



A Gift of

FIRE & BLOOD

Leviticus Then and Now

INTRODUCTION

- Why study Leviticus?
- How could Yeshua be a sacrifice?
 - How misunderstandings distort our perception of the cross
 - Put our understandings of Messiah as a sacrifice on hold until we understand the actual function(s) of the sacrifices
- Importance of placing Leviticus within its historical context
- The relationship with other ancient Near Eastern modes of worship
- Leviticus - from chaos to order - from injustice to justice
- Idealism vs reality

RESOURCES

- Logos Software or [BibleHub.com](https://www.biblehub.com)
- *Who Shall Ascend The Mountain of the LORD?* By Michael Morales
- *JPS Torah Commentary: Leviticus* by Baruch Levine
- *Interpretation Bible Commentary: Leviticus* by Samuel Balentine
- *Leviticus Commentary (Anchor Yale and Continental)* by Jacob Milgrom
- *NIV Application Commentary: Leviticus/Numbers* by Roy Gane
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- *The Day the Revolution Began* by NT Wright
- *Removing Honor, Restoring Shame According to the Temple Service* DVD series by Ryan White

CHAOS

“

And YHWH called to Moses and spoke to him
from the Tent of Meeting saying:

וַיִּקְרָא



AND YHWH CONTINUED CALLING...

- But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, “Where are you? (Gen 3:9)
- God called to him out of the bush, “Moses, Moses!” And he said, “Here I am.” (Exod 3:4)
- The Lord called to [Moses] out of the mountain, saying, “Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob... (Exod 19:3)
- The glory of the Lord dwelt on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days. And on the seventh day he called to Moses out of the midst of the cloud. (Exod 24:16)

Let them build me a dwelling place

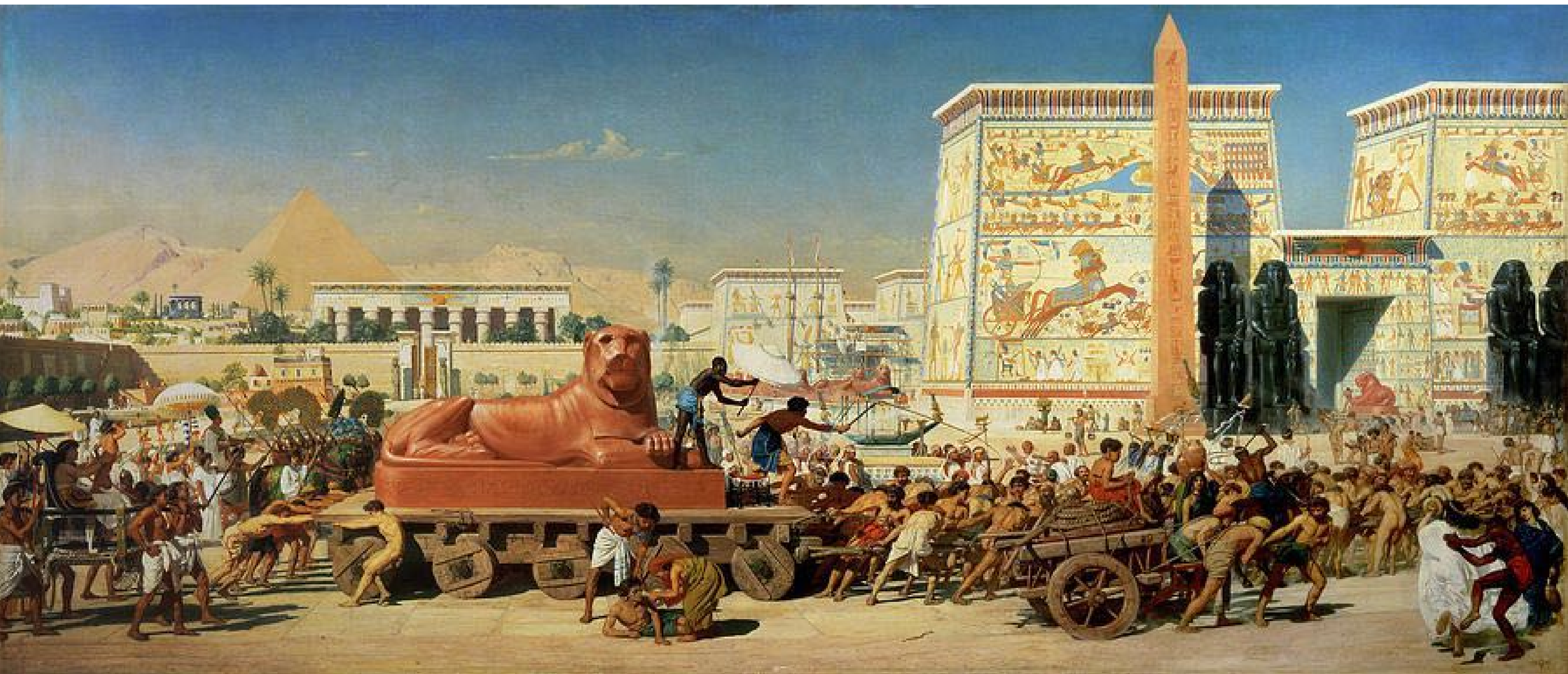
that I may dwell
in their midst

Exodus
25:8

Exodus
29:45-46



EGYPT AND THE ABSENCE OF GOD



Systemic injustice:

Slavery

Haves and Have-nots

Empire-building

World ordering



EDEN

THE GARDEN OF GOD

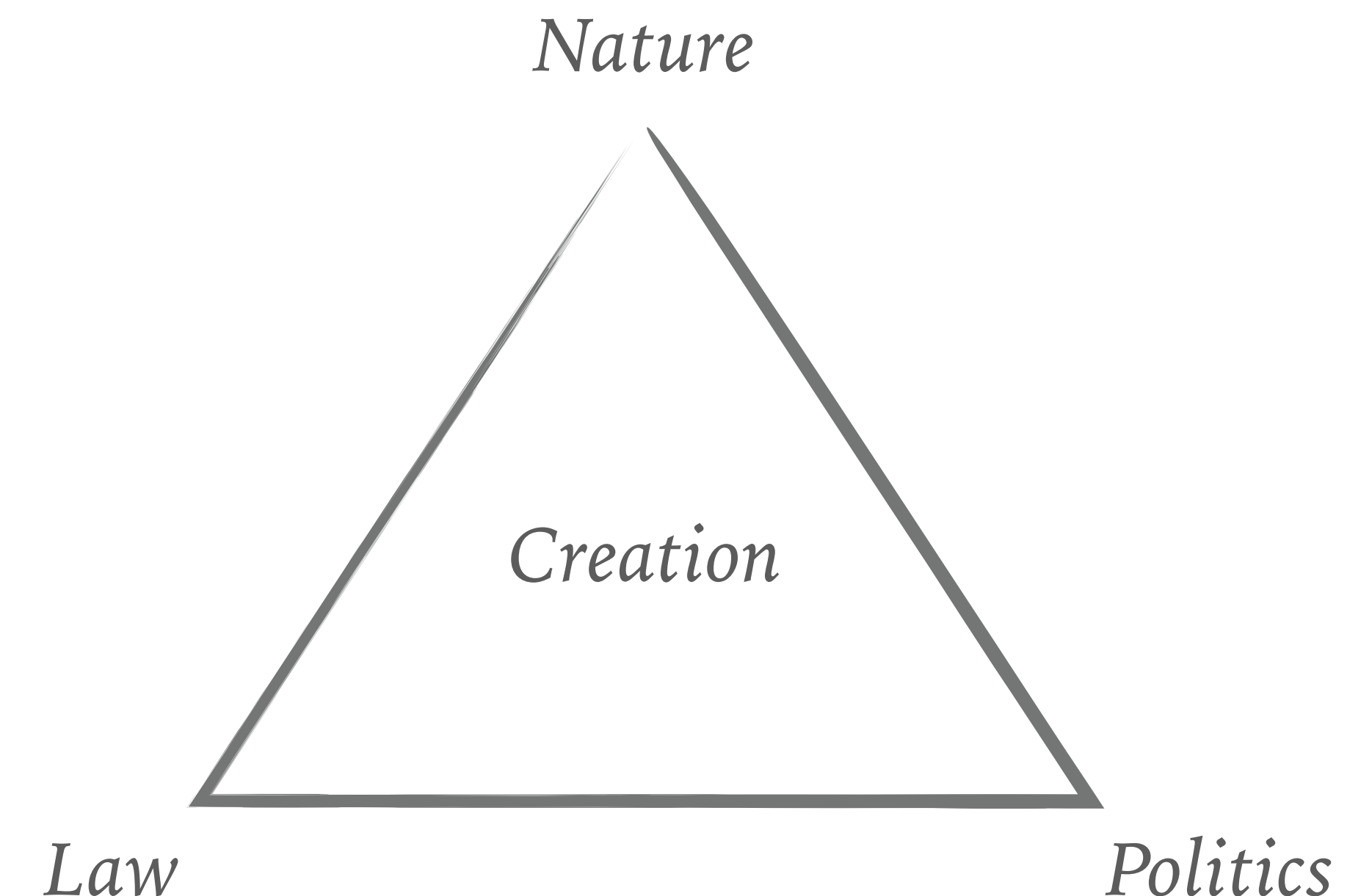
- And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, toward the east, and there he put the man (*ha-adam*) whom he had formed. (2:8)
- The LORD God took the man (*ha-adam*) and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it (2:15)
- The Garden was a place where God dwelt with humanity (3:8)
- And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. (Rev 21:3)

