, 34) asyndetically attached to a wide variety of legislation. While some argue that the wide variety of laws in Leviticus 19 have no clear arrangement or structure, [87] many attempt to find an organizational principle based on the usage of the DNF.

Wenham was one of the earliest to organize the material this way, arguing that the long-form (LF) marks the end of three paragraphs.[88] He formatted Leviticus 19 in the following three paragraphs:

Verses 2b–10 Religious Duties
Verses 11–18 Good Neighborliness
Verses 19–37 Miscellaneous Duties

This has three sections of four lines, four lines, and eight lines respectively, with the final section having an inclusion of "keep my rules" (vv. 19, 37). This may be a little too simplistic, in that honoring parents appears in "religious duties" instead of "good neighborliness," and not profaning Yhwh's name appears in "good neighborliness" instead of "religious duties."

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[87] Gründwaldt thought the lack of structure was intended to mirror the diversity of life covered in the law. See Gründwaldt, *Heligkeitsgesetz,* 259. Gorman also does note see structure: "Leviticus 19 consists of a series of miscellaneous instructions." Frank H. Gorman Jr., *Divine Presence and Community* (Grand Rapids, Mich. Eerdmans, 1997), p. 111.
[88] Wenham, *Leviticus,* 263.

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Warning,[89] building off of Schwartz,[90] essentially breaks Wenham's final paragraph into two parts to make four sections of four lines, but breaks out verses 19–22 as the center.

Paragraph 1	Verses 2–10	LF	[5 units]
Paragraph 2	Verses 11–18	SF	[4 units]
Middle:	Verses 19/20–22		middle
Paragraph 3	Verses 23–31		[5 units]
	23–25	LF	
	26–28	SF	
	29		--
	30	SF	
	31	LF	
Paragraph 4	Verses 32–37		[4 units]
	32		SF
	33–34		LF
	35–36		LF
	37		SF

In this conception, the first paragraph has all LF, the second paragraph has all SF, and the last two paragraphs have alternating patterns of SF and LF, although verse 29 has to be separated out, which seems to force the text to fit the pattern.

Finally, Nihan notes that verse 19 is part of the paraenetic frame that divides the chapter into two pieces and finds many parallels between both halves, most notably that the casuistic laws in verses 5–10 closely parallel the casuistic laws of verses 20–25, which stand out in a chapter of apodictic law.[91] This is not far from the two parts of Warning and Schwartz and agrees with Wenham on verses 11–18 being a paragraph and verses 19–37 being a unit, although with subsections more clearly delineated to match the first half. His analysis of the structure may be pictured as follows:

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[89] Warning, *Literary Artistry,* 108–109.

[90] Baruch Schwartz, "Selected Chapters of the Holiness Code: A Literary Study of Leviticus 17–19" (Ph.D. diss, The Hebrew University, 1983), 115.

[91] Nihan, *From Priestly Torah*, 461–462.

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General exhortation to holiness (19:2)	*Transition:* New exhortation: "Keep my laws" (v. 19a)
(a) Fundamental prescriptions: parents, Sabbath, prohibition of apostasy (vv. 3–4)	(a') Fundamental prescription: prohibition of mixtures (v. 19ab)
(b) Casuistic laws: sacrifice (vv. 5–8) and exploitation of land (vv. 9–10)	(b') Casuistic laws: sacrifice (vv. 20–22) and cultivation of the land (vv. 23–25)
(c) Other prescriptions: loyalty to the fellow Israelite (vv. 11–18)	(c') Other prescriptions: loyalty to Yahweh and the fellow Israelite, including the resident alien (vv. 26–36)
Final Exhortation: "Keep and practice *all* my laws and *all* my customs" (v. 37)	

This conception has the advantage of noting the paraenetic intrusion at 19a and the balance of casuistic laws. Verses 26–36 are still a rather general assortment, which brings his assessment of 19ab as the fundamental prescription that governs the second half into question. However, his insight that loyalty to neighbor and to Yhwh (vv. 3–4) and prohibition of mixtures (v. 19a) are key themes that govern the chapter overall is helpful. I regard Nihan's as the best attempt at seeing a structure in the passage. Overall, in my estimation, there is evidence that the DNF is used to make some structure, with the caveat that a neat structure that explains the placement of every law of the chapter seems impossible to discern.

With this survey of how the DNF serves as a structural background, we again turn to the rhetorical effect of its repeated use. First, all that I argued above still remains true. The DNF does make Yhwh's voice immediately present to the people through the priest, and his name communicates authority behind the commands (your *God*) in relationship (*your* God). Also, just as above, there are signals that not only does Yhwh's name authoritatively govern Israel, but Israel's actions relationally reflect on Yhwh's name. In Leviticus 19:12, swearing by Yhwh's name falsely profanes the name of Yhwh.

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One unique aspect of Leviticus 19 is that loyalty to Yhwh and loyalty to others are brought into relationship at key places.[92] Especially prominent are the opening instructions that follow the call for Israel to be holy as Yhwh is holy. Note in 19:3 how reverence (ירא) for parents is brought into relationship with keeping Sabbaths and avoiding idolatry. The opening verses draw from the decalogue in the order 4, 5, 1, 2.[93] However, in place of כבד of the Ten Words, the verb ירא is used. Cholewinski argues that ירא is reserved for Yhwh and his tabernacle in the HL, so the honor for parents is transposed into a religious respect.[94]

Similarly, standing and honoring elders is paralleled with fearing (ירא) God in 19:32, which "highlights the complementarity between these two forms of loyalty across the chapter as a whole."[95] While Cholewinski argued that כבד of parents is brought into a parallel relationship to loyalty to Yhwh, we may also say that ירא of Yhwh is brought into relationship to honor of parents (v. 31) in a way that recalls Malachi 1, where the cultic connection to Yhwh is explicitly connected to honor of parents. The parallel between כבד and ירא is not uncommon, as Dohman notes that, in reference to Yhwh, כבד is often found in parallel to ירא (cf. Ps 22:22). [96]

To summarize, the DNF does bring the name of Yhwh into a relationship of authority with the commands of Leviticus 19. However, Israel's obedience also can affect the Name. This emphasis on honor can also be seen in that religious loyalty to Yhwh is communicated in terms

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[92] Nihan, *From Priestly Torah*, 466–68. See also J. Magonet, "The Structure and Meaning of Leviticus 19," *HAR* 7.151 (1983): 67.

[93] Milgron, *Leviticus 17–22*, notes, "The very fact that commandments 1, 2, 4, 5, are reversed in vv. 2–4 alludes to Seidel's law, namely, that the author of Leviticus 19 is referring to an earlier list of these commandments, the Decalogue."

[94] A. Cholewinski, *Heiligkeitsgesetz und Deuteronomium* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1976), 111, 260–61.

[95] Rhyder, *Centralizing the Cult*, 319.

[96] C. Dohman, "*KVD*," in *TDOT* 7:13–17.

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of honor of parents, and honor of parents is brought into religious loyalty to Yhwh as an expression of holiness.

5.4 The DNF and Honor

We are now in position to review our argument and consider its implication. The beginning of this chapter surveyed the location and use of the DNF and found that the volume and strategic use indicated that the DNF is a significant part of the structural backbone of the HL.

This observation invites the question as to the rhetorical significance of the DNF. It is commonly argued that the DNF indicates the authority that backs the legislation given. This is plausible in that it recognizes that Yhwh is Israel's God, which implies authority, and it is placed in apposition to instruction that he expects Israel to follow and exhortations to obedience. This also accords with ANE uses of the phrase that imply possession and hegemony. However, I've sought to argue that the use of name is more complex than mere authority using a cumulative argument.

First, in the model we are using, name symbols honor, which accords with its use in the ANE. Within the Hebrew Bible, name is explicitly linked in a cultic context to honor in Malachi 1:6–2:9. And in Ezekiel, in passages directly related to the HL, name also is used to signify the reputation of Yhwh in the sight of the nations.

Second, while the DNF can imply authority, Diesel concluded more broadly that all of life is brought into relationship to "I am Yhwh your God." This is apparent in Leviticus 18 where the instructions on sexuality and idolatry are negatively fitted against the ways of Egypt and Canaan and positively fitted as an implication of the relationship of Yhwh being Israel's God. This relationship governed by the name of Yhwh also can be affected by Israel's lack of

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obedience that can profane Yhwh's name. Bibb helpfully noted that giving children to Molech (18:21; 20:3) and swearing by Yhwh's name falsely (19:12) were public acts that would call into question Yhwh's reputation among the Israelites. This was confirmed as we looked more broadly at what profaning Yhwh's name meant in the Hebrew Bible. Using Milgrom's argument, we concluded that this signaled that Israel's disobedience affected Yhwh's reputation within the community. In Ezekiel this is explicit, with the PCR being the nations. In Leviticus, the PCR is the Israelites.

We may summarize that the DNF governs a personal relationship with Israel and that this relationship is public and concerned for the status of Yhwh's name. It is public in the sense that this legislation is rooted in the exodus, in the sight of the nations. Further, the actions that profane Yhwh's name are public in the eyes of Israel and reflect on his "weight" among the community expressed in terms of his name. And concern is given that obedience would lead to his name being revered—that Yhwh would be sanctified among the Israelites.

This then aligns holiness and honor in a way we have seen in the Blaspheming Son and the Nadab and Abihu incidents. In the Blaspheming Son pericope, a misuse of Yhwh's name is portrayed in terms of a piercing of a holy sanctum with the result that Yhwh's reputation is made light of. Similarly, when Yhwh responds to Nadab and Abihu's actions, he asserts in parallel lines his demand to be sanctified by the priests and honored before all, which implies Nadab and Abihu's offense both crossed a boundary of holiness and affected Yhwh's honor before the people. Here, obedience is related to Yhwh's holy name not being profaned, and this is directly related to Yhwh being set apart among the people. This includes Israel protecting the sanctuary but also is linked directly to life in the land, governed under the holy name of Yhwh. As I argued

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in the last chapter, honor must undergird holiness. Here, the sanctum is Yhwh's name, which governs life in the sanctuary (Lev 21–22) and in the land (Lev 18–20).

While I've argued that honor is implied in the use of the DNF, particularly as it is linked to the exodus and the instruction to not profane Yhwh's name, the strongest argument that name implies honor is the way that this makes sense of the placement and balance of the Blaspheming Son pericope. So, we again return to its placement and conclusion.

5.5 "I am Yhwh" and Leviticus 24

In our survey above, we only briefly noted the only use of the DNF in Leviticus 24. I will conclude by arguing that name implying honor allows us to see the significance of the Blaspheming Son pericope in the Holiness Legislation and makes sense of the one unbalanced line within it.

5.5.1 I am Yhwh and the Placement of Leviticus 24

When considering the placement of the narrative pericope of Leviticus 24:10–23, recall from our discussion in chapter 3 that it has long been considered out of context in the midst of instructions on Sabbaths in Leviticus 23 and lighting of lamps and showbread at the beginning of Leviticus 24. Smith and Douglas argue it has a macrostructural dividing role unrelated to its immediate context. Trevaskis argues that it serves as a contrast between Israel pictured in worship before Yhwh in Leviticus 23–24:9 and more broadly in the context of Sabbath that unites Leviticus 23–25. He quotes Bibb in passing that Yhwh's name expressed in the DNF is ubiquitous and the underlying reason for the instruction of the HL, but this reason is expressed

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very generally and secondary to the main contrast he is arguing.[97] Thus he does not adequately address the particularity of the offense.

So, while Trevaskis argues for a primary contrast with Leviticus 23–25 and in passing mentions the significance of the DNF in the HL, I want to conclude this part of the argument that the particularity of the offense of piercing Yhwh's name and making light of it stands in contrast to the structural backbone of the DNF that runs through Leviticus 18–26, which signals not only authority but reputation. Further, the material of Leviticus 23–24:9, which also is built around the DNF, is a subset of the larger contrast between the Blaspheming Son and the DNF.

Putting the arguments of the last two chapters together, the Blaspheming Son pierces the sanctum of Yhwh's holy name through misusing it, thus making light of Yhwh's name.[98] This leads to legal reflection, centered on the *lex talionis*, where the disparity between offense and consequence in the application of the *talion* creates a status hierarchy where Yhwh's name stands at the highest level. Nihan suggests the chiasm forms a "comprehensive reflection on the nature of justice," and Vroom argues it forms a cosmology,[99] in which the name of Yhwh undergirds the order of life. Just as in Leviticus 10, where the honor of Yhwh was the context in which the status of the priesthood took shape and related to the people, here in Leviticus 24 a cosmology is formed through the chiasm that gives a hierarchy of status that underlies the words of the HL that sanctify Israel.[100]

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[97] Trevaskis, "The Purpose of Leviticus 24," 311.
[98] Pace Johnson, who argues that misusing the name in the Blaspheming Son episode is entirely different from desecrating the name found in the HL and Ezekiel. He argues that misusing the name is a concrete act while a variety of cultic wrongdoings lead to the consequence of Yhwh's name being desecrated. He misses, as I have argued, that all of the actions affect the public perception of Yhwh's name. See Johnson, 151-52.
[99] Nihan, *From Priestly Torah*, 518; Vroom, "Recasting *Mišpāṭîm*," 29.
[100] Cf. Paul's argument in Rom 1, where lack of honor of Yhwh disordered the universe and leads to impurity.

