

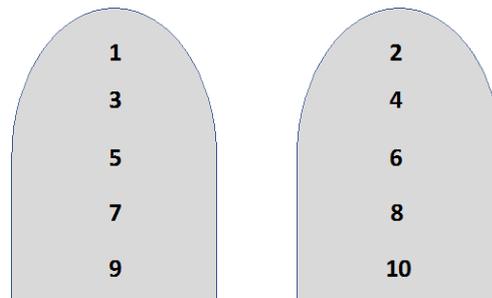
CMJ LECTURE

A NEW AND LIVING WAY

1. INTRODUCTION

In a previous CMJ lecture (Hocking, 2020a, 2020b), we considered the question: “How does God write?” As Western moderns, we have learned to read text as a linear sequence (McGilchrist, 2009, 274–79), but we saw, following the insights of Moshe Kline, how the Decalogue, at least, was written on two tablets, in five parallel pairs, and so should be “read” in pairs, vertically and horizontally.

We also saw that rabbis and scholars have noticed the way the six days of Creation in Genesis can be read in the same way, as three pairs of days (e.g., Collins, 2006, 73).



So, the answer to the question, at least for these examples, is “God writes on tables,” or better, in parallel. It is now recognised parallelism is a Semitic paradigm, and that it should be seen as “a way of thinking” in the Bible, and not simply as a way of writing (Douglas, 2001, 251).

We may well ask whether this way of writing happens elsewhere in the Bible, or at least, elsewhere in the Torah? The answer, according to Kline, is, most definitely yes. He argues the whole Torah is written in literary units of text, each of which is set out in a table, or in parallel rows and columns (Kline, 2015, 225–26; 256–63). He suggests the technology of weaving was current at the time and that the idea of “weaving” text may well have been the



influence on a guild of scribes to write like this. Indeed, the use of weaving as a metaphor for writing may well have some evidence in etymology. The English word for “text,” for instance, comes from the Latin “textus” referring literally to “something woven,” from *texere*, “to weave, to join, fit together, braid.” (Viljamaa, 2007, 132, and note 3; 138). Also, the Hebrew word *masekhet*, used for “tractates” of the Mishnah and Talmud, means “a web, weaving, or woof.”

So, God writes on tables, or better, in parallel, or even better, in a *weave*. The text is not changed in any way, not even the order of reading—you read it in the same order as you do normally and you can still meditate on each verse in the same ways you have done up till now, but reading the text in parallel results in *additional* meaning. You discover there is meaning you could not see before.

2. LEVITICUS AS A WEAVE

In this paper, we will consider Leviticus as a weave and look at the vertical *warp* threads first, and then the horizontal *weft* threads (sometimes called the *woof* threads).

Leviticus is called *Vayiqrá* in the Tanakh, as this is the first word in the book in Hebrew (ויקרא). It means: “He calls.” YHWH calls the reader on a journey into and out of the tabernacle, like moving through a “textual sanctuary” (Liss, 2004, 2006; Nihan, 2007, 109).

| A The Court | B Holy Place | C The Veil | D Holy of Holies | E The Ark | F Holy of Holies | G Holy Place | H Court & Land |
|----------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------------|---|---------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1–7 | 8–12 | 13–15 | 16–18 |  19 | 20–22a | 22b–24 | 25–27 |

As you read through the book, you are called to move in your imagination through the outer court and then into the holy place and then into the holy of holies, and you come face to face with the ark of the covenant, and the revelation of the Holy God. From here you return outwards, through the holy of holies, the holy place and the court to the camp of Israel and the Land itself. As you read through the book, you are led to consider the subject-matter as if you are in these tabernacle zones, spiritually speaking.

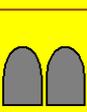
Looking at this composition, you can see the book is made up of 8 sections (labelled A–H for reference). There is one section that seems abnormal, C, made up of chapters 13–15. This section divides the holy place section (B) from the holy of holies section (D). It is made up of material that deals with impurity (טמא) in people, garments and houses, and the counter-measures that must be taken, such as isolation, cleansing and even putting “outside the camp.” Kline suggests this section of the book represents the veil in the Tabernacle, and if, as the subject-matter suggests, the section is removed, like the veil being pulled aside, then there is direct access from the holy place into the holy of holies. What is more, then the book has a symmetric inverted parallel form, with the three zones of the sanctuary leading to the central Ark and the divine Presence, followed by the same three zones in reverse order, like 3 concentric “rings.”