‘ĀBAD – TO SERVE – TO BE A SLAVE

- The lives of God’s people will be transformed from slavery to worship, both words utilizing the same Hebrew verb ‘ābad, which may be translated judiciously in both cases as ‘serve’. This transformation of ‘ābad may also reflect a reversal of its former change from Adam’s worship (‘ābad) in the garden of Eden (Gen. 2:15) to his toiling (‘ābad) outside it (Gen. 3:23).
 - Restoring humanity to our original role.
- The service of the sons of Israel will be transferred from building cities of storage (miskān) to building the tabernacle (miškān), the house of God.
- The king of Egypt’s title Pharaoh means literally ‘The Great House’

CREATION IN THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST

- ✦ The law enacts the establishment of the order of creation seen in its jurisdiction aspect. In short, ANE cosmic, political, and social order find their unity under the concept of “creation”.
- ✦ This is why an offense in the legal realm obviously effects the realm of nature (drought, famine) or in the political sphere (threat of enemy).
 - ✦ David and the Gibeonites
 - ✦ Elijah and the prophets of Ba'al



“

The Greek word *cosmos* refers not just to the physical world, but to the world order.



CREATION AND THE NUMBER SEVEN

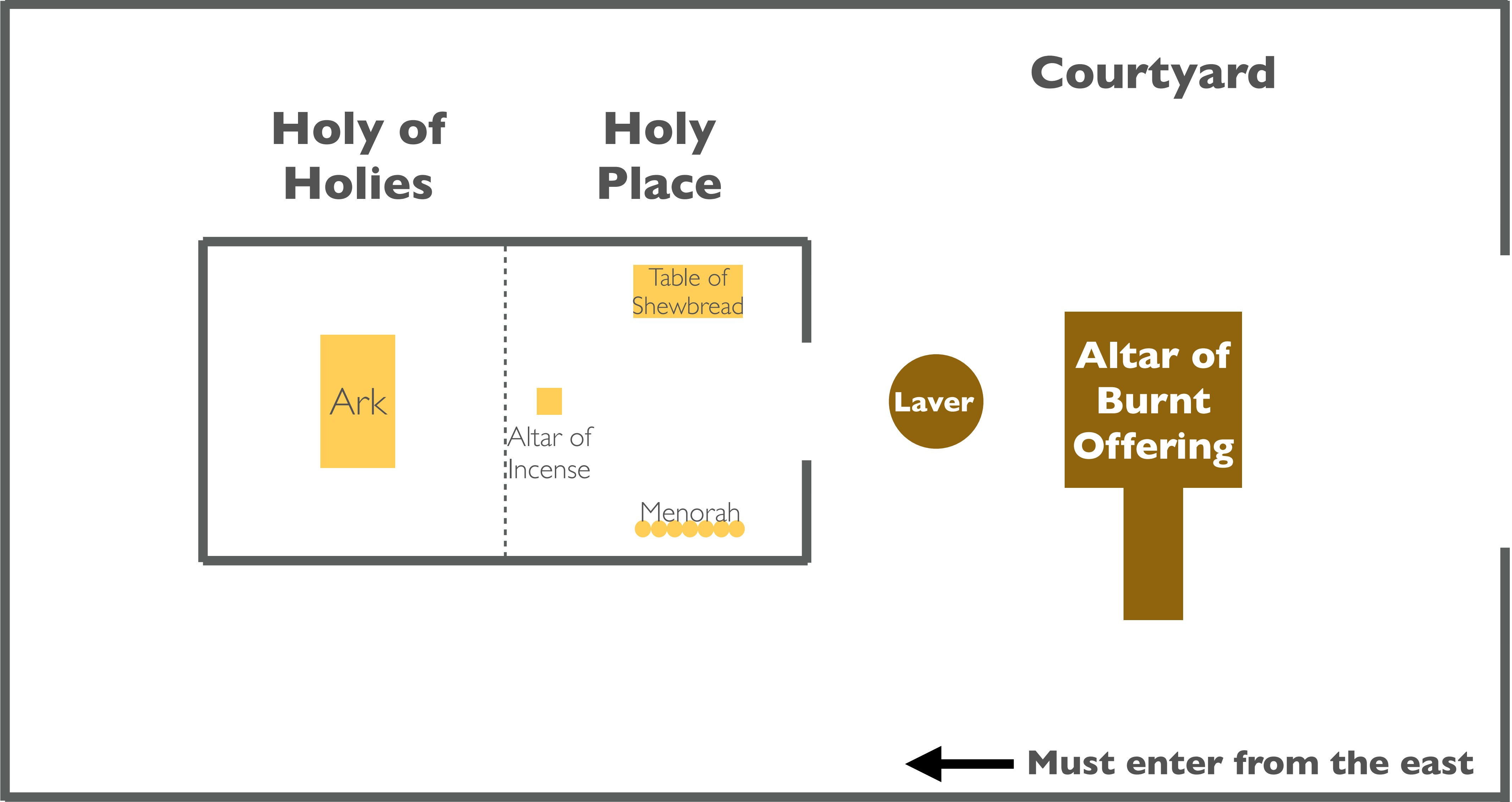
- The Tabernacle is patterned after the cosmos
- 8 acts of creation in 6 days
- 7 branch menorah
- Exodus 25-31 tabernacle instructions are structured along seven speeches by God.
 - 7th speech speaks of the Sabbath and creation (Exodus 31:12-17)
- Exodus 40:17-33 Israel's seven acts of compliance.