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In the first half of Leviticus, where the cult is established and ultimately the high priest is enabled to enter the holy of holies, Nadab and Abihu stand as an archetypical violation that is interpreted as a trespass on a sanctum and a lack of honor. This suggests that the Blaspheming Son pericope might stand as an archetypical violation in the second half of Leviticus. As we've argued above, in the HL all of life in the land is subsumed under the opening call that "I am Yhwh your God" (Lev 18:2). Not only does Yhwh's name define Israel and circumscribe their action, but, as in Ezekiel, Israel's action could affect the name of Yhwh. There is special concern not to profane Yhwh's name, which we've argued functions similarly to Ezekiel—disobedience leads to a making light of Yhwh's reputation, there amongst the nations, here in Leviticus among Israel (cf. Lev 22:32). This would make the Blaspheming Son a fitting contrast to the material developed throughout the HL. This serves as the final text before the conclusion of the HL (Lev 25–26, as I will argue in the next chapter).

This also provides another connection between Leviticus 10 and Leviticus 24, the former not honoring (כבד) Yhwh and the latter making light of (קלל) the name of Yhwh, a common antimony of honor and shame.[101] The failure of each story each suggest Yhwh is to be honored appropriately in the cult and in the camp, by priests and by people.

Thus, the primary context of the Blaspheming Son is the Divine Name Formula that undergirds the Holiness Legislation and governs the relationship with Israel. The DNF establishes the relationship in a public way, concerned for reputation. The Name not only authoritatively governs Israel's behavior, but Israel's behavior affects Yhwh's name.

[101] Many analyses of honor and shame in the Old Testament note this as an antimony. The most thorough is probably Jumper, "Honor and Shame in the Deuteronomic Covenant," 55–74.

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5.5.2 I am Yhwh within the Chiasm of Leviticus 24

One last minor point may also be considered briefly. Understanding the DNF as signifying a relationship of honor makes sense not only of the placement of the Blaspheming Son narrative but also the one unbalanced portion of the chiastic structure in Leviticus 24:13–23.

As a reminder, the center of this section of Leviticus 24 is tightly balanced around *lex talionis*:

F [17] "Whoever takes a human life shall surely be put to death.
G [18] Whoever takes an animal's life shall make it good, life for life.

H [19] If anyone gives injury his neighbor, as he has done it shall be done to him,
I [20] fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth;
H' whatever gives injury he has given a person shall be given to him.

G' [21] Whoever kills an animal shall make it good,
F' and whoever kills a person shall be put to death.

But the next section further out from the center looks like this:

D Whoever makes light of his God shall bear his sin.
E [16] The one who blasphemes the name of Yhwh shall surely be put to death. All the congregation shall stone him. The sojourner as well as the native, when he blasphemes the name, shall be put to death.

E' [22] You shall have the same rule for the sojourner and for the native,
D' **for I am Yhwh your God**."

While the repetition of sojourner and native brings connection (vv. 16b, 22a), the remainder of 15b–16 that emphasizes the death penalty for "making light of" Yhwh's name is unmatched in v. 22b. Given that the next section further from the center returns to an evenly matched command and compliance (vv. 13–15, 23), it invites reflection.

We recall as one moves out from the center, there is a progression from personal injury to killing of animals to killing of humans. The next step on each side is damage to the name of Yhwh. The account of damage in the first half (vv. 15b–16) is matched simply by the DNF on

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the other. In this context it suggests that the reputation of Yhwh may be adequately assumed as an aspect of the DNF. This suggests that "I am Yhwh" does not just authorize the native and sojourner command, but it stands as a summation of the significance of that name and necessity of it being honored. This also is the last command given before the narrative conclusion that they took out the Blaspheming Son and stoned him, and this is the last instruction before the concluding section of Leviticus 25–26, thus making it a fitting bookend to Leviticus 18:2.

5.6 Conclusions

This chapter has argued that the formulae "I am Yhwh" and "I am Yhwh your God" introduce, bracket, and punctuate the HL as a structuring device. It both names Israel's relationship with Yhwh following the exodus and draws all of life into relationship with him as their God. In contrast to the common view that it is merely suggests authority, I argued that the Name also signifies Yhwh's honor, which governs both the call to heed the instruction and highlights the ways that Israel's response reflects on that Name.

This holistic view of name, inclusive of honor, helps place Leviticus 24:10–23 as the archetypical example of mistreating the Name through misusing it (piercing a holy sanctum) and thereby making light of it. Here the chiastic structure centered on the talion places Yhwh's name in the position of highest status, which makes sense of the punishment of making light of that name by the Blaspheming Son. This, in turn, provides a contrast not just to Israel arrayed in worship (Lev 23-24), but to all of Israel's life governed under that Name by the DNF. In an oral culture the repetition of the DNF formulae and the transition of genre from instruction to narrative would be marked features, and the connection through honor both makes sense of the placement of Leviticus 24:10-23 and how it serves as a contrast.

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Literarily, not only is Leviticus 24:10-23 a fitting conclusion to the DNF structuring device, but it also is a fitting balance to the Nadab and Abihu narrative. These stories work together in a holistic way, as Luciani has elegantly summarized: "it is difficult to imagine a stronger and more effective way of saying, at one and the same time, the seriousness of human acts and the requirements of divine holiness and to show that this holiness concerns all the people (priests as well as laity, resident immigrants included), in all places (in the sanctuary as in the camp), and at all times (in the liturgical act as in everyday life)."[102] It is also notable that the requirements of divine holiness are bound up both in honoring Yhwh in approaching him (Lev 10) and avoiding making light of his name in everyday life in the camp and the land (Lev 24).

Rhetorically, the final form of the text addresses Israel in post-exilic Yehud, where Yhwh's Name has been defiled among the nations by Israel (Ezekiel), the cult is contested and even neglected, even as the prophets yearn for Yhwh's Name to be great among the nations (Malachi). The HL holds out a vision of life, rooted in the Name-making exodus of the past and draws all of life into a compelling vision, governed by Yhwh's name. It calls for a way of life that distinguishes them from their neighbors and provides a superior justice. This instruction calls for a response that does not defile that name but rather sanctifies Yhwh in Israel. The instruction places Yhwh at the pinnacle of status in creation and persuades through the negative consequence of making light of that Name.

[102] Didier Luciani, "Une autre intention pour Lv 24," 600. Original in French: "…il est difficile d'imaginer un moyen plus fort et plus efficace pour dire, tout à la fois, le sérieux des actes humains et les exigences de la sainteté divine et pour montrer que cette sainteté concerne tout le peuple (prêtres comme laïcs, immigrés résidants y compris), en tout lieu (au sanctuaire comme dans le camp), et en tout temps (dans l'acte liturgique comme dans la vie quotidienne)."

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This theme of Yhwh's name is a thread that ties together legislation and narrative in Leviticus 17/18-24. As we will see in the next chapter, it also ties together the blessings and curses that conclude the HL.

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Chapter 6

The Appeal to Honor in Blessings and Curses

"You ain't no kind of man, if you ain't got land"
– Delmar O'Donnell, *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*

It is commonly understood that blessings and curses motivate obedience to the covenant instruction that precedes them.[103] This chapter will consider how such obedience is motivated in Leviticus 26 and argue that honor is a key part of its persuasive strategy. This argument will occur in two movements. The first half of the argument is generic; namely, honor is an aspect of ANE covenants that gets expressed in blessings and curses in general, and these generic elements can be seen in the Hebrew Bible especially in Deuteronomy 28. The second argument builds on the first by examining the particularities of Leviticus 26 in the context of the talion in Leviticus 24 and Jubilee in Leviticus 25. I will argue that obedience is motivated by promised status in relationship to Yhwh, the land, and treatment from others.

6.1 Blessings and Curses Motivate Covenant Loyalty

Blessings and curses are an element of ANE suzerain-vassal treaties whose presence and function were elucidated throughout twentieth-century biblical scholarship.[104] As more treaty documents were unearthed and published, Mendenhall was the first of many to discern generic forms that also appear in the biblical text. These generic elements often appeared as follows:[105]

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[103] Watts, "Rhetorical Strategy in the Composition of the Pentateuch," 12–14.
[104] George E. Mendenhall, *Law and Covenant in Israel and the Ancient Near East* (Pittsburgh, PA: Biblical Colloquium, 1955); M. Weinfeld, "The Covenant of Grant in the Old Testament and in the Ancient Near East," *JAOS* 90:2 (1970): 185; Dennis J. McCarthy, *Treaty and Covenant: A Study in Form in the Ancient Oriental Documents and the Old Testament* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1978).
[105] George E. Mendenhall, "Covenant Forms in Israelite Tradition," *BA* 17.3 (1954): 58–60.

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1. Preamble
2. Historical Prologue—reminding the vassal of the beneficence of the suzerain
3. Main Stipulations
4. Provision for Deposit and Public Reading
5. List of Witnesses
6. Blessings and Curses

Blessings and curses are regular features at the conclusions of ANE treaties.[106] Watts generalizes a number of ANE forms into stories, lists, and sanctions[107] common across ANE cultures and found in the Pentateuch.[108] The stories ground the treaty's origin in the king's or deity's past benevolent actions.[109] This motivates the lists of obligations and behavior in the present. The sanctions (blessings/curses) motivate loyalty by "describing possible futures" based on their loyalty to the covenant.[110] Existentially, story-list-sanction explain how we got here, what we are called to do, and what will happen depending on our choice.[111] While the story that precedes the lists also motivate loyalty, the sanctions most explicitly incentivize loyalty.

Scholarship on suzerain-vassal treaties has not only articulated generic form and function but also analyzed characteristic language and underlying conceptual backgrounds. Cross has shown that kinship was the undergirding idea behind covenant and that these covenants were a

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[106] Hartley, *Leviticus*, 459, notes this conclusion in the Code of Lipit-Istar (epilogue, *ANET* 161), Code of Hammurabi reverse 26–27 (*ANET* 178–80), Sefire Treaty, Shamshi-Adad Treaty, and Esarhaddon Treaty
[107] See especially Watts, "Rhetorical Strategy in the Composition of the Pentateuch," 3–21; idem, "Story-List-Sanction: A Cross-Cultural Strategy of Ancient Persuasion," in *Rhetoric Before and Beyond the Greeks*, ed. Carol S. Lipson and Roberta A. Binkley (Albany, SUNY Press, 2004), 197–212.
[108] Biblical writers were well aware of the covenant form and stereotypical blessing and curse language found from other cultures. For example, the curse, "May they make your ground (hard) like iron so that none of you may flourish. Just as rain does not fall from a brazen heaven, so may rain and dew not come upon your fields," is found found in Assyrian documents (*VTE*, 11. 526–33; *ANET* 539) and verbatim in Deut 28:23 and Lev 26:19 and suggests the biblical text is drawing from well-known ANE material.
[109] Watts, "Story-List-Sanction," 204.
[110] Watts, "Story-List-Sanction," 205.
[111] Watts, "Story-List-Sanction," 206.

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means of social organization that extended kinship obligations and expectations of loyalty beyond direct kin.[112] Thus, the bonds and obligations of blood kin—mutual defense, redemption, and just treatment of those included in the treaty—were extended by the covenant that established fictive kin. These relationships are expressed in the treaties using language of adoption and marriage. Moran showed how covenantal love (הסד, אחב) is a characteristic term used to express loyalty in treaties between kings and between suzerains and vassals.[113] Love expresses faithfulness to the relationship that the covenant formalizes. Vassals were to express love "in loyalty, in service, and in unqualified obedience to the law," remaining faithful to their status as vassal.[114] Similarly, suzerains were to reciprocally love their vassals.[115]

Olyan has more recently noted the role of honor in how covenant love was publicly expressed.[116] He argues that honor is "part of the warp and woof of the social world that these treaties organized" and that just as honor is owed by children to their parents, the young to the elderly, and worshipers to their deity, honor was an expected public expression in covenant relationships.[117] He builds off of Moran's work on reciprocal love within treaties to examine letters and narratives that demonstrate that honor dynamics were bound up in covenant relations and that lack of honor could constitute a breach in covenant. His examples are pertinent to our discussion and worth noting in detail.

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[112] Frank M. Cross, "Kinship and Covenant in Ancient Israel," in *From Epic to Canon: Historical and Literature in Ancient Israel* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1998), 3–21.
[113] W. Moran, "The Ancient Near Eastern Background of the Love of God in Deuteronomy," *CBQ* 25 (1963): 77–87.
[114] Moran, "The Ancient Near Eastern Background of the Love of God in Deueteronomy," 78.
[115] Armana Correspondence *EA* 121:61; 123:23; 158:6.
[116] Olyan "Honor, Shame, and Covenant Relations in Ancient Israel and its Environment," 201–18.
[117] Olyan casts his article as groundbreaking, and in many respects it is. However, he does not note how Watts, "Story-List-Sanction," 204, hints in this direction by talking about a major motive of these treaties is that the name of the king be celebrated.

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Olyan begins by examining ANE correspondence between covenant partners, where he notices frequent mention of the treatment of emissaries. Sensitivity to perceived public expressions of diminishment, even if minor, are expressed as cause for concern about the state of the covenant relationship and whether the other party was remaining loyal to the covenant obligations.[118] Within the Hebrew Bible, 2 Samuel 10:1–6 records an example of the treatment of emissaries as a proxy for covenant relations. When the Ammonite king Nahash and his son Hannun takes over, David sends comforters to honor the dead: "I will practice covenant loyalty (חסד) to Hannun as his father practiced covenant loyalty (חסד) to me" (10:2). Instead of receiving David's comforters as an expression of honoring the dead and therefore covenant loyalty, they are perceived as a threat. So Hannun expels them after shaving half their beards and cuts their clothes so their buttocks are exposed (cf. 1 Kgs 5:1 where Hiram sends servants to express love). The narrator explains that they are "exceedingly shamed" (v. 5), and this shaming of David's emissaries, and therefore David, makes public the state of the breach in covenantal relations leading to war (v. 6–14). Olyan concludes that the shaming made public the state of the covenant relationship.