Assuming this is a correct understanding of section C, the significance is clear—uncleanness must be removed, if the worshipper is to journey into ultimate nearness with YHWH. This “unclean” section is a vital part of the structure and theology of the book, but in order to grasp the basic pattern of the journey, in this paper, we will focus on the simplified concentric structure, with the “veil” drawn aside, as depicted below.

| A The Court | B Holy Place | D Holy of Holies | E The Ark | F Holy of Holies | G Holy Place | H Court & Land |
|----------------|-----------------|---------------------|---|---------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1–7 | 8–12 | 16–18 |  19 | 20–22a | 22b–24 | 25–27 |

Looking at this overview, and reading the subject matter in each section carefully, the emphasis in the first half is on *nearness* (Heb root: *q-r-b*). Section A centres on the Court and deals with the *Qorbanim*, which is usually translated as “offerings,” but which actually carries the sense of nearness, and so could be translated rather literalistically as “nearings.” God’s redeemed people can come near to him if they bring these *nearings* with them!

Then, Section B deals with “those who draw near to me” (10:3), that is, the priests—becoming and ministering as priests, the ones who bring near the nearings. This is the stage in the book that Moses and the High Priest Aaron enter the sanctuary/holy place for the first time (9:23), after bringing the nearings. Then, drawing aside the veil (C), the reader enters the fourth section (D), literally walking into the holy of holies with the High Priest on the Day of Atonement! Entering the throne-room of God in the reading, one could not be nearer!

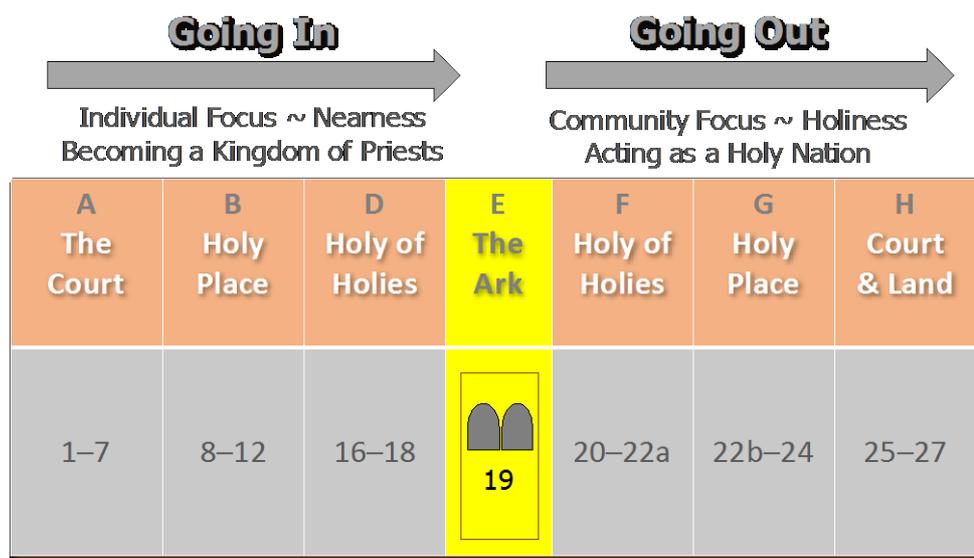
| A The Court | B Holy Place | D Holy of Holies | E The Ark | F Holy of Holies | G Holy Place | H Court & Land |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| 1–7 Nearings (Offerings) | 8–12 Nearers (Priests) | 16–18 Near (Atoned) |  19 | 20–22a Holy | 22b–24 Holy | 25–27 Holy |

Inside the holy of holies, the reader takes one further step (Section E), and stands before the ark of the covenant, containing the two tablets with the Decalogue inscribed on them, and hearing the voice of YHWH say: “You shall be holy, for I YHWH your God am holy” (19:2). Sixteen times in this section, the divine voice says “I am YHWH,” or the longer form, “I am YHWH your God.” God’s call to holy behaviour is based solely on the fact that his redeemed people now belong to him, and he is committed to them—be holy *because* I am the LORD your God, and *because* I am holy. This divine self-revelation and the call to his holiness then dictates the emphasis of the second half of the book—with God’s people called to live out his holiness beyond the sanctuary, living as a holy nation in the realities of the world.