LEVITICUS AND THE NUMBER SEVEN

- Seven speeches convey God's instructions for sacrifices (chaps. 1–7)
- Seven acts comprise the ordination to the priesthood (chap. 8)
- A seven-day period is prescribed for bodily impurities (12:2; 15:19, 24)
- Seven-plus-one-day purification rituals are prescribed for persons recovered from a skin disease (chap. 14)
- a sevenfold aspersion ritual cleanses the sanctuary on the Day of Purification (16:11–19)

ISRAELITE TABERNACLE

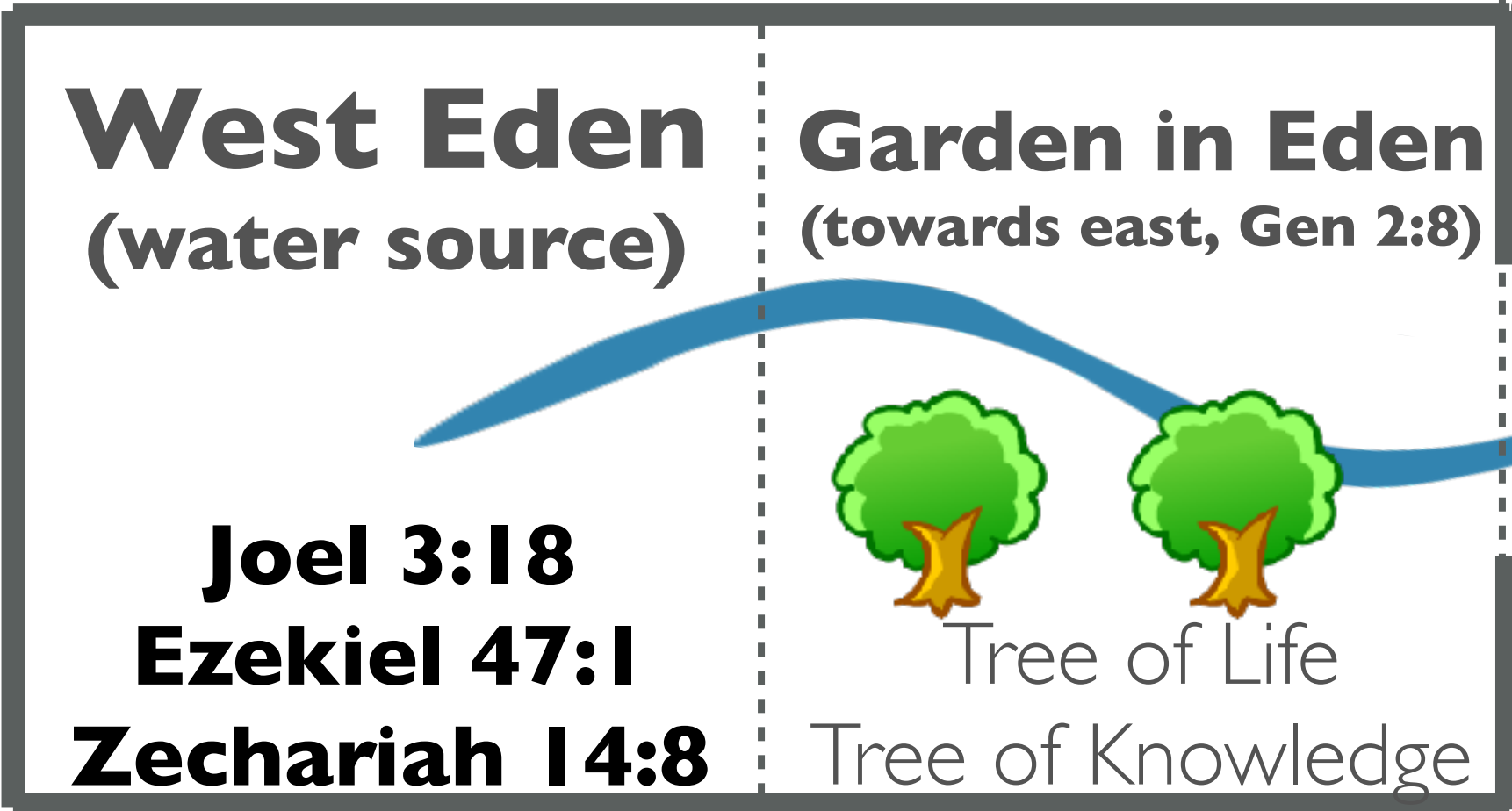




Josephus understood the tripartite structure of the tabernacle to signify ‘the earth [= outer court] and the sea [= inner court], since these ... are accessible to all; but the third portion [= holy of holies] he reserved for God alone, because heaven also is inaccessible to men’