Similarly, in 2 Samuel 19:1–9, Joab kills Absalom, who had forced David to flee from Jerusalem. In response, David mourns instead of publicly celebrating the military victory, which shames his people (19:5).[119] Joab confronts David with the fact of his public shaming and juxtaposes honor and covenant: "you have shamed today the face of your servants, those who saved your life today . . . by loving those who hate you and by hating those who love you" (note

[118] Olyan, "Honor, Shame, and Covenant Relations," 206–7, reviews how in *EA* 20:64–65, 67; 27:108; 29:30–31, 32, 37 there is great concern over how emissaries are shown honor or lack thereof and what it means about the state of the covenant relations.
[119] Olyan, "Honor, Shame, and Covenant Relations," 208–9.

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the covenantal language). This potential breech is averted when David heeds Joab's advice and honors the troops, thereby making public his covenantal loyalty.

Finally, when Saul is defeated by the Philistines, they strip him, behead him, and hang him on the wall, thus publicly shaming him.[120] When the Gileadites hear this, they take down his body and bury him and fast in mourning, which David views as an act of loyal covenant love (חסד, 2 Sam 2:5). Although honor and shame are not explicitly mentioned, clearly the Gileadites move Saul's body from a position of public shame to an honorable burial (covering his shame),[121] and this is a public expression of loyalty to the covenant relationship.

Olyan demonstrates this concept across a wide array of literature and concludes that in the context of covenant relations, honor and shame are public actions that confirm or deny the existing relationships. Vassals are expected to honor their suzerains, but as the David/Absalom story shows, suzerains are also expected to honor their vassals. "To love one's treaty partner was to conform to treaty stipulations, as W. L. Moran and others have shown; to honor an ally, suzerain, or vassal was to demonstrate in the public sphere— often in a ritual setting— conformity to covenant."[122] However, he notes that "It would seem that honor was frequently an implicit requirement in covenant relationships. Most of the evidence for the relationship of honor to covenant is found not in prescriptive contexts but in narrative materials making reference to the state of covenant relations between two parties."[123] He does not examine blessings and curses, so we will examine whether they are part of a discourse of honor related to covenant.

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[120] Olyan doesn't cite Lemos's article on shame and mutilation, but nakedness, mutilation, and exposure are all aspects of public humiliation intended to enhance the superiority of victors and degrade the conquered. See Tracy M. Lemos, "Shame and Mutilation of Enemies in the Hebrew Bible," *JBL* 125.2, (2006): 225–41.
[121] Lemons, "Shame and Mutilation," 227–28.
[122] Olyan, "Honor, Shame, and Covenant Relations," 217.
[123] Olyan, "Honor, Shame, and Covenant Relations," 218.

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We can conclude from the suzerain-vassal treaty genre that blessings and curses envision futures as a response to loyalty expressed in maintenance of covenant terms and intended to motivate such covenant loyalty. This loyalty is often expressed using the language of love and has a public dimension that may be expressed as honor and shame.

This brief overview surfaces several questions we will seek to answer:

1. If Watts and others are correct that treaties conclude with blessings and curses to motivate loyalty, what is the particular rhetoric used for motivation in Leviticus 26?
2. Moran demonstrated that covenant loyalty expressed using the language of love is to be mutually demonstrated, and Olyan built on this to highlight the public dimension of covenantal loyalty. Therefore, do we see a public dimension of covenant loyalty expressed as honor between Yhwh and Israel in Leviticus 26?
3. While it may be more apparent that Israel honors Yhwh through obedience, are there any indications in Leviticus 26 of how Yhwh loves and honors Israel in response to their loyalty?

From these generic patterns, we now turn to the Hebrew Bible to examine the particularities of the text to see if and how they conform to these patterns. We will begin by reviewing the work of James N. Jumper on blessings and curses in Deuteronomy 28.

6.2 Honor and Shame in Deuteronomy 28: James N. Jumper

James N. Jumper, in a 2013 dissertation, studied the role of honor and shame in the Hebrew Bible and applied his analysis to the blessings and curses of Deuteronomy 28 and the

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role they play in the Deuteronomistic History.[124] He argues that in contrast to ANE covenants where the purpose of the blessings and curses is only implicitly understood,[125] Deuteronomy 28 is explicit about how the blessings and curses motivate obedience: namely, covenant loyalty to Yhwh will lead to the honor of Israel in the sight of the nations, which is expressed in both the structure, content, and context of Deuteronomy 28.[126]

First, an envelope structure around the blessings strikingly highlights the motivation of the blessings. Israel will be placed above all the nations as a result of obedience. This brackets economic and military blessings that are presumably the means by which they will obtain this status.[127]

Section A
a If Israel listens to YHWH's commandments (v. 1a)
b Israel will be placed above all of the nations (v. 1b)

Section B
Enumerated blessings of economic and military success (vv. 2–11)

Section A'
a Israel will be placed above all of the nations (vv. 12a–13a)
b If Israel listens to YHWH's commandments (v. 13b)

The curses have a slightly different structure, but they also emphasize Israel's status vis-à-vis the nations. Instead of an inclusion, the curses are arranged in a pattern that moves Israel "lower and lower" (28:43) until they "become the tail" (28:44). The blessings are reversed so that Israel will be reduced economically and militarily, and their end state will be the lowest status of all: unwanted slaves in a foreign land (Deut 29:68).

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[124] Jumper, "Honor and Shame in the Deuteronomic Covenant."
[125] Jumper, "Honor and Shame in the Deuteronomic Covenant," 127.
[126] These three categories are my own heuristic summary of Jumper, "Honor and Shame in the Deuteronomic Covenant,"121–46.
[127] Jumper, "Honor and Shame in the Deuteronomic Covenant," 136.

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Second, this structural envelope accords with the context provided by the covenant inauguration that precedes the blessings and curses, which also emphasizes how keeping Yhwh's commandments will lead him to set Israel "in praise and in fame and in honor above all the nations."

> This day Yhwh your God commands you to do these statutes and rules. You shall therefore be careful to do them with all your heart and with all your soul. You have declared today that Yhwh is your God, and that you will walk in his ways, and keep his statutes and his commandments and his rules, and will obey his voice. And Yhwh has declared today that you are a people for his treasured possession, as he has promised you, and that you are to keep all his commandments, and *that he will set you in praise and in fame and in honor high above all nations that he has made*, and that you shall be a people holy to Yhwh your God, as he promised." (Deut 26:16–19, cf. Deut 4:4–8).

Besides this structure and context, the content of the blessings and curses are also related to economic and military success associated with honor throughout the Hebrew Bible. Jumper devotes a chapter to a semantic study of honor and shame, consistently finding that they correlate with binaries such as heavy/light and high/low. He extensively examines the Hebrew Bible and finds that to be of high status and "heavy" is correlated with wealth and military strength and sheer numbers.[128] He concludes that blessings and curses correlate with כבד and קלל. Another way to get at this is to return to Malina's original definition of honor: "one's claim to worth plus social acknowledgement of that worth."[129] Wu recognizes there are two parts to this, "First, the 'substance' of honor—what honor actually *is*—is encapsulated in the idea of *worth* or *value*. Second, the key factor in assigning or dispensing honor—the authorizing agent that makes honor 'real' is *social acknowledgement*."[130] Pitt-Rivers, the anthropologist from whom Malina draws, distinguishes between the fact and the sentiment of honor, which captures the substantive and

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[128] Jumper, "Honor and Shame in the Deuteronomic Covenant," 136.
[129] Malina, *The New Testament Word,* 31.
[130] Wu, *Honor, Shame, and Guilt,* 58-59.

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responsive aspects of honor.[131] Wu concludes, “there are some instances of כבד that refer to the actual properties of the object, irrespective of the perception of others, while others refer to the action or disposition of a party in response to the object.”[132] For example כבד is used in Judges 18:21 and Gen 13:2 to refer to abundance of possessions. However, in Ps 22:24, כבד is used in parallel with praise and fear as a response to Yhwh. This distinction corresponds to Jumper’s analysis of the content of the blessings and the frame that shows the resulting status. The blessings themselves increase Israel’s כבד in the sense of the substance of honor. Their status above the nations is then *acknowledged* as they rise in status over the nations.

Based on the structure, context, and content, Jumper argues that the purpose of the blessings and curses is to motivate the obedience of covenant loyalty through a vision of honor expressed as status among the nations. Israel honors Yhwh through covenant loyalty expressed as obedience, and Yhwh blesses Israel economically and militarily in ways that make her great among the nations. Jumper concludes that while Israel has been ascribed honor in being brought into relationship with Yhwh,[133] the blessings and curses reveal an “honor-for-honor, shame-for-shame exchange between the divine suzerain and his earthly vassal. When Israel is loyal to YHWH, he blesses her with economic and military superiority so that her prestige rises above the nations. And when she dishonors YHWH with her disobedience, YHWH will diminish her status.”[134] This accords well with Moran’s findings that suzerains and vassals are each reciprocally obligated to love one another and with Olyan’s argument that mutual loyalty is made

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[131] Pitt-Rivers, “Honor” in *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, ed. David L. Sills, XX vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1968), 6:503.
[132] Wu, *Honor, Shame and Guilt*, 64.
[133] Jumper, “Honor and Shame in the Deuteronomic Covenant,” 139–41.
[134] Jumper, “Honor and Shame in the Deuteronomic Covenant,” 146–7.

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public. Although Olyan addresses the connection between covenant and honor in narratives, it also appears that the genre of blessings and curses operate on the same dynamic.

Jumper validates the relationship between honor and blessings/curses through studies of the Ark Narrative (1 Sam 4–6), the Davidic covenant (2 Sam 7), Psalm 74, and judgment on Eli's sons (1 Sam 1–3).[135] The example of Eli and his sons is worth considering more carefully here, as it explicitly articulates the "honor-for-honor, shame-for shame exchange" in a cultic setting.

This narrative occurs in the opening chapters of Samuel, where a barren Hannah and her future son, Samuel, provide a foil to Eli and his sons. In 1 Samuel 1, barren and despised Hannah faithfully seeks Yhwh for a son, offers annual sacrifices, and eventually gives the son granted her over to service to Yhwh. Meanwhile in 1 Samuel 2:12–17, by contrast, Eli's sons steal from the sacrifices what is intended for Yhwh—treating "the offering with contempt" (2:17)—and Yhwh implicates Eli for honoring his sons more than him (2:29).[136] While Samuel grows (גדל) in the presence of Yhwh (2:21), the sins of the sons of Eli become great (גדל, 2:17).[137]

In between the descriptions of the two families, in response to the son Yhwh grants her, the song of Hannah is only incidentally about Samuel. Instead, the core of the song (2:4–8) notes how Yhwh raises those of low status and lowers those of high status.[138] These are associated with economic prosperity, military strength, and association with those of lofty positions of honor (see especially v. 8). This song covers the dynamics of the entire composition of Samuel

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[135] Jumper, "Honor and Shame in the Deuteronomic Covenant," 147–54, 164–212.
[136] Kang Bin helpfully notes that Eli only indirectly addresses them with two questions and an expression of disappointment. See Kang Bin, "Honor and Shame in 1 Samuel 1–7" (PhD diss., Asian Graduate School of Theology, 2021), 174.
[137] W. Brueggemann, *First and Second Samuel*, Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching (Atlanta: John Knox, 1990), 22–23.
[138] For a helpful analysis of this song, see Bin, "Honor and Shame in 1 Samuel 1–7," 145–61.

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foreshadowing the rise and fall of Saul and David.[139] But in its immediate context it covers the juxtaposed rise of Samuel and downfall of Eli and his sons. While Hannah is given seven sons and Samuel rises to prominence, Eli and his sons are judged for not honoring Yhwh and a multifaceted curse brings down their household:

> "Why then do you scorn my sacrifices and my offerings that I commanded for my dwelling, and **honor (כבד)** your sons above me by fattening yourselves on the choicest parts of every offering of my people Israel?" Therefore Yhwh, the God of Israel, declares: "I promised that your house and the house of your father should go in and out before me forever," but now Yhwh declares: "**Far be it from me, for those who honor me I will honor (כבד) and those who despise me shall be lightly esteemed (קלל).** Behold, the days are coming when I will cut off your strength and the strength of your father's house, so that there will not be an old man in your house. . . . And everyone who is left in your house shall come to implore him for a piece of silver or a loaf of bread and shall say, "Please put me in one of the priests' places, that I may eat a morsel of bread." (1 Sam 2:29–36)

Yhwh promises to honor those who honor him and those who despise me shall be lightly esteemed (קלל). What follows is a type of curse section,[140] where Yhwh will make Eli's house lightly esteemed in terms of position, progeny, and prosperity.[141] His house, having been given a special position before Yhwh will lose that position. Progeny will be cut off, most immediately with the death of Hophni and Phineas on the same day. And instead of prospering on the sacrifices, they will beg for bread. Jumper deftly demonstrates how these relate to the covenant curses of Deuteronomy 28.[142]

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[139] Childs calls it the interpretive key of the composition. See Brevard Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1979), 273. See also R.C. Bailey, "The Redemption of Yahweh: A Literary Critical Function of the Songs of Hannah and David," *BibInt 3* (1995): 213–31; David T. Tsumura, *The First Book of Samuel*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 68–69.
[140] Tsumara, *The First Book of Samuel*, 168.
[141] Jumper, "Honor and Shame in the Deuteronomic Covenant," 73.
[142] Jumper, "Honor and Shame in the Deuteronomic Covenant," 185–86, 192.