So, the first half of the book calls every redeemed individual to *nearness*, going in to YHWH as a kingdom of priests, and the second half calls the community to *holiness*, living out as YHWH’s holy nation (Exodus 19:5–6). Scholars since Rabbi August Klostermann (1893, 368–418) have rightly recognised the shift in the second half of the book to what is called “the Holiness Code,” or amongst Hebrew-speaking scholars, the Holiness Book (ספר הקדושה), but there has not been the same recognition of the key literary term in the inward phase of the journey, that of *nearness*. It would indeed be right to label the first half of the book “the Nearness Code,” paralleling “the Holiness Code” in the second half.

So, in summary, Leviticus sets out a sanctuary journey in two phases: individually moving inwards to nearness, becoming a kingdom of priests, and, as a result of seeing the divine self-revelation at the ark in the holy of holies, then turning outwards in holiness as a community, to live as a holy nation in the world. If the big picture of the Exodus-Leviticus-Numbers story is **salvation**, *bringing out* the people from Egypt and *bringing them in* to the promised land (Deut 6:23), then the nested picture in Leviticus, central in the journey, is **sanctification**, *going in* to nearness in the sanctuary and *going out* in holiness to the Land. Leviticus sets out God’s means of transformation, the process by which he transforms the slaves-of-Egypt into saints-fit-for-the-Land, in spirit now, of course, for the reader-worshipper.

Transforming Slaves to Saints



However, this is just the one perspective, the vertical warp threads. What about the colourful details given to the weave by the horizontal weft threads? Kline shows each of the seven sections of the book is made up of three literary units (not including the central unit, E, the ark, which acts like a single-unit “hinge” in the book).¹ The seven “Unit-triads” make up 21 literary Units, plus the central Unit, making 22 Units in all. The Units are labelled with Roman numerals in the book-weave below, and the italic numerals show the chapter references (Kline, 2015, 237, Figure 7, adapted).

¹ Each literary unit is also a “woven” text. For the woven units in the whole Torah, see www.chaver.com

| A The Court | B Holy Place | D Holy of Holies | E The Ark | F Holy of Holies | G Holy Place | H Court & Land |
|-------------------|-----------------|---------------------|---|---------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| I (1-3) | IV (8-10) | X (16) | | XVI (22:1-25) | XIX (24) | XXII (27) |
| II (4:1-6:7) | V (11) | XI (17) |  XIII (19) | XV (21) | XVIII (23) | XXI (26) |
| III (6:8-7:35) | VI (12) | XII (18) | | XIV (20) | XVII (22:26-33) | XX (25) |

Again, reading carefully, one discovers these Unit-triads are oriented with an *above* unit, a *below* unit and a *between* unit. The Above unit is always God-oriented (shown in blue), the Below unit is always Earth, Mundane or People-oriented (green) and the Between unit always shows the connection or relationship between the above and the below, between God and his people (turquoise).

There are three features of this pattern that need to be noticed:

1. As previously, the “unclean” section C (Units VII–IX) is omitted, to show the simplified, underlying composition, with the “veil” removed.
2. The unit-triads in the second half of the book are inverted, based on their content and literary indicators, as they appear to be arranged in inverted parallelism with the first half of the book. This is a further indication of the “turn-around” expected of the reader. When needing to show the “orientation” of each unit in the composition, Kline inverts the units in the second half (as here), so that the God/sacred-oriented units are all in the top row, and the people/mundane-oriented units are all in the bottom row (for example, Unit XVI is an above unit, and Unit XIV is a below unit).
3. The three concentric rings are not-only projected onto a tabernacle zone (the court, holy place, and holy of holies) but also have three organising principles: *Place* is the principle in the outer ring, *Time* in the middle ring, and *Person* in the inner ring, as shown below, with the focus of all three rings being Unit XIII (Ch. 19), the Ark of the Covenant in the holy of holies.

| | A The Court | B Holy Place | D Holy of Holies | E The Ark | F Holy of Holies | G Holy Place | H Court & Land |
|--|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|---|-----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Above | I (1-3) | IV (8-10) | X (16) | | XVI (22:1-25) | XIX (24) | XXII (27) |
| Between Separation/ Connecting/ Distinguishing | II (4:1-6:7) | V (11) | XI (17) |  XIII (19) | XV (21) | XVIII (23) | XXI (26) |
| Below | III (6:8-7:35) | VI (12) | XII (18) | | XIV (20) | XVII (22:26-33) | XX (25) |
| Organising Principles > | <i>Place (Outer)</i> | <i>Time (Middle)</i> | <i>Person (Inner)</i> | Focus | <i>Person (Inner)</i> | <i>Time (Middle)</i> | <i>Place (Outer)</i> |

Of course, there is much to be examined and discussed in the details for each section (why not gather a small group to study each unit together?), but for now, let us briefly consider the units in Section A (Unit-triad A), as an example.