-Ant. 3.181; cf. 3.123

Eden



**Cherubim
Guards**



Pishon

Gihon



Tigris

Euphrates

**Cain
and
Abel's
Altar**

Havilah

Cush

Assyria

**Land
of
Nod**

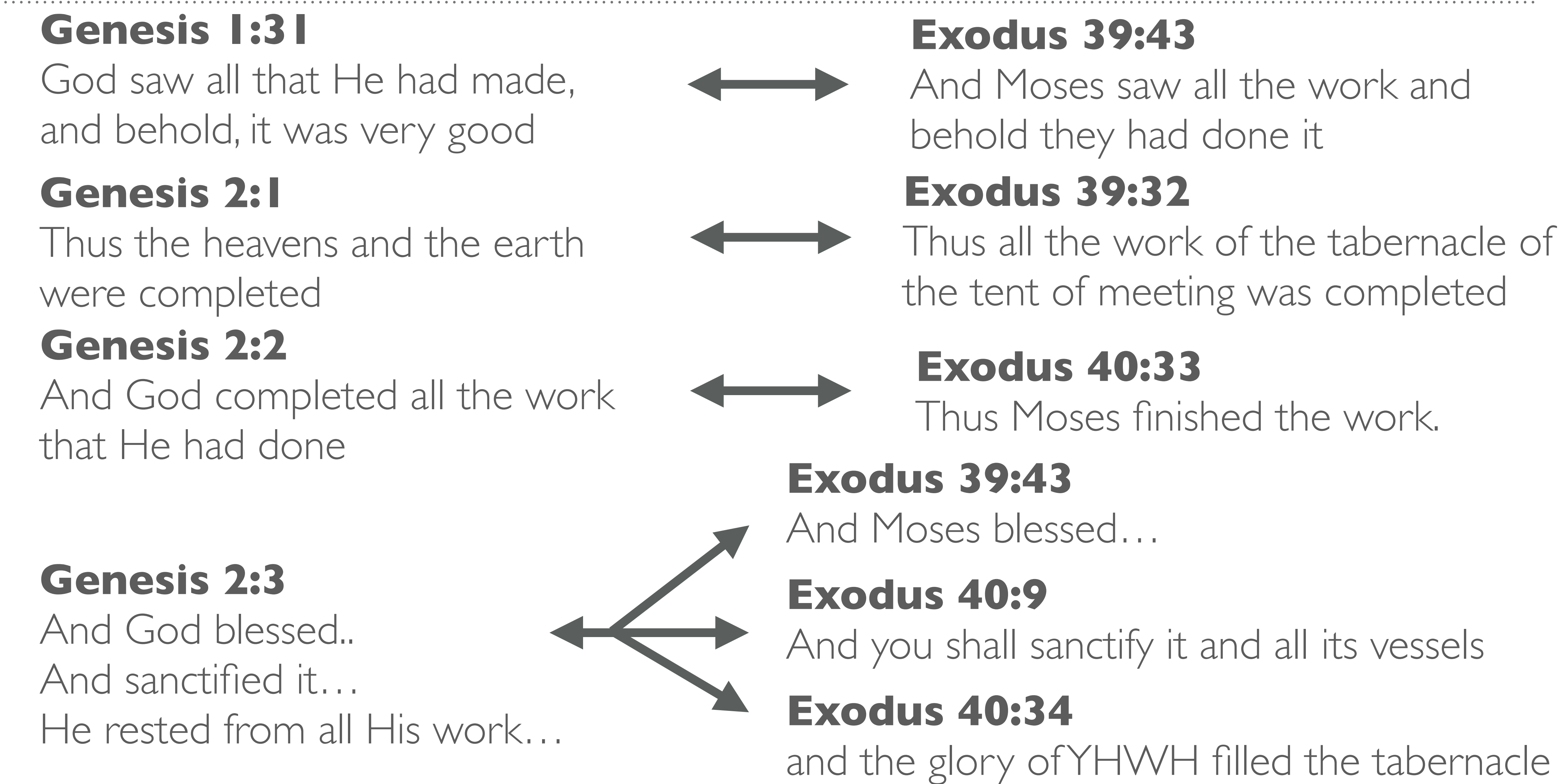
Must enter from the east



“ Creation is likened to a tabernacle pitched by God (Ps. 104; Job 9:8; Isa. 40:22) or to a house God has established, with pillars, windows and doors (Job 26:11; Gen. 7:11; Ps. 78:23), the cosmos being thought of as a three-decked house of heavens, earth and sea

-Morales, Who Shall Ascend the Mountain of the Lord?

LITERARY STRUCTURE OF GENESIS 1-2 COMPARED WITH EXODUS 39-40



LITERARY STRUCTURE OF GENESIS 1-4 COMPARED WITH LEVITICUS 1-16

Genesis 1

- Creation through separation
- Functions & functionaries



Leviticus 1-7

- Holiness through separation
- Sacrifice functions, priest functionaries

Genesis 2

- Adam's role established
- Separation from dust & from Adam



Leviticus 8-9

- Priest's role established
- Separation from Israel & Levi

Genesis 3:1-13

- Rebellious transgression
- Violation of sancta
- Death result
- Shame result



Leviticus 10

- Rebellious transgression
- Violation of sancta
- Death result
- Aaron's shame

LITERARY STRUCTURE OF GENESIS 1-4 COMPARED WITH LEVITICUS 1-16

Genesis 3:11

- Serpent is cursed above all
- All animals receive a curse
- Serpent must now slither
- Serpent characteristics (forked-tongue)
- Serpent brings death to the world



Leviticus 11

- Certain meats are cursed
- Things which swarm on the earth are prohibited
- Split but not divided hoof forbidden
- Must chew the cud
- Carrion-eaters prohibited
- Carnivores prohibited
- Sea creatures without fins & scales, thus with similarity in appearance to a snake

Micah 7:16-17



LITERARY STRUCTURE OF GENESIS 1-4 COMPARED WITH LEVITICUS 1-16

Genesis 3:15-23

- Curse of painful childbirth
- Walking dead
- Shameful nakedness
- Expulsion from the garden
- Children born outside garden



Leviticus 11-15

- Lochia flow from childbirth renders impure
- *Tsarot* equated to corpse impurity
- *Tsarot* requires expulsion from camp
- Impurity = shame
- Sexual relationships cause impurity
- Abnormal discharge associated with death

Genesis 4

- Two brothers
- Abel dies after sacrificing
- Cain lives, but is banished to wander the earth
- Thus rebellious sin and its shame is removed from Adam's family



Leviticus 16

- Two goats
- One is sacrificed to remove the impurities from the Tabernacle
- One is *l'az azel*, "goat for departure"
- Effect: rebellious sin & its shame are removed from the camp

CREATION

throne in heaven



mountain of the Lord

Garden of Eden

cherubim and flaming sword

Euphrates

Hidekel

Pison

Gihon



tree of life

tree of the knowledge of good and evil

Moving East

FALL

Adam & Eve worship at altar



Moving West

ATONEMENT

Holy of Holies

cherubim on the veil

Holy Place

cherubim on the veil

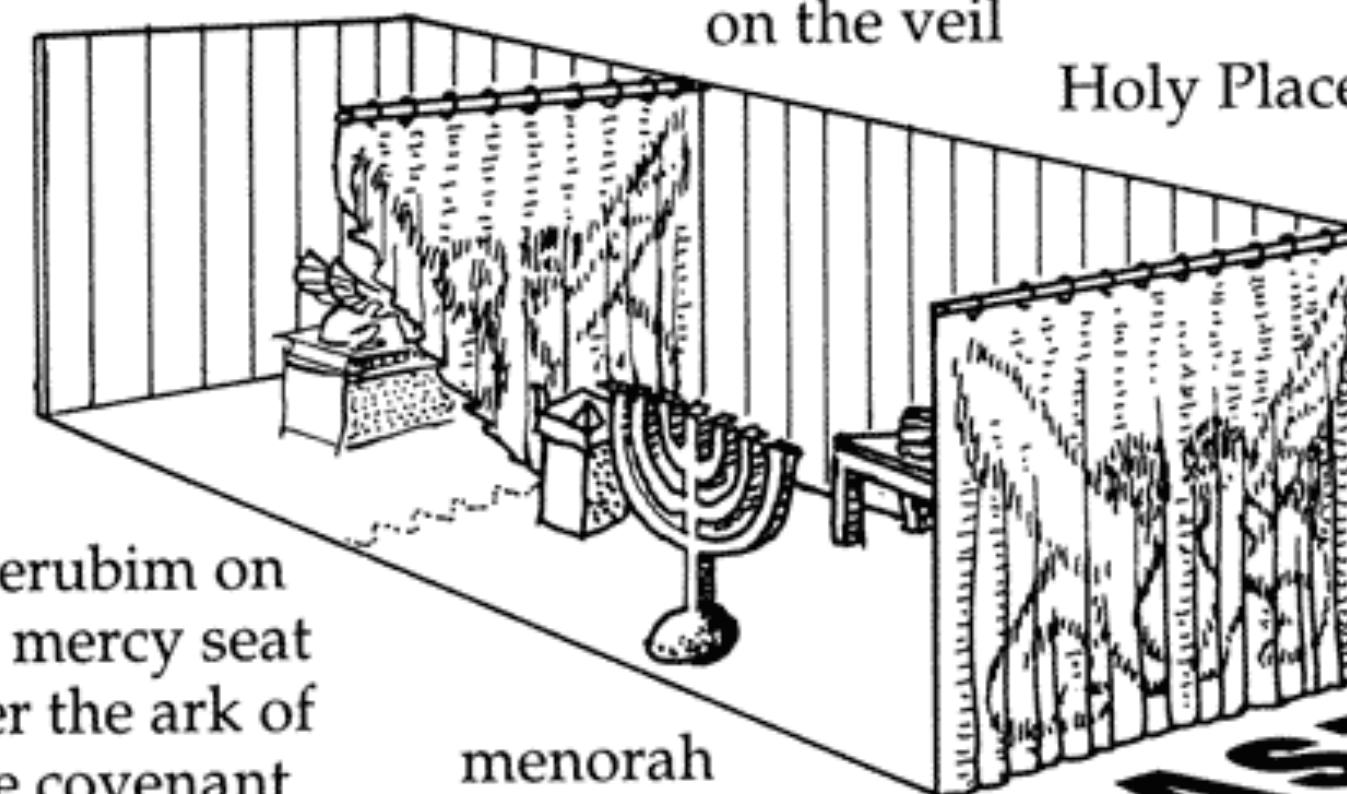
cherubim on the mercy seat over the ark of the covenant

menorah

Mosaic Tabernacle

bronze laver

bronze altar



EAST

“

Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord?
And who shall stand in his holy place?
He who has clean hands and a pure heart,
who does not lift up his soul to what is false
and does not swear deceitfully.