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Types of Honor Loss in Hannah's Prayer and the Deuteronomic Covenantal Curses	
1 Samuel 2:1–10	*Deuteronomy 28*
High to Low Status	*High to Low Status*
Bows of the mighty are shattered (v. 4)	Defeated by enemies (vv. 19, 25, 52)
YHWH kills (v. 6); He brings down to Sheol (v. 6)	Death (vv. 61, 66)
The full hire themselves out for food (v. 5)	Be economic dependents/ slaves (vv. 36, 44)
He makes poor (v. 7)	Makes poor (vv. 18, 51, 63)
One with many children becomes childless	Loss or destruction of children in household (vv. 18, 32, 41, 53, 57, 62)

The narrative that follows confirms the outcome of Yhwh's judgment. His sons lead Israel into battle with the Philistines and are defeated, they both die, the household comes to nothing, and they beg for bread. The curses that fall on Eli are rooted in treating Yhwh lightly vis-à-vis his sacrifices. Eli dishonors Yhwh, and Yhwh responds with an "honor-for-honor, shame-for shame exchange" that diminishes Eli's house (2:30, 31, 35, 36). The *talionic* aspect of those who treated Yhwh lightly will be made light is also expressed in that eating what is not theirs leads to hunger and lack of seeing eventually causes his descendants in a low position to see with envy (1 Sam 2:32).

This reading of the opening narrative confirms Jumper's analysis that the Deuteronomic blessings and curses are framed by status. Covenant faithfulness is an expression of honor to Yhwh, who will in turn honor his covenant partners. Disobedience is a sign of dishonor—treating Yhwh lightly—which will lead to the covenant partner being made light.[143]

[143] Similarly, in a cultic setting, when Yhwh asks the priests in Malachi 1 'if sons honor fathers, where is his honor?', the consequence is also talionic: "if you will not take it to hear to give honor to my name, says Yhwh of hosts, then I will send the curse upon you and I will curse your blessings" (Mal 2:2). He even goes so far as to shame them by rubbing their faces in dung (Mal 2:3).

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6.3 Review and Prospect

Before we turn to Leviticus 26, we can briefly review our findings thus far. Watts' generic analysis of story, list, and sanction primes us to expect that blessings and curses rhetorically motivate the listeners toward covenant loyalty in some way, but the question of how that is accomplished must be discerned in each particular text. Moran prepares us to watch for how covenant loyalty is mutually expressed, and Olyan's work primes us to be sensitive to how loyalty is expressed publicly in terms of honor. In Deuteronomy 28, Jumper's analysis reveals a confluence of all these elements. The content of the blessings and curses, correlating with כבד and קלל are framed by a rare statement that explicitly reveals the persuasive strategy of the text in offering Israel to be set high above the nations. Conversely, disobedience as covenant disloyalty leads to curses that are a reversal of the blessings and structured toward increasing diminishment among the nations, until Israel falls off the social scale—they become unwanted slaves in a foreign land. The *talionic* nature of honor for honor, shame for shame was especially highlighted by the story of Eli and his sons in a cultic setting.

We now turn from Deuteronomy 28 to Leviticus 26, which also contains blessings and curses, to see if a rhetoric of honor is also present in that text. While the blessings and curses contain similar themes of economic abundance and security, there is no explicit statement of purpose as there is in Deuteronomy 28. A closer look also reveals further differences in the address[144] and structure,[145] but most of all the surrounding context. Leviticus 26 is the fitting

[144] In Deut 28 Moses speaks in first person and refers to God in the third person, but in Lev 26 Yhwh speaks in the first person. This makes Lev 26 a direct address of promises and threats rather than blessings and curses of typical treaties.
[145] Deut 28 presents curses in a straightforward list; Lev 26 presents the threats in five increasing stages of chastisement (vv. 14–17, 18–20, 21–22, 23–26, 27–38) threatened if Israel does not turn, which suggests chastisements designed to help Israel repent.

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conclusion of the Holiness Legislation, which has different emphases than Deuteronomy, especially the implications of Yhwh dwelling in the midst of the people. For example, the final section of the blessings (26:11–12) where Yhwh dwells among the people is uniquely fitted to the HL discourse in ways that are distinct from Deuteronomy. This material follows immediately after the final commands of the Holiness Legislation in Leviticus 26:1–22, which also accents worship of Yhwh alone and reverence for his sanctuary. For all the similarities between the blessings and curses in Deuteronomy 28 and Leviticus 26, they are each embedded into different compositions and have unique emphases. To determine how covenant loyalty is motivated by Leviticus 26 will require closer examination of both their content and context. Therefore, I will argue in the rest of this chapter that the blessings and curses of Leviticus 26 build on a vision of dignified status established in Leviticus 25, configured through relationships with Yhwh, the land, and others and represent an expression of the *talion* that concluded Leviticus 24.

6.4 Connection between Leviticus 25 and 26

The blessings and curses in Leviticus 26 are embedded most immediately in the context of Leviticus 25–26.[146] Milgrom nicely summarizes why these two chapters should be seen as a unit.[147] He notes that the Divine Speech Formula, "and Yhwh spoke to Moses," is a major structural marker to begin new sections throughout the Holiness Legislation (e.g., 18:1; 21:1; 23:1), and this marker is present in 25:1 but not in 26:1, which suggests Leviticus 26 is not a new section but continues what began in Leviticus 25. Furthermore, Leviticus 25–26 is enveloped in a

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[146] See my earlier arguments in §3.8 for a longer argument about why ch. 25 more properly belongs with ch. 26 rather than with 23–25. This does not deny that Lev 25 also connects with Lev 23 in the theme of Sabbath. Here, Lev 25 serves as a bridge in a similar way to Lev 17.
[147] Milgrom, *Leviticus 23–27*, 2274–75.

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unique inclusion where this revelation occurred (26:4; 25:1; בהר סינ). These structural indicators of connection are confirmed by numerous thematic connections such as exodus, Sabbath, and redemption, which we will explore more fully below. Milgrom summarizes this way: "Together they (Lev 25 and 26) have a single theme: Israel's violation of YHWH's commandments, especially of the sabbatical, leads inexorably to its exile."[148]

In contrast to Milgrom's focus on violation, which is not present in Lev 25, we may also note that both chapters share a similar vision for obedience and its specific consequences of economic abundance and military security. Leviticus 25:18 and Lev 26:3 each have calls to "keep" and "do" statutes that will lead to dwelling in the land securely (25:18; 26:6–10) and the land yielding its fruit (25:19; 26:4–5). In fact, the identical blessing appears in each chapter: the people will be eating the old crop when new crop arrives (25:22; 26:10). Thus, economic abundance and security in response to obedience are explicitly shared between Leviticus 25 and 26.

I will further argue below that these two chapters share a similar vision of Israel dwelling on Yhwh's land conceived of as a temple estate and that each chapter fleshes out a vision of the status of Israelites in terms of whose עבדים they are. We will trace these themes first in Leviticus 25 before turning to Leviticus 26.

[148] Milgrom, *Leviticus 23–27*, 2275

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6.5. Leviticus 25 and Status

6.5.1 Leviticus 25 Overview

On the surface, Leviticus 25 picks up the theme of weekly and annual Sabbaths from Leviticus 23 and extends it to a septennial Sabbath of the land (25:2b–7) and a Jubilee every fiftieth year (vv. 8–12) and then explicates the significance of these instructions through the possibilities of redemption and status as עבדים.[149] The first half of the chapter gives basic instructions for the septennial Sabbath and Jubilee, Sabbaths "to Yhwh" (25:4) that have social significance detailed in the chapter. The land is to rest every seven years, and after "seven weeks of years" the septennial Sabbath becomes a Jubilee,[150] where on the Day of Atonement any Israelite in debt bondage was freed and returned to their ancestral land—a reset to the original conditions after the exodus.[151] Besides the mechanics of how these work, each set of instructions assures them there will be enough food while the land lays fallow (vv. 6–7, 20–22). And since the Jubilee precludes accumulation and ownership of land, there are also instructions on the economic exchange of the usufruct of the land relative to the Jubilee (vv. 13–17), which effectively eliminated slavery among Israelites.[152]

The center of the chapter is anchored by the theological assertion that Yhwh is the owner of the land (v. 23). This serves as the foundation of the relationship between Yhwh, the land, and the people—they are tenants on his land.[153] This also serves as the foundation for the Jubilee—

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[149] As noted above, Wagner, "Zur Existenz des sogenannten 'Heiligkeitsgesetzes,'" 314, n. 29, argues there is natural continuity from the weekly Sabbath and annual festivals in Lev 23 to the septennial Sabbath year in the land and Jubilee after forty-nine years in Lev 25..

[150] A helpful discussion of whether this is forty-nine or fifty years can be found in Sun, "An Investigation," 459–460.

[151] Nihan, *From Priestly Torah*, 534.

[152] Nihan, *From Priestly Torah*, 527.

[153] E. E. Meyer, "People and Land in the Holiness Code: Who is YHWH's Favourite?" *OTE* 8.2 (2015): 433–50.

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the land is not to be sold in perpetuity because it is owned and gifted by Yhwh. And finally, this statement anchors the pivot in the chapter toward redemption, thus bridging the two halves of Leviticus 25.[154]

The second half of Leviticus 25 is marked by a series of conditional cases of redemption that can occur any time before the Jubilee. Three such cases begin similarly—"if your brother becomes poor" (vv. 25, 35, and 39)—and envision a series of worsening scenarios from which redemptive possibilities exist before Jubilee.[155] The people, if possible, are to redeem their kin as soon as possible and thus imitate Yhwh as a גאל.[156] If they are not immediately able, they are not to treat their fellow Israelites as עבדים but as hired workers, because all Israelites are Yhwh's עבדים. If the people can't redeem their kin, then Yhwh acts as a redeemer in the Jubilee when the people are released and returned to their land.[157]

6.5.2 Theology and Configuration of Leviticus 25

Whether or not the Jubilee was ever observed by Israel,[158] the details of the instruction regarding the septennial Sabbath and Jubilee becomes the matrix in which the relationships

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[154] Nihan, *From Priestly Torah*, 519–20.
[155] The first section enables the poor man or his kin to redeem the land at any time, and if they are unable, the land will be returned at Jubilee. The second section enjoins fellow Israelites to treat those who must give up the usufruct of their land with economic fairness, not taking advantage of him. The third section pictures a total loss of the poor but argues that not only does the land belong to Yhwh, which can never be sold, but Israelites also belong to Yhwh as his עבדים. Layered into this progression are subcases of redemption in walled cities, of Levites (Vv. 29–34), and in situations where servitude of the nations by Israel (vv. 44–46) and servitude of Israelites to those of other nations (vv. 47–55). Milgrom, *Leviticus 23–27*, 2191; Nihan, *From Priestly Torah*, 519–20; Rhyder, *Cult Centralization*, 342–43.
[156] Nihan, *From Priestly Torah*, 532. This is the only use of this term outside of Exod 6 and 15.
[157] Hartley, *Leviticus*, 443.
[158] See Fager's excursus "Was It Ever Observed?" in Jeffrey A. Fager, *Land Tenure and the Biblical Jubilee: Uncovering Hebrew Ethics through the Sociology of Knowledge*, JSOTSupp 155 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 34–36.

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between Yhwh, the people, and the land are configured. The two main theological pillars upon which this configuration rests are asserted at the middle and the end: Yhwh owns the land (vv. 23–24) and he redeemed the people out of Egypt and thus owns the people too (v. 55).[159] The first of these pillars is primary in the chapter. Israel's relationship with the land is then mediated entirely by their relationship with Yhwh.[160] They dwell as sojourners on Yhwh's land, are to follow the statutes of the owner of the land, and are to image Yhwh's character in redeeming kinsmen. The statutes regulate how they treat fellow Israelites who fall into economic trouble, and they provide a contrast to their time as עבדים of Pharaoh in Egypt.

The chapter increasingly emphasizes the exodus (cf. vv. 38, 42–43, 46, 53, 55) and concludes with an explicit statement that through the exodus, Israel became Yhwh's עבדים and therefore were not to be עבדים to any other. It is significant that in Leviticus 18–22 the exodus brings Israel into relationship to God, and this has implications for their *sanctification*. Because Yhwh redeemed them and separated them from the peoples, Leviticus 20:26 concludes that Israel is to be holy to Yhwh and make ritual purity distinctions. Leviticus 22:31–33 similarly roots Israel's sanctification in the exodus in an exhortation to obedience that Yhwh's name not be profaned and that Yhwh be sanctified. Here in Leviticus 25, as in Leviticus 26:13, the exodus is the occasion when Israel becomes Yhwh's עבדים, and in both cases this has implications on their *status* relative to others. Nihan concludes that in the HL, the exodus is not only the basis of the separation and consecration of Israel *from* Egypt (20:24b–26 and 22:33a) but a consecration *to* "become dependent workers on Yahweh's estate, cultivating the land for him."[161]

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[159] Nihan, *From Priestly Torah*, 519; Fager, *Land Tenure and the Biblical Jubilee*, 108. See also Frank H. Gorman, *Divine Presence and Community: A Commentary on the Book of Leviticus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 137.
[160] Meyer, "People and Land," 433–50
[161] Nihan, *From Priestly Torah*, 535.