1. Unit I is oriented upward, towards God. It contains the details for the voluntary “pleasing-aroma” offerings that individuals can bring in their approach to God at the altar in the court. Indeed, the very first offering, often called in English the Burnt Offering or Whole Offering, is actually called in Hebrew *olah* (עֹלָה), which literally means “that which goes up or ascends” (Brown et al., 1906, 750; Clines et al., 2009, 326). It should really be called the Upward Offering (or “Nearing”!), as it is all burnt up to God, in keeping with the God-ward orientation of this unit.
2. The opposite pole in the Unit-triad, Unit III, is below-oriented, containing a series of mundane regulations for the priests regarding the offering procedures and the portions to be used for their everyday maintenance.
3. And thirdly, the middle or between Unit II contains the “sin and trespass offerings,” (or “nearings”) which address what individuals must do when there has been some kind of unintentional break in relationship between the above and the below, with God and others, providing a way for those who sin to restore their relationship with God and others. Ten times in this Unit, the root “atone” (כַּפַּר *k-p-r*) occurs, and nine times, the root “forgive” (סָלַח *s-l-kh*).

All 7 sections have a similar orientation for their three literary units, and it is a fulfilling experience to study each unit from the perspective of where it sits in the warp and weft of the book’s weave. Quoting Milgrom: “Structure is theology” (Milgrom, 2001, 2129–30).

3. RE-PRESENTING THE BOOK’S WEAVE AS A JOURNEY

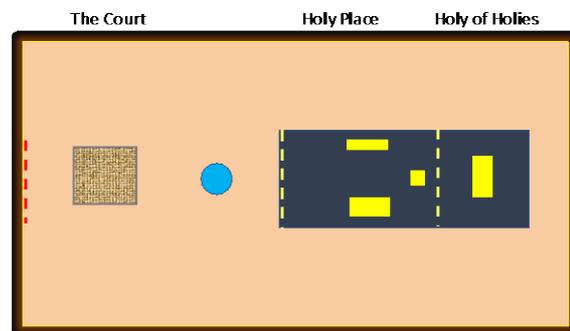
We have seen the book of Leviticus is projected onto the 3 zones of the wilderness tabernacle, like a journey into and out of a “textual sanctuary.” The literary artist has

projected a “world,” the ancient tabernacle, in the text of Leviticus (Wolterstorff, 1980). The book is not simply made up of two themes, such as ritual and ethical, or cult and community (Meyer, 2013), but as we have seen, the composition is following a *journey* inwards through the three zones of the sanctuary, into the holy of holies, hinging at Unit XIII, the Ark of the Covenant (ch. 19), and then taking a return journey, back out through the same three zones. Leviticus acts like a “text world” or a “memory palace” for the worshipper-reader-listener.

Turning from the literary book to the physical sanctuary, its other name, “the tent of meeting” (אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד), gives the sense of both space (tent) and time (meeting), the *when* and the *where*, in which YHWH calls his people to come near to him. Using modern language, this could be conceived of as a “space-time capsule,” in which God transforms his people from slaves-in-Egypt into a holy-nation-fit-for-the-Land.