-Psalm 24:3-4

CULTURE CONCEPT OF TEMPLES



ZIGGURAT

KINGSHIP AND CREATION – CODE OF HAMMURABI PROLOGUE

Prologue to the Code of Hammurabi:

[Marduk] established for him in its midst an enduring kingship,
whose foundations are as firm as heaven and earth—

at that time Anum and Enlil named me

to promote the welfare of the people,

me, Hammurabi, the devout, god-fearing prince,

to **cause justice to prevail** in the land,

to **destroy the wicked and the evil**,

that the strong might not oppress the weak,

to **rise like the sun** over the black-headed (people),

and to light up the land.

Hammurabi, **the shepherd**, called by Enlil, am I;

HOW WAS CREATION UNDERSTOOD IN ANCIENT NEAR EAST?

*The order of creation found its most vivid expression in the kingship ideology of the ANE. As incarnation or son - in any case the representative - of the (creator-)deity upon the earth, **the king was understood to be the earthly guarantor of the order of creation**. Upon him and his acts depend the fertility of the land as well as the just social and political order of the state.*

BIBLICAL CREATION AS COUNTER-CULTURE

Marduk created human beings as cheap slave labor to do the dirty work of the lower gods. Only certain people - the king, princes, priests, and lords and ladies of the high court - were ordained to be the images of the gods on earth. Where these image bearers could not be, idols would be erected and the idol would image the god to the people.

Subversive Christianity: Imaging God in a Dangerous Time by Walsh

THE IMAGE OF GOD – GENESIS 1:27

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים | אֶת-הָאָדָם בְּצַלְמוֹ

בְּצַלְמוֹ אֱלֹהִים בָּרָא אֹתוֹ

זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה בָּרָא אֹתָם

“

We are invited to *participate*
with God in ruling this world
and restoring His creation order



A PORTABLE MT. SINAI (EXODUS 24)

Holy of Holies

Vs 12-15 - Moses and Joshua ascend to the top of the mountain

Holy Place

Vs 9-11 - Moses, Aaron & his sons, & 70 elders ascend the mountain for a sacred meal

Boundary: “Whoever touches the mountain shall be put to death” -Exod 19:12

**Courtyard
with altar**

Vs 4 - Moses built an altar at the foot of the mountain

“

Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. **And Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting** because the cloud settled on it, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.

WHO MAY ENTER?

WHO MAY DWELL WITH THE DIVINE?

THE ANXIETY OF KNOWING

SUMMARY

- The *function* of the Tabernacle and subsequent temples is God dwelling with humanity (*adam*)
 - God meets us where we are at, but calls us to become true humanity; image-bearers of the Divine
- The Tabernacle is a return to the Garden in Eden
- The Tabernacle is a restoration of the creation order
- The Tabernacle is a *microcosm* of the cosmos - it is a reflection of reality
- The Tabernacle is a stage for ritually acting out these concepts
- Leviticus provides instructions on how we approach God; about how we dwell in the presence of a Holy God.