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One convenient way to describe this configuration in the ANE is a temple estate, where properties belonged to the deity and were cultivated to provide for both the workers and the shrine.[162] While Israel dwelling on Yhwh's land as his עבדים is clear, the temple aspect can be deduced from the context of the temple both before (Lev 24:1–9) and immediately after (26:1–2).[163] This is further strengthened by the observation that Leviticus 25 is governed by sacred time. Rhyder notes that, "the claim that Yhwh is the exclusive owner of the land, coupled with his ownership of the Israelites as his personal slaves, clearly echoes these Mesopotamian sources which describe temple estates. This does not necessarily mean that H had in mind these literary sources."[164] We will follow Rhyder's lead in finding the temple estate as a useful construct to describe the configuration of Yhwh, land, and people that was available to the authors to provide a useful shorthand for that configuration.

6.5.3 Leviticus 25, Persuasion, and Status

Within this configuration of Israel as Yhwh's עבדים serving on his land, Israel is persuaded towards the obedience of covenant faithfulness in two ways—each that deal with their status.

[162] Joosten, *People and Land in the Holiness Code*, 181–84; Nihan, *From Priestly Torah*, 535–36. See especially Rhyder, *Centralizing the Cult*, 345–48. The one striking difference is that Yhwh claims all the land and all the people are his עבדים, as opposed to the deity reserving only part of the land and people. Although Rhyder and others do not explore this, it is possible that Yhwh owning the whole land of Israel actually strengthens the parallel with temple estates that owned only a fraction of available land in a kingdom. Namely, the idea that the deity claims part of the land for his/her own may parallel Yhwh claiming all the land of Israel as his temple estate and his people as his עבדים with a broader view of the earth in view. This aligns with Israel's claim that the earth is Yhwh's. (e.g., Ps. 24:1).
[163] Joosten, *People and Land in the Holiness Code*, 183.
[164] Rhyder, *Centralizing the Cult*, 347.

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First, there is a strong focus on the privilege it is of being Yhwh's עבדים in how it safeguards how Israelites are treated by kinsmen and enemies. Even in the midst of economic calamity, Israelites were not to be treated as someone else's עבדים, and they retained rights to their land. They were to be treated as hired workers and not to be ruled over ruthlessly (25:43, 46, 53) because they were Yhwh's עבדים. The words ruled over (רדה) and ruthlessly (בפרך) are rare in the Pentateuch; their usage speaks directly to status. In P, rule (רדה) is used only in Genesis 1 and Numbers 24:19. In Genesis 1 it refers to the primordial couple's status as royal priests[165] having dominion over creation, which is explicated in Psalm 8 as a status of glory and honor. Thus, humans are intended to rule over the rest of creation, not be ruled over, which would be a degradation of status. Redemption restores Israel to a royal priesthood set on Yhwh's land and guards against being ruled over by others.

This rare word "rule" is combined with another rare and distinctive word, "ruthlessly" (בפרך), also repeated in verses 43, 46, and 53. This word only appears in the Pentateuch in another Priestly passage, Exodus 1:13–14, where Pharaoh makes Israel his עבדים (used six times in these two verses) and treats them ruthlessly (used twice in these two verses). This explicit connection to their redemption from Egypt provides a contrast in treatment and dignity between being Pharoah's and Yhwh's עבדים. Just as with the word "rule," "ruthlessly" signals a contrast to be treated with a lower status. Thus, part of the persuasive strategy of Leviticus 25 is to hold out a vision of being Yhwh's עבדים, which guards their dignified status granted at creation and

[165] The royal aspect being conveyed by the dominion they are to have (Gen 1:26–28) in the context of temple construction in Gen 1. The priestly aspect is also reinforced by the verbal pair "serve and keep" in Gen 2:15 and associated with priests in Num 3:7–8; 8:25–26; 1 Chr 23:32; Ezek 44:14. See G. J. Wenham, "Sanctuary Symbolism in the Garden of Eden Story," *Proceedings of the World Congress of Jewish Studies* 9 (1986): 19–25

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contrasted with Egypt. We will explore more fully below how this status is explicated both in the blessings (26:13) and curses (26:17).

Second, Israel's status is also guarded by their rights to a fruitful land. Although they do not own the land, they have guaranteed rights to the usufruct of the land. This land would produce enough—indeed more than enough (25:18–22)—and even in the event of economic disaster they retained rights to the land. In an agrarian society, fruitful land rights afford the dignity of being free from being the servant of others[166] and allows the people to live out their role as royal priests. Further, their name could be perpetuated in relationship to the land, as Numbers 27:4 and Ruth 4:10 make clear.[167]

Finally, not only is Israel's dignified status guaranteed in relationship to the land and relationship to one another, it is also ensured by kinship (through covenant) status with Yhwh. In the process of instructing Israel to redeem the member of their clan as soon as possible, there is also the guarantee that Yhwh himself will ultimately redeem them in the Jubilee.[168] He not only redeemed them in the past but ultimately guarantees future redemption if they fall into hardship. This kinship obligation of redemption implies covenant, where the bonds of kinship have been extended from Yhwh the suzerain to Israel the vassal. We can recall here that honor is not simply an individual characteristic but a group identity established most prominently by the family status/reputation. Therefore, the people have identity and status as Yhwh's kin.[169]

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[166] Fager, *Land Tenure and the Biblical Jubilee*, 114.
[167] See Steffan Mathias, *Paternity, Progeny, and Perpetuation: Creating Lives after Death in the Hebrew Bible*, LHBOTS 696 (New York: T&T Clark, 2020), 233–34; and Jacob Milgrom, *The JPS Commentary: Numbers* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989), 231.
[168] Hartley, *Leviticus*, 443.
[169] Jumper, "Honor and Shame in the Deuteronomic Covenant," 134, n. 405.

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6.5.4 Leviticus 25, Leviticus 26:1, 2 and Transition into the Blessings and Curses of Leviticus 26

We now turn to Leviticus 26, where we will argue that the configured relationship of Yhwh, land, and others described as a temple estate becomes the backdrop to which blessings and curses are expressed. Or, to put it another way, the *talion* that concluded Leviticus 24 is expressed in the blessings and curses of Leviticus 26 in terms of the temple estate configured in Leviticus 25. The dignified status the people can enjoy through honoring Yhwh's sanctuary and keeping his Sabbaths that stands at the center of the temple estate is intensified in the blessings and reversed in the curses. However, the kinship through covenant with the hope of redemption remains.

Verses 1–2 stand as a bridge between Leviticus 25 and 26. On one hand they are the final instruction of the Holiness Legislation.[170] They also provide an explicit cultic conclusion to the implicit understanding of temple estate developed in Leviticus 25, and the Sabbath law concludes the theme of Sabbath developed throughout Leviticus 25. The negative commands to avoid bowing to idols and positive commands to keep Sabbath and reverence the sanctuary serve as a precis of the Decalogue[171] that use the first, second, and fourth commands to accent cultic reverence and connote covenant loyalty. Together they cover the temporal and spatial spheres that Yhwh's presence in the tabernacle oversees.[172] On the other hand, Leviticus 26:1–2 mark a change in person (third-person singular to second-person plural) and provide the commandments that are specifically alluded to as being broken in the curse section (cf. 26:30, 34–36, 43). Further, Leviticus 26:1, 2 has a dual use of the DNF that forms an inclusion with the dual use of

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[170] Nihan, *From Priestly Torah*, 535. Hartley, *Leviticus*, 449.
[171] Milgrom, *Leviticus 23–27*, 2277.
[172] Milgrom, *Leviticus 23–27*, 2285.

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the DNF in 26:44–45, and this serves as the underlying rationale of the chapter.[173] This DNF makes Yhwh's voice immediately present through the priest and matches the blessings and curses that follow in Leviticus 26, which Yhwh declares in first person that he will do, in contrast with Deuteronomy and other ANE texts, where the deity's actions to bless and curse are reported in third person.[174]

These laws also repeat laws that introduce and conclude Leviticus 19. Leviticus 26:1 is similar to 19:4, and Leviticus 26:2 is identical to 19:30 (cf. 19:3aβ). As Milgrom notes, that the term *ʾĕlîlîm* occurs in the Torah only here (26:1) and in 19:4 is but another indication that the H editor wished to associate the blessing and curses of Leviticus 26 with the fulfillment of the commandments of Leviticus 19.[175] So these concluding instructions assume Leviticus 19 and act as a fitting conclusion to the overall instruction.[176]

Finally, these two verses also introduce a specifically covenant-focused portion of the HL. The Sabbath is a sign of the covenant (Exod 31:12–17) and introduces covenant dialogue throughout Leviticus 26. Apart from Leviticus 2:13 and 24:8, the term ברית only occurs in Leviticus 26 and does so eight times.[177] The blessings and curses are a part of covenant discourse, which Watts reminds us follow stories and lists to promote covenant loyalty.[178] In fact, the HL follows the Covenant Code and Deuteronomy with the pattern of beginning with

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[173] Harper, "The Rhetorical Function of Allusion to Genesis 1–3 in the Book of Leviticus," 325. Nihan, *From Priestly* Torah, 535.
[174] Harper, "The Rhetorical Function of Allusion to Genesis 1–3 in the Book of Leviticus," 327; Hans U. Steymans, "Verheißung und Drohung: Lev 26," in Fabry, *Levitikus als Buch*, 273; Nihan, *From Priestly Torah*, 534–35.
[175] Milgrom, *Leviticus 23–27*, 2279.
[176] Nihan, *From Priestly Torah*, 535.
[177] Thomas Hieke, "The Covenant in Leviticus 26: A Concept of Admonition and Redemption," in *Covenant in the Persian Period: From Genesis to Chronicles*, ed. Richard J. Bautch and Gary N. Knoppers (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2015), 75.
[178] Watts, "Rhetorical Strategy in the Composition of the Pentateuch," 12–14.

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sacrifice (Exod 20:24–26; Deut 12) and concluding with blessings and curses (Exod 23:20–33; Deut 28).[179] Thus, 26:1, 2 foreshadow the covenant focus that pervades the chapter.

6.6 Blessings and Curses (Lev 26:3–13, 14–39)

As we turn to examine the blessings and curses of Leviticus 26, we again recall the questions raised by our survey of Watts, Moran, and Olyan. Watts' generic analysis of story, list, and sanction primes us to expect that blessings and curses rhetorically motivate the listeners toward covenant loyalty in some way, but the question of how that is accomplished must be discerned in each particular text. Moran prepares us to watch for how covenant loyalty is mutually expressed, and Olyan's work sensitizes us as to how loyalty is expressed publicly in terms of honor.

We also recall that in Deuteronomy 28 covenant mutuality was expressed in obedience to Yhwh leading to stereotypical ANE blessings of economic abundance and security. These elements of כבד led to explicit statements about Israel's status among the nations, thus both the content of honor and the acknowledgement of that status vis-a-vis the nations were present. Similarly, the curses were a reversal and loss of these blessings that led to Israel being the lowest social status imaginable—unwanted even as slaves in a foreign land. While Leviticus 26 does not contain such statements, I will now argue that its content and structure accent themes developed in Leviticus 25 that point to Israel's status. Specifically, I will argue that Leviticus 26 (along with 25) motivates obedience by holding out a vision of dignity as servants on Yhwh's temple estate

[179] See Milgrom, *Leviticus 17–22*, 1450–51.

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in contrast to the lack of dignity in Egypt and in exile. And disloyalty to Yhwh and dishonoring his house will lead to a *talionic* response of dishonor of Israel.

6.6.1 The Blessings: Leviticus 26:3–13

The structure of the blessings in verses 3–13 is clear and will guide our discussion: a protasis that calls for obedience in verse 3, followed by an apodosis of a single blessing spoken by Yhwh connected by *waw* perfect consecutives.[180] These blessings are structured in three movements,[181] each beginning with a use of נתן that introduces verses 4-5, 6-10, and 11-12, followed by a conclusion in verse 13. [182]

> **4** I will give (וְנָתַתִּי) you your rains in their season, and the land shall yield its increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit.
> [4–5; economic abundance]
> **6** I will give (וְנָתַתִּי) peace in the land, and you shall lie down, and none shall make you afraid.
> [6–10; security in the land]
> **11** I will give (וְנָתַתִּי) my dwelling among you, and my soul shall not abhor you.
> [11–12; unique emphasis on Yhwh's dwelling among the people]

If Israel "walks in my statutes and observes my commandments and does them," then the first two sections that follow promise the stereotypical blessings of economic abundance that come from Yhwh's giving (נתן) of rain (vv. 3–5) and military security along with fruitfulness described by creation blessing and Abrahamic promise[183] (vv. 6–10) that comes from Yhwh

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[180] Hartley, *Leviticus*, 457.
[181] Wenham, *Leviticus*, 328, summarizes the units as "the gift of rain and good harvests" (vv. 4–5), "the gift of peace, no wild animals, defeats, or famine" (vv. 6–10), and "the gift of God's presence" (vv. 11–13). However, his last designation surely only applies to vv. 11–12, with v. 13 alluding to the exodus and employing the DNF being consistent with how the exodus and DNF have been used throughout the Holiness Legislation to mark conclusions to sections.
[182] Hartley, *Leviticus*, 457.
[183] Milgrom, *Leviticus 23–27*, 2297–98, clarifies that in both Lev 26:9 and Gen 17:6–7, "the promise of progeny is linked to the covenant, in the identical language *wahăqīmōtî ʾet-bĕrîtî* 'I will maintain my covenant.'". Hieke, "The

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giving (נתן) peace. The third section (vv. 11–12) also begins by Yhwh giving (נתן) Israel "my dwelling among you," which is a blessing uniquely fitted to the context of Leviticus. However, even the way stereotypical blessings of fruitfulness are expressed also points to Yhwh's dwelling among the people. Fruitfulness is expressed in terms of "being fruitful and multiplying," an expression of blessing found in Priestly texts of creation (Gen 1:28), re-creation after the flood (Gen 9:1, 7), and covenant (Gen 17:4–7).[184] The accent on creation can also be seen in the giving of (נתן) fruit, tree, and land, which only occurs in Genesis 1:29, here in Leviticus 26:4, and in Ezekiel 34:27.[185] Similarly, the hope of Yhwh walking among the people, using הלך in the *hithpael*, recalls its unique usage in Gen 3. This confirms Milgrom's evaluation that obedience holds out hope of a return to paradisiacal conditions.[186] In terms of Leviticus 25, covenant loyalty is motivated by a vision of not just any temple estate but of a primordial one. That Leviticus 25 is also in view is confirmed by the explicit restatement of "eating old store long kept" and "clearing out the old to make way for the new," which was a promise in Leviticus 25 of provision in light of the land laying fallow (25:22).