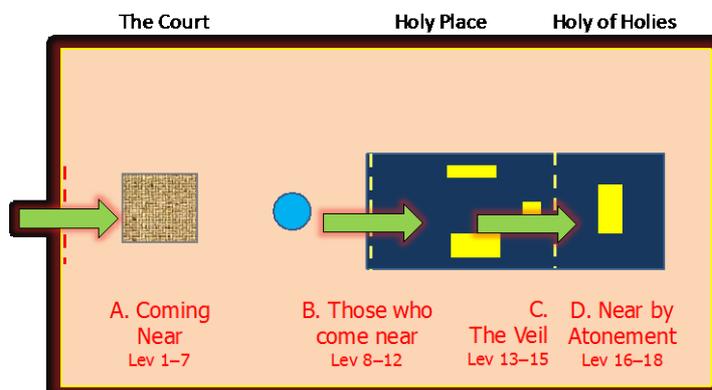
To visualise how the literature is being projected onto this sanctuary, the reader needs to have in mind a simplified plan of the tabernacle, as shown here. As we have seen, in this appointment tent there are three zones or spheres of consideration: the court, the holy place and the holy of holies—an outer, a middle and an inner zone or sphere. The book of Leviticus has been projected onto these three spheres. Throughout the book, in the concentric “rings” of Unit-triads, there are way-markers, to indicate to the reader the *sphere of influence* being considered. The Unit-triads are not to be read simply *locationally*, as if all was taking place within that zone of the tabernacle, but *thematically*, in the “text world.” Given this, I have labelled each zone a “Theme-Sphere,” to indicate that all the material in the Unit-triad is influenced by that sphere’s *theme* or *theological perspective*.

The Tent of Appointment The Three Theme-Spheres



The first half of the book, which represents the inward journey, could be represented graphically, as here. In this half of the book, the purpose of the journey seems well described

The Tent of Appointment Coming Near as a Kingdom of Priests



by YHWH when Israel came to the mountain of Sinai (Ex 19:5–6). There he told them that if they kept his covenant then they would become for him a “kingdom of priests” (מְמַלְכֶת כֹּהֲנִים). This half of the transforming journey sets out the process for the readers to become such a kingdom of priests.

I recognise a complex composition cannot easily be boiled down to sound-bites, but I have attempted to summarise the key concepts in a

graphic format, using the repeating root word *nearness* (q-r-b) in each zone.

The first Unit-triad A (chs.1–7) calls every individual in the congregation (and the reader) to draw near to YHWH, through the door and into the court of the tabernacle, to stand in front of the large altar that dominates the perspective.

As worshippers drawing near, they are commanded to bring near their *qorbanim*. Nearness to YHWH is possible for the ordinary Israelite, in this “world,” but only through the “nearings” he has prescribed. From the perspective of the inner movement of this part of the book, the root idea of nearness is explicit, both in the verb and in the noun. Many reader-interpreters have missed this emphasis, reading the text as if addressing primitive worshippers bringing gifts to please some god, rather than focussed on YHWH and his call to his people to nearness. The whole Unit-triad, located in the tabernacle Court, presents YHWH as dictating the way by which his people are to come near to him, by means of the *qorbanim* he defines.

The second Unit-triad B (chs. 8–12) is headed by the initiation and ministry of the priests (the “above” Unit IV: chs. 8–10). In 10:3, the priests are actually called “those who are near to me” or “those who come near to me” (בְּקִרְבִּי), and it is in this Unit-triad (chs. 8–12) the text tells us that Moses and Aaron enter for the first time into the sanctuary tent itself, into the first chamber called the holy place (9:23). This completes a narrative arc from Exodus 40—where we are told (v. 35) Moses was *not* able to enter the sanctuary because the glory of the LORD had come—right through to Leviticus 9, where we read of Moses and Aaron’s entry for the first time (v. 23), on the basis of the “nearings,” and the glory of YHWH appears again and consumes the “nearings” (v. 24).

As explained above, the third Unit-triad (C: chs. 13–15) can be considered as a representation of the veil. YHWH sees uncleanness as a barrier, one that must be removed, if the reader-worshipper is to enter the holiest place.

The fourth Unit-triad D (the inner theme-sphere, chs. 16–18), is headed by the Day of Atonement (the “above” Unit is Unit X: ch. 16), and this is where, for the first time, the high priest (and the reader) is able to enter into the innermost sphere of the sanctuary, the holy of holies. It is as if the readers are all priestly worshippers, journeying with the high priest on the Day of Atonement, passing through the court and the holy place, right into the holy of holies. Leviticus is not an exclusive manual for priests, but a call to all God’s people to join in the sanctifying journey in the hearing or reading.