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The Tabernacle

Circa 1450 BC

Pillar of smoke

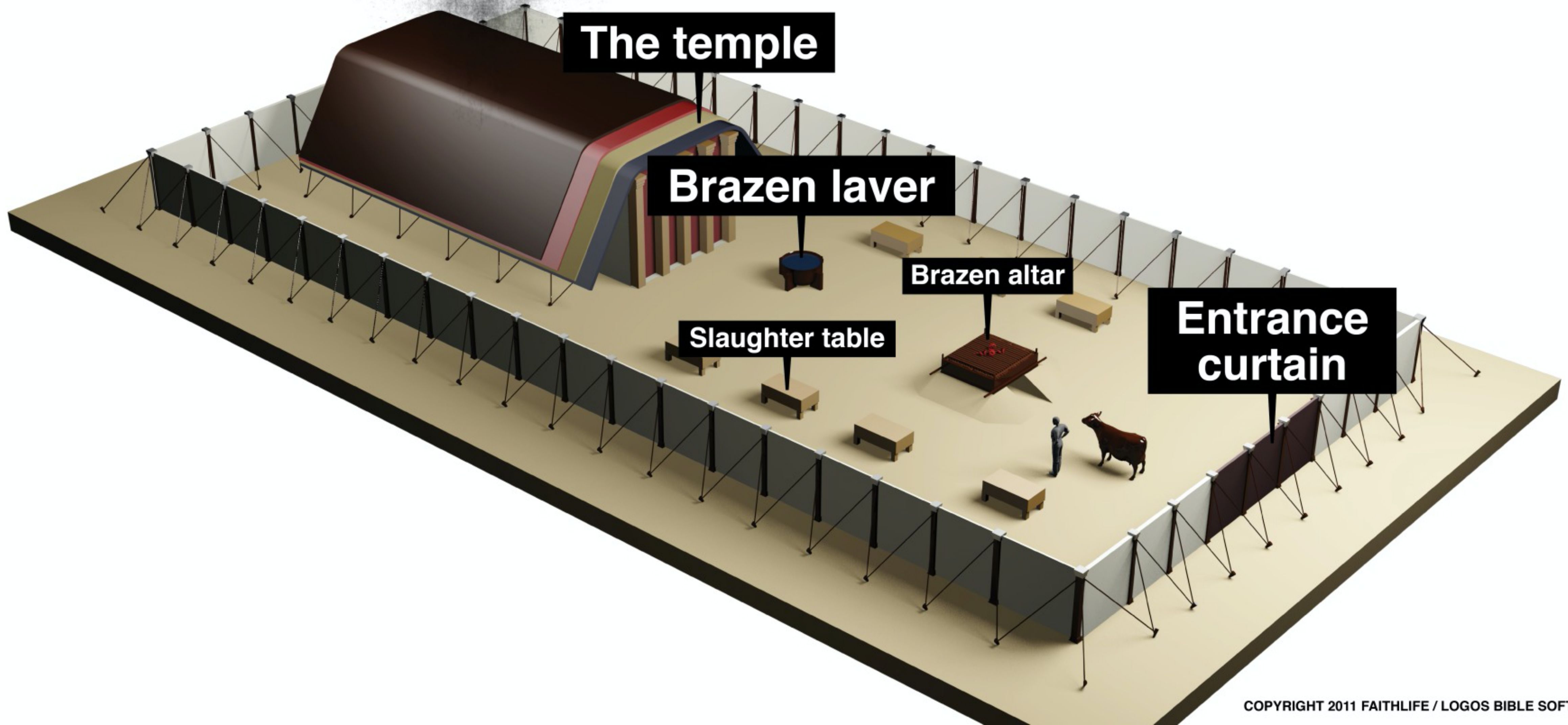
The temple

Brazen laver

Brazen altar

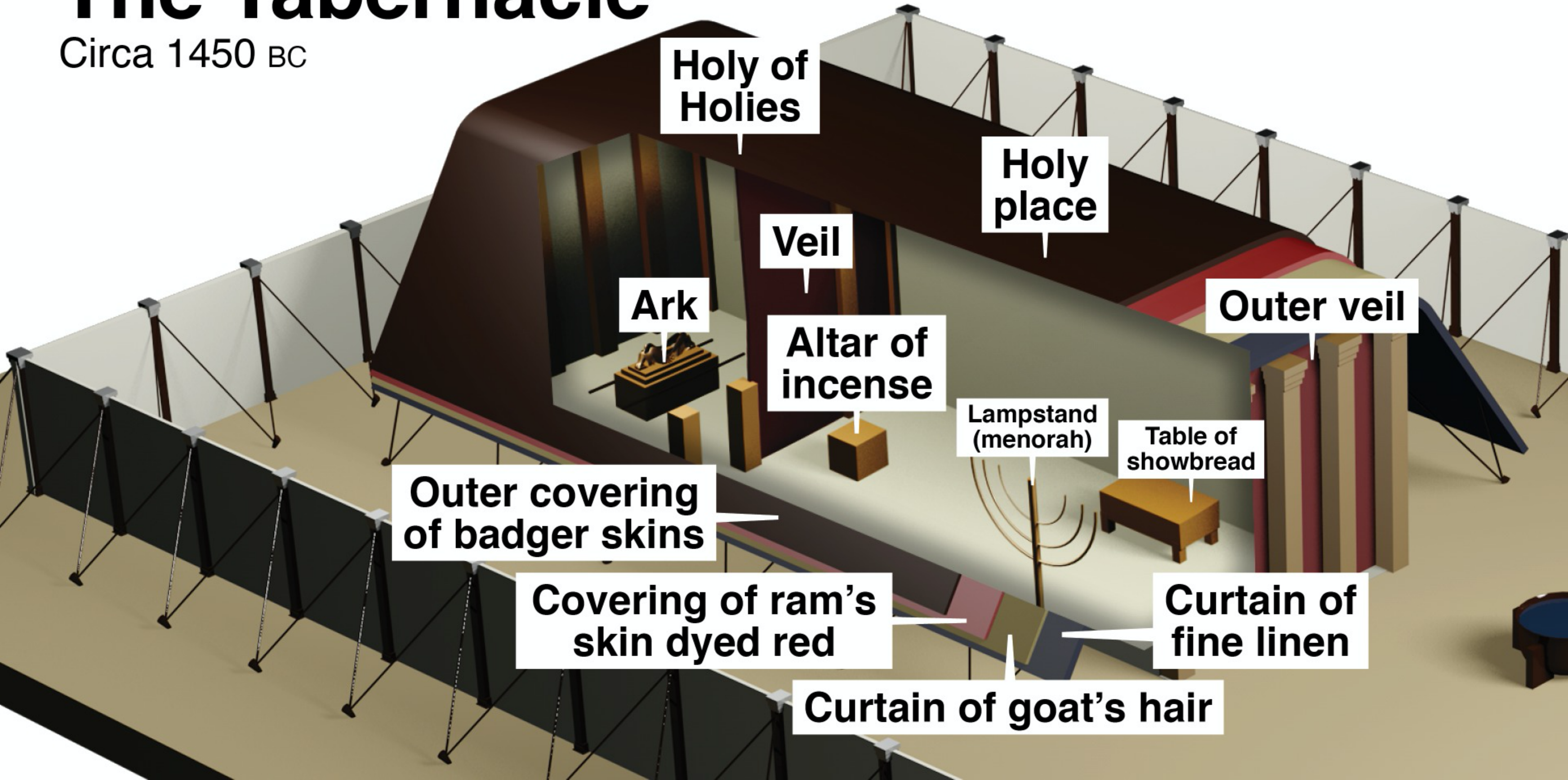
Slaughter table

Entrance curtain



The Tabernacle

Circa 1450 BC



UNDERSTANDING THE SACRIFICES

“

Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. **And Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting** because the cloud settled on it, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle...Then the Lord called to Moses and spoke to him from the tent of meeting

ORIGIN OF THE OFFERING

- God commanded it from the beginning and was reiterating instructions that had been lost/corrupted
- God accommodated a cultural method of worship and used this to teach higher principles (cross-style incarnation)
- Either way, no sacrifice today.
- We are not teaching to prepare for a future temple, but how to learn behaviors for today (living sacrifice)
- Rituals do not establish a mindset, they guide proper actions and create an ordering in the world.
 - The Tabernacle was about creating an ordering of the world geared towards holiness

HOLY




HYPERRION

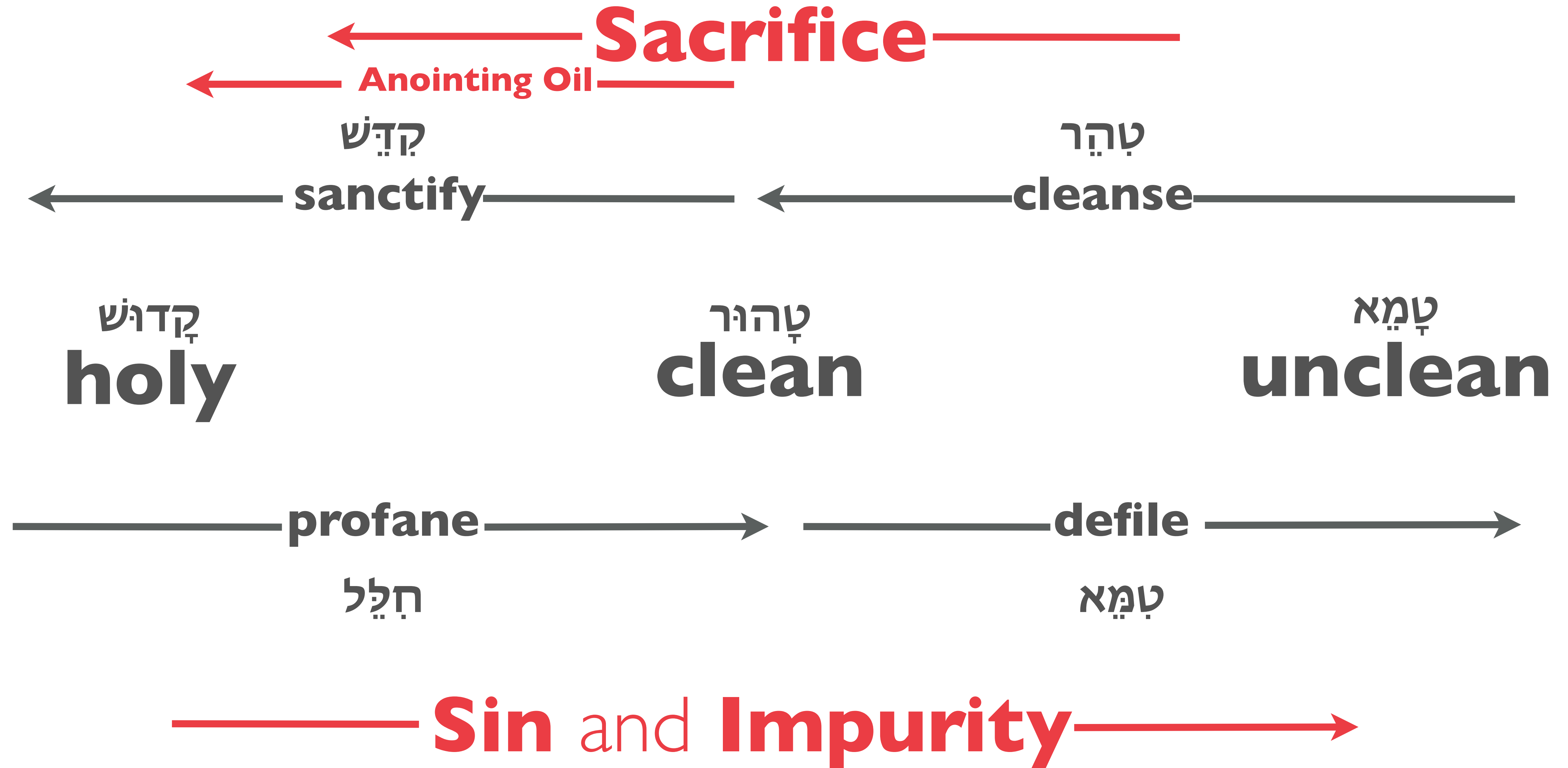


WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

What is the real problem in creation?