So, to summarize, the blessings are predicated on obedience and hold out the promise of blessing in promises of economic abundance, military security, and a third section uniquely fitted to the context of Leviticus that holds out the promise of Yhwh's presence in primordial terms. The first section follows stereotypical ANE blessings, the second mixes stereotypical blessings

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Covenant in Leviticus 26," 76, also notes the allusion to Gen 17 and intriguingly adds that Israel's identity is at stake in their obedience.

[184] Grünwaldt, *Heiligkeitsgesetz*, 366–67.

[185] Harper, "The Rhetorical Function of Allusion to Genesis 1–3 in the Book of Leviticus," 345, also notes the connection between Gen 1:29 and Lev 26:4. In each both the plants of the land yielding seed and every tree with seed in its fruit are gifts. Note Grünwaldt's analysis of why Lev 26 is more dependent on P than on Ezekiel. See Grunwaldt, *Heiligkeitsgesetz*, 351–55.

[186] Milgrom, *Leviticus 23–27*, 2302.

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with distinct Priestly language of blessing in terms of covenant and paradisiacal creation, and the final section promising Yhwh's presence draws on a primordial temple estate fitted uniquely to the context of Leviticus.

These three sections of blessings are concluded in verse 13 by explicitly framing these blessings against an exodus backdrop, which continues a theme within the Holiness Legislation of rooting the discourse in Israel's foundational redemptive event with the use of the DNF.[187] Here the DNF is used as the subject for the exodus that makes two points, both in alignment with Leviticus 25. First, Yhwh brought them out of Egypt that they would not be Egypt's עבדים. And second, Yhwh broke their bonds that they might walk erect. This contrast is expressed through bodily imagery that elucidates status. Their former way of life where they were enslaved involved being bent under bars of slavery, which is contrasted with a way of life of walking erect. As we've noted above, the body expresses honor,[188] and in this case the bars of being עבדים of Egypt contrast to walking upright (i.e., dignified) as Yhwh's עבדים. The basic posture communicates the relationship to the other found in Leviticus 25. As Yhwh's עבדים they are not to be ruled over or treated ruthlessly by any other.

Verse 13 is distinct within the structure of verses 3–13 and provides an overall summary of the purpose of the blessings.[189] Whereas in Deuteronomy the blessings were framed by Israel's projected status against the nations in the future contingent on obedience, in Leviticus 26:3–13 the blessings are framed by an expression of their status in relationship to the past, both

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[187] Cf. Lev 20:24–26; 22:31–33.
[188] Hans Ijzerman and Dov Cohen, "Grounding Cultural Syndromes: Body Comportment and Values in Honor and Dignity Cultures," *European Journal of Social Psychology* 41.4 (2011): 456–67; Malina, *The New Testament World*, 35.
[189] Milgrom, *Leviticus 23–27*, 2303.

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the immediate past that contrasts being bent under bars versus walking erect and the primordial past of restored dignity. These again are played out on a picture of a temple estate, where they have dignified status in God's presence on God's land and will not be ruthlessly ruled over by others.[190]

The allusions to creation and covenant also confirm the emphasis on status through intertextual means. Recall that the primordial couple are pictured as having dominion to rule over creation as royal priests, which Psalm 8 commemorates as being crowned with glory and honor (vv. 6–7[5–6 EVV]). Similarly, the covenant promises to Abraham are embedded in discourses that promise honored status. The promises to Abraham in Genesis 17 occur when Abram's name is changed, and as Hahn points out, this is the first time "name" is mentioned since the opening frame of the Abraham narrative opened with a promise of blessing that will make Abram's name great in juxtaposition with the Babel builders who aim at a great name but are scattered.[191] The fulfillment of the promises to Abraham in terms of fruitfulness and land are part of the great name promised to him.

As we noted in Leviticus 25, the exodus motif combined with the DNF is often used to conclude sections throughout Leviticus 18–22 (cf. Lev 20:22–26; Lev 22:31–33). There they focused on Yhwh's redemptive action and the implications of Israel being separated unto him. Here the emphasis of the redemptive action is on Israel's status in relation to others. As Yhwh's עבדים, they are not to be ruthlessly ruled over, and in contrast to being bent by bars of slavery in a foreign land, they now walk erect on Yhwh's land.

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[190] Hartley, *Leviticus*, 463–64, notes, "Yahweh desires his people have honor and dignity.".
[191] Scott W. Hahn, *Kinship through Covenant* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 105–6.

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Finally, these blessings are clearly related through a dozen uses of similar language, to Ezekiel's enumeration of blessings.[192] We again find that this language of blessing that reverses curse also accents Israel's status relative to the nations. This can be seen in Ezekiel 34:25–31 especially, which is shown below with shared phrases highlighted.

> I will make with them a covenant of peace and **banish wild beasts from the land**, so that they may dwell securely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods. And I will make them and the places all around my hill a blessing, and I **will send down the showers in their season; they shall be showers of blessing. And the trees of the field shall yield their fruit, and the earth shall yield its increase, and they shall be secure in their land.** And they shall know that I am Yhwh, **when I break the bars of their yoke**, and deliver them from the hand of those who enslaved them. They shall no more be a prey to the nations, n**or shall the beasts of the land devour them. They shall dwell securely, and none shall make them afraid**. And I will provide for them renowned (לשם) plantations so that they shall no more be consumed with hunger in the land, and no longer suffer the reproach of the nations. And they shall know that I am Yhwh their God with them, and that they, the house of Israel, are my people, declares the Lord Yhwh. And you are my sheep, human sheep of my pasture, and I am your God, declares the Lord Yhwh.

What is also clear from these verses is that Yhwh's treatment of Israel is related to his mission of making himself known as well as removing the reproach of the nations from Israel. It is clear from the curses that Israel will be ruled over by enemies and a foreign land. And Yhwh will again liberate them in the eyes of the nations. And Yhwh expresses loyalty as their patron in blessing the people so that Yhwh is known and Israel does not suffer reproach. This fulfills Olyan's understanding of honor being expressed publicly. In fact, Leviticus 26 takes a significant turn toward Israel's public status vis-a-vis the nations. Previously, we noted that Leviticus was concerned about Yhwh's status in the eyes of Israel in contrast to Ezekiel, where his name was being profaned in the sight of the nations. But in Leviticus 26 Israel's status is a public matter as they are ruled over by enemies, exiled, and die in their lands. Leviticus 26 comes much closer to

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[192] Shared language can be seen in both Ezek 34:25–31 and Ezek 37:26–28. For a discussion on the direction of influence in Leviticus and Ezekiel, see Nihan, "Ezekiel and the Holiness Legislation. For an historical overview that traces models, shortcoming, and development, see Lyons, "How Have We Changed?"

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the blessings and curses of Ezekiel where Yhwh's name is tied to Israel "suffering reproach in the eyes of the nations" (Ezek 34:29). This may account for Leviticus 26 concluding with hope of an exodus accomplished in the "eyes of the nations" (Lev 26:45).

We conclude two things. First, these blessings are an extension of the vision of life on Yhwh's temple estate as his עבדים in Leviticus 25. Both promise blessing in return for obedience. Both emphasize the privilege of being Yhwh's עבדים in relationship to the inferior status they previously had of being the עבדים of others. In Leviticus 25 it was being "ruthlessly ruled over." In Leviticus 26 it was being bent over under bars versus walking erect, a bodily metaphor that communicates dignity. Each chapter holds out a vision of abundance on Yhwh's land. Leviticus 26 takes this even further in alluding to Edenic conditions, where of course the couple were a royal priestly pair, crowned with glory.

Thus, the temple estate configuration of relationships is used to persuade people toward covenant loyalty to Yhwh that he would express his loyalty in giving abundance, security, and blessing that would confer status in contrast to their previous status in Egypt and a restoration of primordial status that would yield a great name.

6.6.2 The Curses: Leviticus 26:14–39

The curse section in Leviticus, like in Deuteronomy, is much longer than the blessings, but unlike in Deuteronomy, in Leviticus it is laid out in a series of five chastisements (vv. 14–17, 18–20, 21–22, 23–26, 27–38), each marked with ואם and presumably intended to cause Israel to turn in repentance. Generically, the cause of curse is covenant disloyalty, and within the text the

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destruction wrought is called “vengeance of the covenant” (26:24).[193] The primary cause of these chastisements is listed both generally as “not listening” and “walking contrary to me” (cf. vv. 14, 18, 21, 23, and 27) and explicitly within some of the curse section as idolatry (26:30), and particularly breaking of Sabbath (26:34–35, 43), which recalls the opening verses that preceded these curses (Lev 26:1, 2) with a cultic emphasis. As is true throughout the HL, the land and temple are integrated, and “all this suggests that the destinies of the sanctuary and land are inseparable.”[194]

Generally, the curses are expressed as a reversal of the blessings. As Milgrom, drawing on Levine, aptly summarizes: “the fertile land (vv. 4–5, 10) will become unproductive (vv. 16, 19–20, 26); God will turn with favor toward his people (v. 8) or will set his face against them (v. 17); Israel will repulse its enemies (v. 9) or be battered by them (vv. 17, 25); wild beasts will disappear from (v. 6) or devour the people (v. 22); the sword will not traverse the land (v. 6) or will bring destruction (v. 25); obedience brings secure settlement (v. 5), whereas disobedience brings exile (v. 33a).”[195]

As we noted above, the presence or lack of economic and military security on the land is associated with status or its lack. This is again matched by Israel’s status vis-à-vis the nations. The first curse section makes clear a change in status with regards to the enemies that recalls Leviticus 25. In contrast to Yhwh, who loves and enables them to live on his temple estate not *ruled* over by any other (Lev 25:43, 46, 53), Leviticus 26:17 pictures Israel being *ruled* over by

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[193] Hartley, *Leviticus*, 466.
[194] N. Kiuchi, *Leviticus*, Apollos Old Testament Commentary (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2007), 484.
[195] Milgrom, *Leviticus 23–37*, 2305, who summarizes Levine, *Leviticus*, 276.

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those who hate them (again, covenant language). With regards to the image established by Leviticus 25, this constitutes an entire reversal and a loss of their dignified status.

The curses also conclude by accenting Israel's fate relative to their enemies. Yhwh will devastate the land so much that the nations will be appalled (v. 32). Those who are exiled will perish in the land of enemies, eaten up by their land (v. 38). Thus, there are actually three lands mentioned in the chapter. The land of Egypt that recalls past degradation of being ruled over ruthlessly bent under bars, the land of promise where Israel walks erect, and the land of enemies where they are again ruled over by those who hate them. The conclusion of each major section of the chapter is framed in terms of movement between lands—either through exodus or exile—with the hope of exodus again at the end, which we turn to now.

6.6.3 Restoration: Leviticus 26:40–45

The final section lacks a formal introduction, but confession marks a shift of Israel's unresponsiveness that characterized the previous section.[196] This leads to a positive conclusion that is first of all covenantal. Yhwh remembers his covenant with Jacob, Isaac, and Abraham (v. 42). Although the covenant is broken by Israel (v. 15), God remains faithful to the covenant.[197] Nihan argues that the Abrahamic covenant is brought into the form of the Sinai covenant that is conditioned on Israel's obedience in verse 9. However, the conclusion of the chapter shows that

[196] Hartley, *Leviticus*, 458.
[197] Hieke, "The Covenant in Leviticus 26," 78–79.

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the Sinai covenant is ultimately enveloped in a priestly concept of covenant as a ברית עולם that Yhwh will maintain.[198] Covenant thus "serves as an anchor and a *Rettungsschirm*."[199]

The conclusion is not just covenantal but also resolves the issues of the land. In 26:42 Yhwh remembers not only the covenant but also the land. The land will enjoy the Sabbaths that it missed by Israel's covenantal breach of breaking Sabbath. But because of the covenant and because "I am Yhwh their God" (v. 44), Yhwh will bring them back. The conclusion of this final section mirrors the previous two in movement from land, from exodus to the land, from the land to the land of the enemies, and now hope for a return to the land.