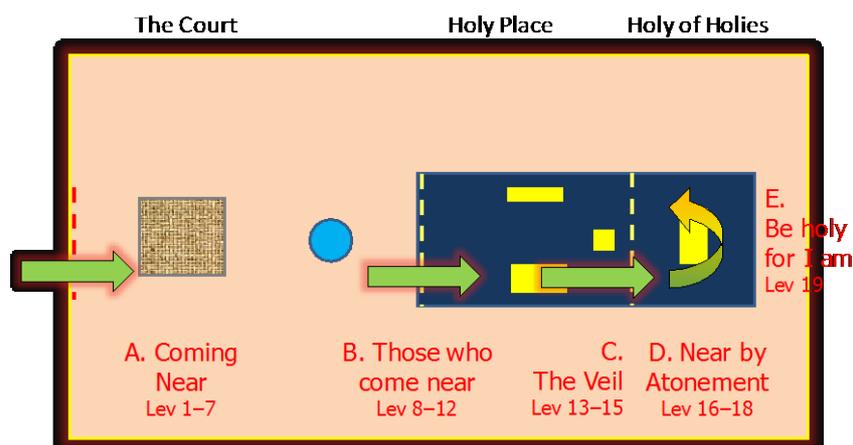
At each stage, it is made clear that “nearness” is dependent on acting with the specified “nearings,” the *qorbanim*, and, as the scene in the B-triad with Nadab and Abihu demonstrates, to act otherwise means it is not the *olah* “nearing” that is consumed (אכל) in acceptance (9:24), but those who dare to come near inappropriately, consumed in judgment (10:2).

Virtually all composition proposals for Leviticus see chapter 16 (or 16–17) as the centre of the book. Most also agree this chapter is then followed by another source, called the Holiness Code, making up the second half of the book (chs. 17–27). However, Kline is unique in arguing there is another way to view the centre of the book, in keeping with the literary indicators. He argues the central concentric circle (chs. 16–18, parallel with chs. 20:1–22:25) certainly occurs in the theme-sphere of the holy of holies, so it is definitely at the *centre* of the book conceptually (and indeed, Ch. 16 is the first Unit that takes the reader into the holy of holies). But, the key insight here is that chapter 19 (Unit XIII) takes another step inwards,

to stand the reader before the ark of the covenant, *within* the holy of holies. Chapter 19 (Unit XIII) is *enclosed within* the holy of holies “ring,” and forms a single-unit “hinge” in the composition of the book, *the centre of the centre* of the book! The unit-chapter is dominated by mentions of most of the Decalogue and sixteen mentions of the divine self-revelation formula, “I am YHWH (your God),” in keeping with the context of the ark of the covenant, containing the Decalogue tablets.

Again, Kline has shown the material in this Unit XIII is also structured in a two-dimensional, parallel or woven form, with the one dimension/ column (or “tablet”) focusing on commandments for individuals, and the other dimension/ column (or “tablet”) focusing on the community commandments (Kline, 2008). It therefore appears that the composition of this central chapter (19, Unit XIII) is the “hinge” in the journey—between the inward, individual journey (chapter 1–18) and the outward, community-oriented journey (chs. 20–27). This inward journey to the innermost sphere of the sanctuary is a journey into relationship with the divine.

The Tent of Appointment The Centre – *Imitatio Dei*



The central unit is headed with the command of YHWH, translated word-for-word: “Holy you shall be, for holy am I, YHWH your God” (קדשים תהיו כי קדוש אני (יהוה אלהיכם) and its inverted parallel in the two-tablet structure is the command: “... and love your neighbour as yourself” (ואהבת לרעך (כָּמוֹךְ) (19:2, 18). This

call to holiness in relation to God, and to love in relation to people, is the essence of this chapter/unit, being transformed into the likeness of God, *imitatio dei*, and then living out in the light of that as a holy nation, in love for others.

It is then completely logical for the “holiness code” to be laid out from this point in the book (chs. 19–27). It also makes sense of the fact that there are *no* references to “holiness” in chapters 17 or 18, the previous two units, which is a serious challenge to those who argue the “holiness code” runs from chapter 17. The proportion of the root word for *holy* (q-d-sh) in chapters 19–27 is 2.3 times the proportion in chapters 1–18!