S I N

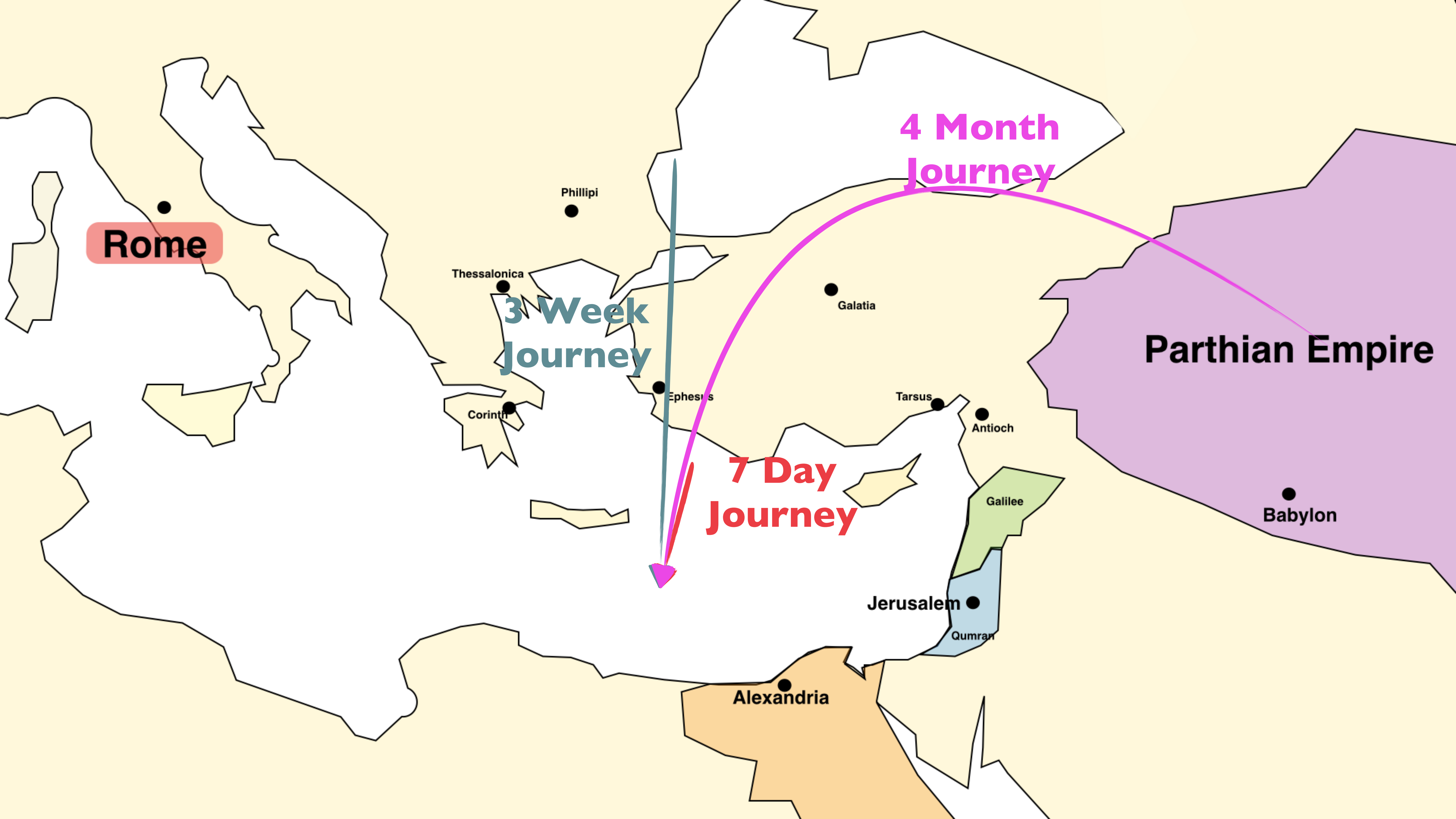


All wrongdoing is sin, but there is sin that does not lead to death

1 John 5:17

Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, **you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of Sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness?** For **the wages of Sin is death, but the free gift of God** is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 6:16, 23



Rome

**3 Week
Journey**

**4 Month
Journey**

**7 Day
Journey**

Parthian Empire



Much of the message of the prophets is centered on God's forgiveness...The means to obtain that pardon is by repentance and conversion, by changing one's attitude and moral behavior...In none of the prophetic text is forgiveness the result of sacrifices. Never did the prophets suggest that the people offer sacrifice to avert God's anger and obtain forgiveness.

—Andrea Spatafora, From the Temple of God to God as the Temple, 23

“

To do righteousness and justice is more
acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice

-Proverbs 21:3

ATONEMENT

“Each day you shall offer a bull as a sin offering (תִּזְבֹּחַ) for atonement, **and you shall purify (תִּטְהַר) the altar when you make atonement for it**, and you shall anoint it to consecrate it. For seven days you shall make atonement for the altar and consecrate it; then the altar shall be most holy, and whatever touches the altar shall be holy.

Exodus 29:36-37

“Aaron shall make atonement on its horns once a year; he shall make atonement on it with the blood of the sin offering of atonement once a year throughout your generations. It is most holy to YHVH.”

Exodus 30:10

"The sin (חַטָּאת) of Judah is written down with an iron stylus;
**With a diamond point it is engraved upon the tablet of their
heart and on the horns of their altars"**

Jeremiah 17:1

You shall take some of its blood and put it on its four horns and
on the four corners of the ledge and on the border round about;
thus **you shall cleanse (חִטָּאתָ) it and make atonement for it.**

Ezekiel 43:20

OVERVIEW

- Gift
- Order within the text
- Origin of “sacrifice”
- Understanding the term **Qorban**
- Are all offerings for sin?
- Isn't the animal a substitute for the offerer?
- Order of service vs. chaos of impurity
- Death pollutes, blood cleanses
- Comparison to pagan sacrifices
 - What is the cause of chaos in the world?

**WHEN DID LEVITICUS BECOME
IMPORTANT?**

6 MAJOR RITES OF THE OFFERING

PRESENTATION RITE

- Animal from one's own flock - does one approach God without cost? (cf. 2 Sam 24:24)
- Unblemished animal - is the worshiper careless in what he/she offers the Divine?
- Unblemished = *tamim* ("perfect") - cf. Noah and Abraham.
- Determining the reason for the offering
 - Passover Lamb
- Egyptian slavery and the animal sacrifice

A son honors his father, and servants their master. **If then I am a father, where is the honor due me?** And if I am a master, where is the respect due me? says YHVH of hosts to you, O priests, who despise My name. You say, “How have we despised your name?” By offering polluted food on my altar. And you say, “How have we polluted it?” By thinking that the Lord’s table may be despised. **When you offer blind animals in sacrifice,** is that not wrong? And when you offer those that are lame or sick, is that not wrong? **Try presenting that to your governor; will he be pleased with you or show you favor?** says YHVH of hosts.

- Malachi 1:6-8

HAND-LEANING RITE

- The best scholars will tell you we don't really know what this ritual accomplished.
- Also used for offerings that were for joy, not for sin
- Not required for the bird offering
- Yad vs. Yadim in Lev 16
 - Where does the sin-laden goat go?
- Vicarious substitute - ascending on behalf of the offerer.