Finally, the conclusion also highlights the public nature of the covenant relationship and exodus. Hartley notes the public dimension of this. The curses represent a reversal of Yhwh's goal of creating a holy nation on the land he had provided for them, and "[a] failure in creating a holy people like himself would be put on public display."[200] The conclusion to this is a remembrance of the covenant with their forefathers, "whom I brought of the land of Egypt in the sight of the nations, that I might be their God: I am Yhwh." Several things can be noted here. First, the DNF is used twice in the closing verses in a way that forms an inclusion with the beginning of the chapter. Second, the name again is attached to a public event. Yhwh's redemption is done publicly in the eyes of the nations, so Yhwh's reputation is on the line. So, in

[198] C. Nihan, "The Priestly Covenant, Its Reinterpretations, and the Composition of 'P,'" in Schectman and Baden, *The Strata of the Priestly Writings*, 112–113. Stackert argues that each use of ברית must be interpreted in context, and he reads some uses of ברית as divine requirement and some uses of ברית as divine promise. It is unclear to me why he flattens a complex relationship that is well attested to simple facets of the relationship to the exclusion of a more holistic understanding. See J. Stackert, "Distinguishing Innerbiblical Exegesis from Pentateuchal Redaction: Leviticus 26 as a Test Case," in *Pentateuch: International Perspectives on Current Research,* eds Dozeman et al. (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 377-78 and 384.
[199] Hieke, "The Covenant in Leviticus 26," 78.
[200] Hartley, *Leviticus*, 472.

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line with how Ezekiel spoke of redemption, Yhwh redeems not just for Israel but also for his reputation in the sight of the nations. This draws to a close the HL with a public note of Yhwh's relationship with Israel, with an inclusion in verse 46 that matches Leviticus 25:1 but also the HL and Leviticus as a whole.[201]

6.7 Conclusions

We return to our question of how covenant loyalty is motivated in blessings and curses (Watts), and whether mutual love/covenantal loyalty is expressed publicly in terms of honor (Moran/Olyan). We saw above, in Deuteronomy, that the content, context, and structure of the blessings and curses were framed through persuasion toward honor and avoidance of shame, which the content of the blessings and curses spelled out. This mapped well onto Olyan's argument that those in a covenant relationship had expectations to honor one another and the status of the relationship was made public in this way. Jumper concludes that blessings and curses of Deuteronomy 28 reveal an "honor-for-honor, shame-for-shame exchange between the divine suzerain and his earthly vassal. When Israel is loyal to YHWH, he blesses her with economic and military superiority so that her prestige rises above the nations. And when she dishonors YHWH with her disobedience, YHWH will diminish her status."[202]

Our question is whether these dynamics that are true of the genre and seen in Deuteronomy 28 are applicable to Leviticus 26. It's certainly true that Leviticus 26 contains similar blessings and curses as Deuteronomy that are associated with the substance of honor, but

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[201] Milgrom, *Leviticus 23–27*, 2334.
[202] Jumper, "Honor and Shame in the Deuteronomic Covenant," 146–47.

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statements regarding Israel being set "in praise and in fame and in honor high above all nations" are nowhere to be found.

I've argued here that Leviticus weaves its blessings of Leviticus 26 alongside a picture of a dignified status on a temple estate that coheres with Leviticus 25. This dignified status involves kinship relations with Yhwh, rights to and security on a land that will be fruitful, and rights not to be ruled over by others. This is undergirded by Yhwh's redemptive activity and ownership of the land. The content of the curses reverses the blessings, and as in stereotypical ANE fashion there is an emphasis on the loss of fruitfulness of the land and security against others. Especially jarring in Leviticus 26 is how Israel will be ruled over by "those who hate them." They not only lose the content of their dignified status—with economic abundance and security in the land—but also fall in status before their enemies.

This argument is strengthened by how the blessings of Leviticus specifically allude to creation and covenant with Abraham that connote honorable status. Blessings will be a return to the primordial temple estate where Israel is not ruled over but instead has dignified status and also recalls the fruitfulness and land that come with Abraham's name being made great. Leviticus is in strong alignment with Ezekiel, both in the wording of the blessings and in portraying the blessings and curses publicly in relation to the nations. The blessings in Leviticus are framed in terms of their relationship to Israel in the past. The curses are framed in terms of being ruled over by enemies and dying in their lands. This public nature of the covenant consequences is matched by the hope held out of an exodus done "in the sight of the nations."

So, I conclude that Leviticus 26 also has the dynamic of blessings and curses similar to Jumper's conclusion that "honor-for-honor, shame-for-shame exchange between the divine

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suzerain and his earthly vassal."[203] It also matches Yhwh's response to Eli in 1 Samuel 2:30 that, "Far be it from me, for those who honor me I will honor, and those who despise me shall be lightly esteemed," which, when applied to Eli's lack of honor for Yhwh, led to the curse. It also mirrors Malachi 1:6–14, where Yhwh expects the same honor as a son who honors a father and the lack of honor leads to a curse (1:14). This follows, "If you will not listen, if you will not take it to heart to give honor to my name, says Yhwh of hosts, then I will send the curse upon you and I will curse your blessings" (2:2). And more immediately, it matches the *talionic* conclusion of Leviticus 24.

This confirms Watts' supposition that blessings and curses persuade the listener towards covenant faithfulness and Olyan's argument that this covenant faithfulness is demonstrated publicly. Within the narrative world of Leviticus, the blessings and curses hold out two potential futures based on Israel's response in terms of a life as Yhwh's עבדים on a Temple estate in contrast to being hunched over in chains. Rhetorically, the final form of the text addresses Israel as the vassal of Persia, in an impoverished state. In this setting, covenant obedience – particularly that centered on the cult (Lev 26:1,2), holds out hope of walking uprightly from foreign bonds, prosperity, security, and an Edenic hope of Yhwh's presence walking among them again. Whereas Lev 17/18-24 appealed to the status of Yhwh among Israel, Leviticus 25-26 appeals to the status of Israel, contrasting life on Yhwh's temple estate with life ruthlessly ruled over by enemies, which Israel had experienced.

More broadly, honor again provides additional coherence in the reading of the HL. The HL is structured through the Divine Name Formula, which I argued signifies not only authority

[203] Jumper, "Honor and Shame in the Deuteronomic Covenant," 146–47.

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but also honor. The Blaspheming Son then provides an archetypical offense of misusing the Name and thereby piercing a holy sanctum and making light of that Name. The fitting penalty of death was communicated through a status hierarchy centered on the *lex talionis* where Yhwh's name constituted the greatest status. This *talionic* response that concluded the first part of the HL also provides a transition to the conclusion (Lev 25–26), where Israel is pictured as Yhwh's עבדים and then the blessings and curses appear as a *talionic* response for Israel's covenant loyalty expressed in terms of the cult. It is an "honor-for-honor, shame-for-shame exchange" between the divine suzerain and his earthly vassal.

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Chapter 7

Conclusions and Further Study

This thesis sought to use a socio-rhetorical approach to the HL that emphasized honor to provide a coherent, thick reading of the text against a network of cultural assumptions and historical background. This final chapter will review the argument of each chapter, summarize key findings, and conclude with potential directions for future research.

7.1 Review of Argument

7.1.2 Chapter 2

This thesis began with a personal illustration of how communication contains unspoken embedded cultural assumptions that make cross-cultural communication fraught with opportunities for ethnocentric and anachronistic assumptions. However, because culture provides some patterns of regularity, social science models may be used to enter into a text from a foreign culture and make sense of the particulars of its utterance. The model allows readers to "continually reassess our reading frames—that is to say, our ideas about the possible context of symbols and beliefs in terms of which the texts seem to make sense—in a way that at least mitigates our tendency to interpret biblical texts in terms of our own assumptions . . . to distance ourselves from at least part of what passes as 'common sense' in our own culture."[1]

In contrast to using a model deductively or naively as corresponding to the world behind the text, it is best to use the model as an ideal construct that provides a plausible entry point to

[1] Stone, *Sex, Honor and Power in the Deuteronomistic History*, 35–36.

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the text.[2] This enables us to compare and contrast the text with a model, noting similarities and differences. This feedback allows the model to adapt as it interacts with texts in an iterative (recursive) process. The goal is to find a coherent account of the text's features in relationship to a network of cultural assumptions. For the HL, I argued that a modified version of Malina's Mediterranean model would provide a suitable starting place to begin this process.

While a social science model attempts to responsibly interface between the text and how it reflects the cultural "situation," I also articulated a rhetorical-critical methodology to make sense of the text's rhetorical "strategy" to speak to and shape the situation. In developing a rhetorical methodology, we saw how Muilenburg's rhetorical criticism, originally appreciative of *Sitz im Leben*, devolved in the biblical studies guild into explaining texts purely against their literary features. However, later rhetorical methodologies righted this oversight by acknowledging that persuasion takes place with awareness of the "external reference of discourse, the context both immediate and antecedent, the suasory potential in the situation" that plays an "organic part" of the analysis.[3] That is to say, that the historical context that forms a part of the rhetorical situation matters. Thus, while in this thesis I foregrounded cultural context of honor, I did not ignore the historical context in seeing how the text persuades the listener towards some end.

7.1.3 Chapter 3

Because our understanding of rhetoric necessitated specifying the context of the speech, chapter 3 used Bitzer's theory of rhetorical situation to provide context to the HL. I argued that

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[2] I argued in chapter 2 in the "rhetorical setting" section that the text and the history of Israel make the assumption of a culture of honor and shame plausible.

[3] Bryant, *Rhetorical Dimensions in Criticism*, 35, quoted in Barker, *Disputed Temple*, 14.

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although the HL originated in preexilic times, it came into final form in postexilic Yehud. Therefore, I started with Weinberg's Citizen-Temple Community background and reviewed recent research that outlined the postexilic situation as addressing those who were "still being servants" of foreign kingdoms (Neh 9:36) and lived in relative poverty. While the cult in Jerusalem was the center of religious community, it was contested by other Yahwistic temples and other gods. The name of Yhwh was also contested in postexilic texts, as seen in postexilic texts such as Malachi, Haggai, and Ezekiel, where the honor of Yhwh in the eyes of the nations was addressed, often in cultic terms.

With the rhetorical situation described, I began the rhetorical analysis with an overview of the arrangement of the HL, making a cumulative argument about structural markers. Several findings about the nature and shape of Leviticus guided this study. I argued that although Leviticus 25 serves as a bridge from Leviticus 23, it also belongs more properly to a conclusion with Leviticus 25–26. We also noted the significance of the narrative pericopes in Leviticus 10 and 24 and saw that while Leviticus 10 was well fitted, Leviticus 24:10–23 seemed ill-fitting. These findings shaped the following chapters that explored Leviticus 10 and 24, the relationship of Leviticus 24 to the DNF, and the conclusion of Leviticus 25–26.

7.1.4 Chapter 4

Although this thesis focused on the HL, the introductory survey of structure revealed that Leviticus 10 and Leviticus 24 were closely related. Therefore, the thesis began with Leviticus 10, enabling a test of methodology on a well-formed narrative that provided additional context to Leviticus 24. In contrast to Houston, who interpreted only the first three verses of Leviticus 10 as an honor challenge, this study used the Mediterranean model as a starting place to interpret the

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entire chapter, looking to see if it led to a coherent reading. I argued that the ambiguity of Nadab and Abihu's actions highlighted the clarity of Yhwh's speech, which interpreted Nadab and Abihu's actions as a violation of holiness and dishonor. The parallelism of his speech brought holiness and honor and priests and people into relationship in ways that get spelled out over the course of the chapter. In contrast to Nadab and Abihu, Aaron honors Yhwh over family by refusing to enter into an unclean state of mourning and maintaining his state of holiness. For this, he was granted the honor of interpretive authority and the responsibility of teaching others how to navigate the boundaries of holiness. The first half heightened the tension of this responsibility through repeated warnings of death. In the face of bringing many black and white boundaries into contact with the ambiguities of life, the threat of death could be paralyzing. However, in the second half this tension is relieved as Aaron again honors God through exercising his interpretive judgment of an ambiguous situation by considering what would honor Yhwh. Seeking to honor Yhwh, his interpretation is accepted by Yhwh and Moses.

The rhetorical effect of this chapter is to heighten the importance of honoring the boundaries of holiness in approaching Yhwh as a life and death issue. But it also affirms priestly authority that comes from honoring Yhwh and enables navigation of these boundaries by means of interpretation that honors Yhwh. Thus, honor leads to a reading that brings coherence to the chapter and naturally incorporates major features of the chapter (esp. the speeches of Yhwh and Aaron).

While Leviticus 10 dealt with priests in the tent, the narrative pericope of Leviticus 24 shifted the focus to the people in the camp. Here a half-Egyptian son used the name of Yhwh lightly, was arrested, and sentenced to death. While the verbs and syntax yield multiple interpretative options, I argued that the most likely option was that the Blaspheming Son pierced

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the sanctum of Yhwh's name and thus made light of it (קלל). This was confirmed in the oracle that followed. Here a concentric structure, with the *talion* at the center, was combined with asymmetry between the offense and consequence for the treatment of animals, humans, and Yhwh. Since each is a *talionic* response, it forms a status hierarchy with Yhwh's name at the top. I argued that this provided additional evidence that קלל was intended to mean "make light of / dishonor."

Thus, both Nadab and Abihu and the Blaspheming Son violate a sanctum and thus dishonor Yhwh, and both are punished with death. One death occurs in the tent and one in the camp/land. Since Nadab and Abihu formed an archetypical offense in the tent that provided a contrast to the surrounding material in the first half of Leviticus, I hypothesized that the Blaspheming Son potentially served as an archetypical offense in the second half of Leviticus, which could explain its placement. We further noted that in the chiastic structure of the oracle, the first half of not making light of Yhwh's name is the only unbalanced portion, being matched with the Divine Name Formula, which we turned to next.