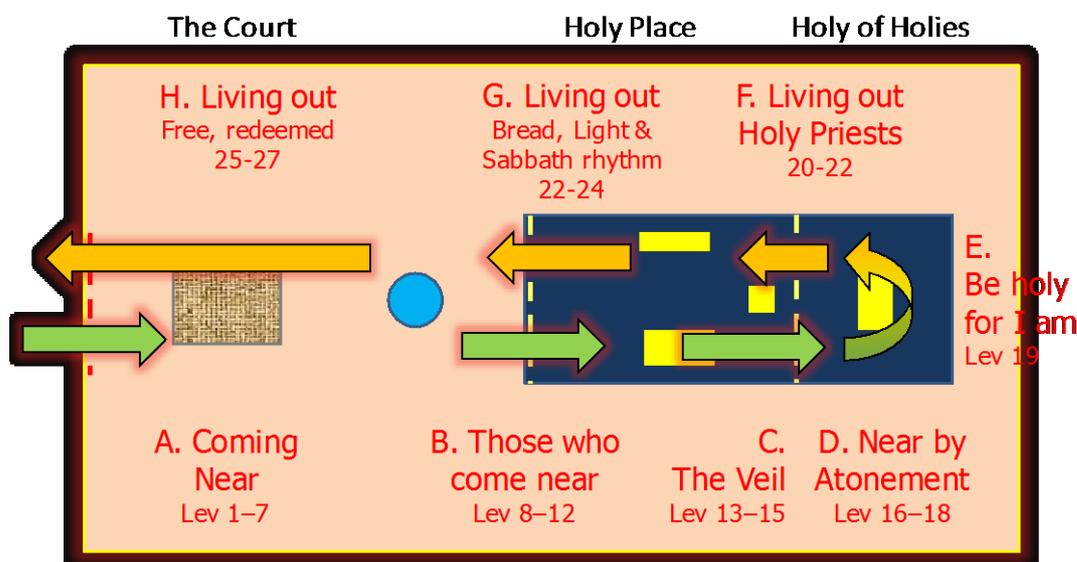
From this point on, the journey reverses, moving back out of the sanctuary, through the holy of holies, to the holy place and finally to the court and land. This is indicated in a literary sense by the remaining Units being framed as an inverted parallel, not just the content in the Unit-triads generally, but also by the literary indicators. The Unit-triads are inverted in their vertical orientation, as if to confirm the about-face in the journey.

In the second part of the book, the movement is outwardly-focused conceptually, and I have labelled it as “living out,” as it sets out how the sanctified people are now to live as a witnessing congregation (הַעֲדָה), a witness in the world to God’s sanctifying work. This second phase fits with the second descriptor for God’s people in Exodus 19:6, not just to be “a kingdom of priests” (מִמְלַכֶּת כֹּהֲנִים), but also to be a “holy nation” (גּוֹי קָדוֹשׁ). Again, we will take the Unit-triads in order, this time journeying outwards.

The fifth Unit-triad F is parallel with the fourth, D, still conceptually in the theme-sphere of the holy of holies, but oriented towards “living out” as a holy, priestly nation. Appropriately, it is focused on the priesthood, but not as “going in” to the holy of holies, but as living out in the world, as a priesthood set apart for God’s service in every aspect of life.

The sixth Unit-triad G parallels the second, B, in the theme-sphere of the holy place, and it makes this obvious with the legislation in the “above” Unit XIX (ch. 24) dealing with the continual daily and weekly priestly service at the lampstand and the table, both of which stand in the holy place.² This emphasis on time in G is very strong in the “between” Unit XVIII about the weekly Sabbath and the annual “appointed times” (מוֹעֲדִים), setting out the rhythms that confirm and affirm, maintain and manifest the community of God as a holy nation. The strong impression is given that Sabbath as a principle is the rhythm and goal of such a holy nation, ensuring the earthly people are on-goingly connected in relationship with the LORD their God, as if living in the holy place as they live out in the “real” world (for details of the unit weave, see Hocking, 2020c).

The Tent of Appointment Living Out as a Holy Nation



As in the opening Unit of the second Unit-triad (B; Unit IV), so now in the parallel closing Unit of the sixth Unit-triad (G; Unit XIX, ch. 24), there is a unique *narrative* (24:10-23),

² Interestingly, there is no parallel in the outward journey to Unit-triad C. It is as if the barrier of the Veil is now removed, so there is no divider between the holy of holies and the holy place.

embedded in this book of legislation, that seems to act as a literary indicator of a crossing of the sanctuary boundary. At this point, the reader is moving from the sanctuary to the court, camp and land. I will discuss the two narratives briefly at this point, to consider their significance in the composition:

1. As we have seen, in Unit IV (ch. 10), on the journey *inwards*, the narrative is told of Nadab and Abihu, two of the priestly sons of Aaron, who “brought near to the presence of YHWH strange fire in a way that he had not commanded them” (וַיִּקְרְבוּ לְפָנַי יְהוָה אֵשׁ זָרָה) (אֲשֶׁר לֹא צִוִּיתִי אֹתָם), thus emphasising the *strangeness* of their action, not according to YHWH’s command. This gave reason for Moses to remind Aaron of the LORD’s words (ch. 10:3 NASB): “by those who come near to me, I will be treated as holy” (בְּקִרְבֵי אֲקֻדָּשׁ). This emphasis on the moment of entry is repeated in a parallel Unit X (ch. 16), which reminds the reader of the Nadab and Abihu incident: “when they drew near to the presence of YHWH” (בְּקִרְבָּתְכֶם לְפָנַי יְהוָה) (16:1), and gives reason for God to define the correct way to *enter* through the veil into the most Holy Place on the Day of Atonement (16:3): “In *this* way Aaron is to *enter* into the sanctuary” (בְּזֹאת יָבֹא אֶהְרֹן אֶל־הַקֹּדֶשׁ). From this narrative about Nadab and Abihu (from ch. 10), we are *inside* the theme-spheres of the sanctuary itself, the holy place and the most holy place.
2. Then, at the end of the sixth Unit-triad (G), in Unit XIX (ch. 24:10–23), in the parallel unit but on the journey *outwards*, is the second narrative in the book. It commences (24:10), not with entry and bringing near, but with the verb “he-went-out” (וַיֵּצֵא), and continues literally: “and he went out, the son of an Israelite woman, and he the son of an Egyptian man, in the midst of the sons of Israel, and they fought in the camp—the son of the Israelite woman and an Israelite man” (וַיֵּצֵא בֶן־אִשָּׁה יִשְׂרָאֵלִית וְהוּא בֶן־אִישׁ מִצְרַיִם בְּתוֹךְ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּלָּחֲמוּ בַּמַּחֲנֶה בֶן הַיִּשְׂרָאֵלִית וְאִישׁ הַמִּצְרַיִם). The description of the man emphasises his mixed race or sonship, both Israelite and Egyptian (notice the fourfold reference to “son”.) The offence here is not strange entrance into the presence of YHWH, but blaspheming the Name of YHWH and belittling it (וַיִּקְבַּב ... אֶת־הַשֵּׁם וַיִּקְלַל) in the camp of the sons of Israel. From this narrative of the blasphemer and onwards, we are conceptually *outside* the sanctuary, in the camp and beyond, in the land, dealing with the way the holy nation can live out holiness in the context of other nations.

It is as if these two narrative portions are being used as literary indicators of the dividing point between the theme-zones of the sanctuary, the first narrative marking the entry from the court through the curtain into the holy of holies, on the inward journey, and the second narrative indicating the exit, the movement out through the curtain from the theme-sphere of the holy place and into the theme-sphere of the camp, “in the midst of the children of Israel.”

Finally, the seventh Unit-triad (H) parallels the first Unit-triad (A). The individuals that began the journey of “nearing” in the first Unit-Triad, and of becoming like *a kingdom of priests*, have now been sanctified by the Holy One, and so are enlightened to live out as *a holy nation*, as a testimony, in the freedom and shalom of the land, as God had promised, and with YHWH walking among them as he did in Eden (Lev 26:12 and Gen 3:8). In this Unit-triad, the focus is on the community, living out the good of being a holy nation, and “walking” in keeping with the covenant with YHWH (26:3). They are living as free citizens in the land, and everything is lived as “to the LORD” (ch. 27: Unit XXII), and according to values governed by the sanctuary (וְכָל־עֲרֹכָדָי יְהוָה בְּשִׂקְלֵי הַקֹּדֶשׁ) (27:25).

4. CONCLUSION

To apply the words of Hebrews 10:19–25, this “new and living way” of reading the book of Leviticus seems to show indeed that the author had in mind “a new and living way” of conceiving the ancient sanctuary, priesthood and nation, and how readers and worshippers could continue to go in and out of the “textual sanctuary” and become sanctified in the journey, even long after the ancient tabernacle had ceased to exist!

5. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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