7.1.5 Chapter 5

Chapter 5 began with a survey of the location and usage of the DNF and found it ubiquitous and strategically placed as a structuring device. It also was a prominent feature of the paraenetic frame, which is especially highlighted in Leviticus 18:2 where everything that follows is subsumed under the introductory charge "I am Yhwh your God."

In contrast to a common view that the DNF signified merely the authority of Yhwh, I argued that it also signified his honor. A more expansive view than authority is suggested in the

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work of Zimmerli and Diesel. That Name indicated honor was argued as plausible by the way name functions in anthropological models, the ANE, and the Hebrew Bible. This is especially apparent in the cultic context of Malachi 1 and passages related to Leviticus in Ezekiel, where Yhwh's name being profaned in the sight of the nations clearly refers to his reputation.

In Leviticus, I argued that Name functions both similarly and differently from Ezekiel. It is similar in that Name signified the authority of Yhwh over Israel but also how Israel's actions can affect the Name. This is especially apparent when the DNF is attached to individual commands that Bibb noted to be public (e.g., worship of Molech).[4] This was reinforced by the paraenetic conclusion of Leviticus 22:31–33, where Israel's disobedience profanes Yhwh's name and his sanctity among Israel. Thus, the DNF in Leviticus is different in that it focuses on Yhwh's reputation among Israel first, rather than the nations, as in Ezekiel.

I concluded the chapter by offering a reasoning for the placement of the Blaspheming Son in Leviticus 24:10–23. I argued that just as Nadab and Abihu stand as an archetypical violation of holiness in the tent that dishonors Yhwh, so the Blaspheming Son stands as an archetypical violation of holiness in the land that dishonors the Name of Yhwh, in contrast to the DNF, which organizes the surrounding material. This view makes sense not just of the placement of the pericope but also of the one prominent imbalance in the structure of the oracle that follows the narrative. "I am Yhwh" stands in balance with the command to not take Yhwh's name lightly (קלל). This is part of an overall chiastic structure that orders life from injury, death of animal, death of humans, to the ultimate injury of blaspheming Yhwh's name.

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[4] Bibb, *Ritual Words*, 143.

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Thus, a socio-rhetorical reading not only brought coherence to the individual narrative pericopes of Leviticus, but it also brought coherence to the broader HL. The narrative pericope in Leviticus 24 stands at the first major conclusion of the HL and precedes the formal conclusion of Leviticus 25–26, which we addressed in the next chapter.

7.1.6 Chapter 6

Chapter 6 began with an overview of the form of ANE suzerain-vassal treaties and Watts' contention that the Blessings and Curses sections rhetorically motivate covenant fidelity. This was strengthened by Olyan's work that shows how public displays of honor are a part of covenant fidelity. Olyan demonstrated that honor is an integral part of covenants in narratives of the Hebrew Bible, but closer to our text, Jumper demonstrated similar dynamics in the blessings and curses of Deuteronomy 28. Jumper argued that while in ANE covenants the motivation of blessings and curses was implicit, Deuteronomy 28 explicitly frames the content of the blessings and curses in terms of Israel's status among the nations. So, both the content of the blessings and the framing and context all point to honor as a motivation for covenant loyalty. This *talionic* response of honor for honor and shame for shame was also found in Malachi 1–2 and Yhwh's response to Eli in 1 Samuel 2.

Building off of Jumper's work, I argued that Leviticus 25–26, while not so straightforward as Deuteronomy 28, still framed Blessings and Curses in terms of status (read: honor) and its loss. Leviticus 25 uses legislation about Sabbaths and Jubilee as a way to configure a picture of Israel as Yhwh's עבדים dwelling on his temple estate. On this temple estate, Israel's status as Yhwh's עבדים precluded being *ruled* over—what humans do to non-

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humans in Genesis 1—and being treated *ruthlessly* as they had been treated as Pharaoh's עבדים in Exodus 1.

Leviticus 26 then uses the framework of Leviticus 25 to articulate blessings and curses, which I argued has the same concern for status as Leviticus 25. If Israel obeys, they will have the blessings of security and abundance on Yhwh's temple estate that give them the content of כבד. This state is explicitly concluded by contrasting their shamed status as bent over under Pharaoh's yoke. In contrast, if they are not loyal to the covenant, then they will be *ruled* over (a degradation from the role envisioned for humans in Gen 1) by "those who hate them" (contrast to Yhwh's covenant love). They not only lose the content of their dignified status—with economic abundance and security in the land—but also fall in status before their enemies, being ruled over and dying in foreign lands.

This public nature of the covenant consequences is matched by the hope held out that Yhwh will remain faithful to his covenant and again holds out hope of an exodus done "in the sight of the nations." This reminds the listener of the public nature of their covenant relationship and that how Yhwh and Israel treat each other affects their reputations in the eyes of the nations.

So, I concluded that Leviticus 26 also has the dynamic of blessings and curses similar to Jumper's conclusion that "honor-for-honor, shame-for-shame exchange between the divine suzerain and his earthly vassal."[5] It also matches Yhwh's response to Eli in 1 Samuel 2:30 that "Far be it from me, for those who honor me I will honor, and those who despise me shall be lightly esteemed," which, when applied to Eli's lack of honor for Yhwh, led to the curse. It also mirrors Malachi 1:6–14, where Yhwh expects the same honor as a son who honors a father and

[5] Jumper, "Honor and Shame in the Deuteronomic Covenant," 146–47.

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the lack of honor leads to a curse (1:14). This follows "If you will not listen, if you will not take it to heart to give honor to my name, says Yhwh of hosts, then I will send the curse upon you and I will curse your blessings" (2:2). Thus, Leviticus 26 builds off the temple estate vison of Leviticus 25 according to the *talion* that concludes Leviticus 24.

7.2 Summary of Findings

I began this study with the hypothesis that if the Holiness Legislation in Leviticus is read against cultural scripts of honor, the reader will gain insight into the rhetorical strategies used to shape the people's response to God's holiness and develop a more coherent understanding of the Holiness Legislation. I argued that honor would provide cultural context against which the HL could be read more coherently. This objective has been met on multiple fronts.

First, a socio-rhetorical approach yielded several useful results in reading Leviticus 10. In contrast to Houston's work that used a model of honor to understand the opening verses of Leviticus 10, I demonstrated that honor was operative throughout the entire chapter. In contrast to the work of Watts, I argued that the tension and resolution of the chapter was not just about priestly competence but about the threat of death in drawing near to Yhwh and navigating that threat in the case of ambiguity. My reading also demonstrated the significance of the content of the speeches of Yhwh and Aaron instead of minimizing them as ambiguous. It provided greater coherence between Yhwh's speech, Aaron's abstaining from mourning, and Aaron's grant of authority, which led to Aaron's interpretation in the second half. Overall, it provided greater coherence to the chapter in explaining the logical progression of the narrative.

Similarly, a socio-rhetorical approach to Leviticus 24:10–23 yielded greater coherence between the narrative and the oracle that followed. Nihan and Hutton argued that קלל most likely

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indicates "making light of" or dishonoring rather than cursing, based on fittingness of the grammar and semantic range of the words and on the unlikelihood of cursing a deity. My reading also borrowed from Nihan's observation that the oracle that followed the chiasm organized around the *lex talion* shows a disproportionate response of offense and consequence for Yhwh, humans, and animals. This demonstrated a status hierarchy. In my reading of honor, this provides additional evidence that the status or honor of Yhwh links the narrative and oracle, providing greater evidence that the key issue is that the Blaspheming Son made light of Yhwh's name.

Second, a socio-rhetorical reading of the HL sensitive to honor brings greater coherence to the HL as a whole. In parallel to how the Nadab and Abihu incident provides an archetypical offense in the sanctuary, I argued that the Blaspheming Son provides an archetypical rebellion that contrasts with the concern for Yhwh's name that structures the material. In contrast to those who see the DNF as simply asserting the authority of Yhwh, I argued that the DNF also signified concern for Yhwh's name in terms of his reputation among Israelites.

Finally, my reading shows that honor is also an aspect of Leviticus 25–26, where the status of Israelites is based on their honor of Yhwh. While this was not expressed as explicitly as the blessings and curses of Deuteronomy 28, where the framing is explicit, the language and concepts are present, often at key locations (e.g., Lev 26:13).

Hermeneutically, while social science readings that emphasize honor are relatively scarce in the Pentateuch, the coherence of this reading validates its use and calls attention to the role of honor in the culture and the text.

Theologically, it also brings more clarity to how honor undergirds holiness in priestly matters. For Nadab and Abihu, Yhwh interpreted their violation in terms of a call to treated as holy and honored. Aaron's response to mourning specifically showed how the boundaries of

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holiness could be honored (or given weight to) over and against cultural expectations. He then is given interpretative authority, but the exercise of that authority shows him navigating the system of holiness using the lens of honor.

Similarly, the Blaspheming Son transgresses a sanctum in misusing Yhwh's name and makes light of it, leading to a lesson rooted in *lex talionis* that establishes Yhwh's *holy* name at the pinnacle of a *status* (read honor) hierarchy. Here again, access to something holy is expressed through the means of honor. This matches how honor is used in Malachi 1 to teach (or shame) Israel into honoring Yhwh in the cult. This holy Name is used significantly in the DNF as the structuring device that organizes the HL, and concern for the Name is a motivating factor in Israel's maintenance of holiness.

Rhetorically, in post-exilic Yhwh where the cult of Yhwh a contested, the land was poor, and the Name of Yhwh suffered reproach, the HL persuades listeners long two lines. First, it offers a vision of life rooted in relationship to Yhwh, where his Name stands at the pinnacle of a cosmology that orders life and demands reverence. Second, the same talionic principle that concludes Leviticus 17-24, also governs the overall conclusion of Leviticus 25-26. Honor in Yhwh also leads to the substance of honor on Yhwh's temple estate, with Yhwh's presence echoing primordial paradise, and a status as people not ruled over. This is contrasted with Israel being ruthlessly ruled over, an echo of the past and distinct possibility as a vassal state in post-exilic Ywhud. Honoring Yhwh through covenant faithfulness – particularly highlighting reverence for the cult (Lev 26:1,2) and public acts that might defile Yhwh's name – leads to an honored status vis-à-vis contrast to past slavery in contrast to their relationship to present powers. This effectively ties life in the cult to life in the land with a vison of flourishing through honor of Yhwh's instruction and therefore his Name.

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7.3 Areas of Further Research

There are two main areas of further research that are suggested from these findings. First, this study provides additional evidence that concern for Yhwh's name was a live issue in postexilic Yehud. Throughout this thesis, we've compared the HL to similar themes of Yhwh's name in a cultic setting in Malachi 1 and 1 Samuel 2–3. This study adds to the understanding of Yhwh's name in postexilic Yehud that could potentially be explored as a complementary "name theology" distinct from D.[6] Pohlmann has spoken of a comprehensive "diaspora redaction" in Ezekiel, with a concern for Yhwh's name being a distinct element of this redaction. This thesis could contribute to an understanding of how Yhwh's name functioned in postexilic literature.

Second, although the methodology section of this thesis extensively discussed how to use a social science model, the model I used to describe honor is relatively simple. Additional social science elements could be explored, as Rhyder has done with Foucault and power. While Foucault is currently a popular choice for analysis,[7] one underexplored resource in biblical studies is the work of Pierre Bourdieu. Matthias notes that he is considered the single most influential sociologist of the later twentieth century whose work pervades a wide range of disciplines yet has been utilized in only a handful of biblical studies.[8] In particular, Bourdieu's emphasis on the body through his concept of habitus and his concept of field and doxa are more

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[6] See Nihan, *From Priestly Torah*, 495, n. 379; Pohlmann, *Hesekiel 20–48*, 299–313, 473-75.
[7] By some measures, Foucault is the most popularly cited source in scholarly literature today. See Google Scholar Citations, Ranking Web of Universities, 10th ed., compiled by www.webometrics.info/en/.
[8] Matthias, *Paternity*, 13.

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expansive social science concepts that, in my opinion, are fitting to the material of Leviticus and yet underexplored.[9]

In general, this thesis has contributed to the understanding that reading the HL against its original context includes being cognizant of its unstated cultural assumptions and that reading texts against social science models can fruitfully lead to a thick reading that interprets texts relative to "a network of cultural presuppositions" and thereby honor their otherness.

[9] Rhyder mentions Bourdieu three times in her discussion on standardization but relies more heavily on Foucault in her understanding of power. See Jacques Berlinerblau, "Ideology, Pierre Bourdieu's Doxa, and the Hebrew Bible," *Semeia* 87 (1999): 193–214.

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Ethics Clearence Letter

Faculty of Theology and Religion

Research Office
Mrs Daleen Kotzé

NAME:	Mr AK Heyd
STUDENT NUMBER:	20719184
COURSE:	Doctoral
DATE:	27 January 2021
APPLICATION NUMBER:	T075/20

This letter serves as confirmation that the research proposal of this student was evaluated by:

1) **The Research committee**: This applies to all research proposals
2) **The Research Ethics committee**: This applies only to research that includes people as sources of information

You are hereby notified that your research proposal (including ethical clearance where it is applicable) is approved.

Prof E van Eck
Chairperson: Research committee: Faculty of Theology and Religion

Dr T van Wyk
Chairperson: Research Ethics committee: Faculty of Theology and Religion

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