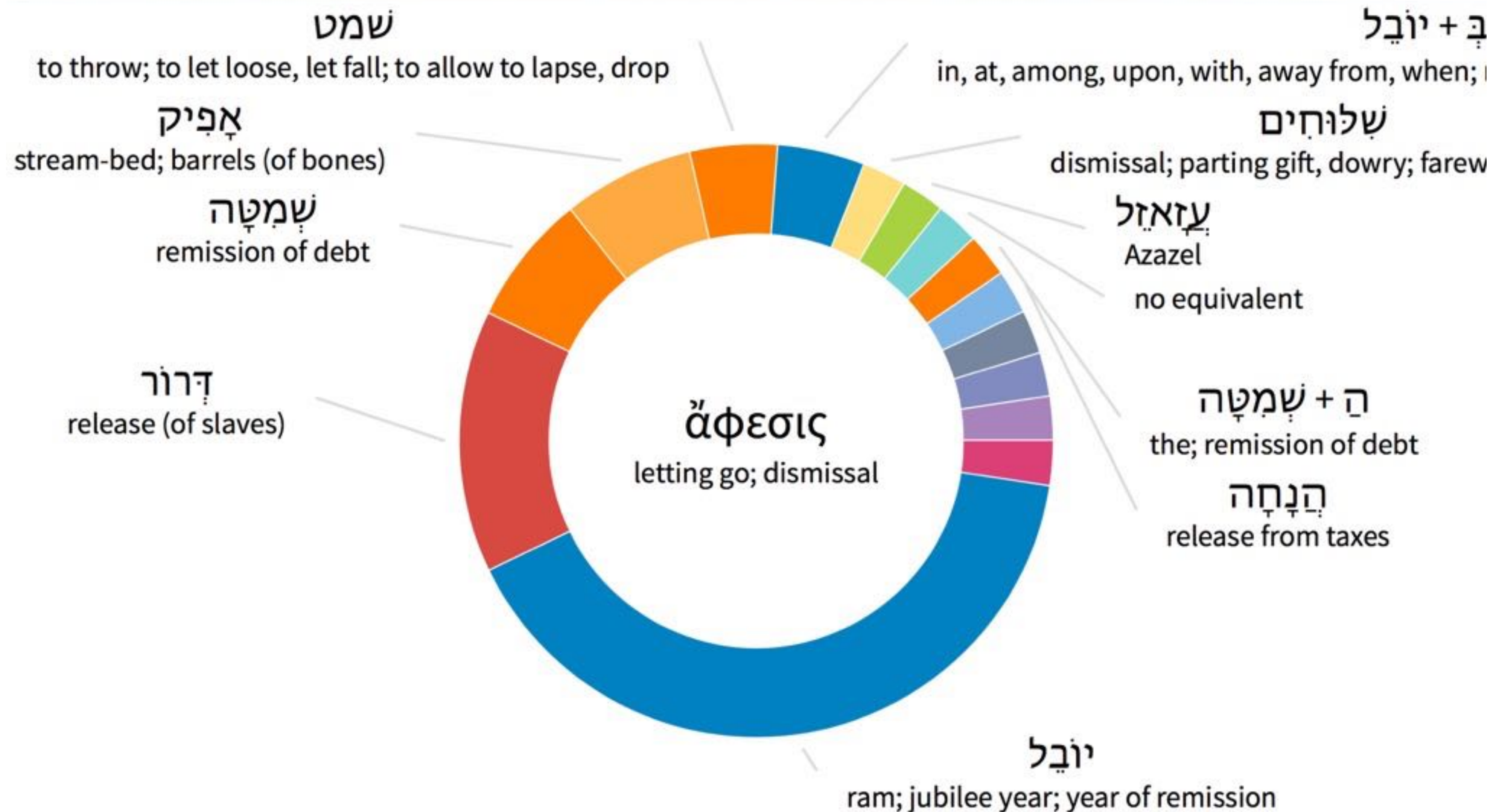
SLAUGHTER RITE

- Minimized description of the slaughter
- The modern day hunter
- Facing towards the west while slaughtering (not facing your animal...)
- Who can slaughter? Who collects the blood?
- When is forgiveness achieved?

BLOOD-MANIPULATION RITE

- Where is the blood applied?
- Is the blood ever applied to the offerer?
- What is the object of the atonement?
- Blood-indexing
- Pagan blood manipulations
- Correlation of life with holiness
- Without the shedding of blood...

Hebrews 9:22 And according to the Law, almost all things are cleansed with blood, and **without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness (ἄφεσις)**



BURNING RITE

- Whereas *sārap* is used as the general word for burning to destroy in the common spheres of life, *hiqṭîr* refers to the burning that takes place specifically upon the altar fire. The word for incense, *qēṭōret*, shares the same root as *hiqṭîr*, highlighting the emphasis on transformation into smoke.
- The animal is transformed into a pleasing aroma, transporting it to God's heavenly abode.
- The animal's ownership is thus transferred to the Divine

COMMUNION RITE

- The Israelite enjoys the hospitality of the house of God.
- Leviticus 10 - When is the sacrifice complete?
- Passover offering - What does it mean to “keep” Passover?
 - Exodus 24 - “Then Moses and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel went up, and they saw the God of Israel...they beheld God, and ate and drank.
 - Road to Emmaus (Luke 24) - “Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he was known to them in the breaking of the bread.”

ORDER OF APPEARANCE IN LEVITICUS



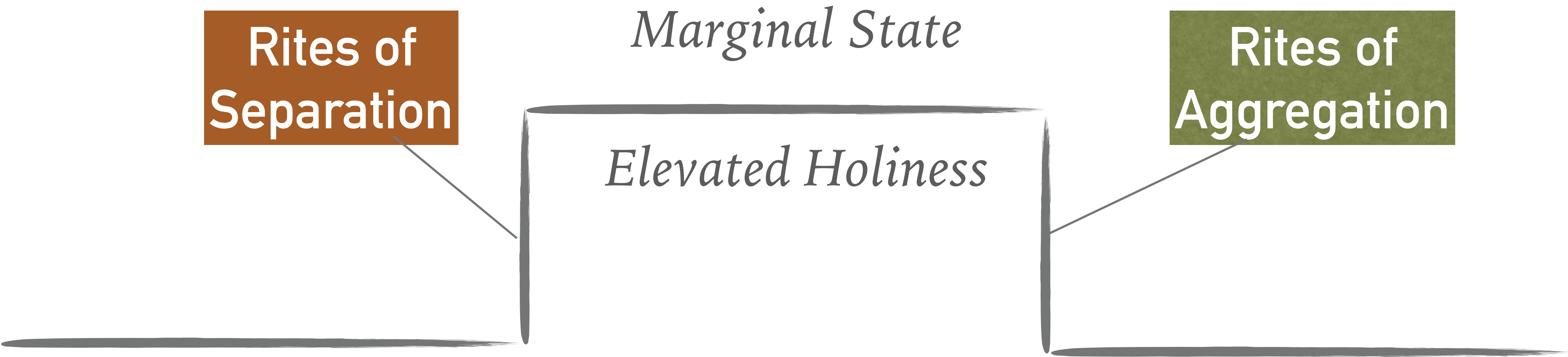
ASCENDING OFFERING – OLAH

- Offered for thanksgiving, entreating God, and as part of status-elevation rituals
- All offerings are equal
- Kippur and the danger of approach
 - Gift that brings honor to God (Mal 1:6-10)

DAILY OFFERING – TAMID

Exodus 29:38-45

Now this is what you shall offer on the altar: two lambs a year old regularly each day. One lamb you shall offer in the morning, and the other lamb you shall offer in the evening...for a pleasing odor, a fiery offering (אֵשׁ־זֶבַח "offering by fire") to YHVH. It shall be a regular burnt offering throughout your generations at the entrance of the tent of meeting before YHVH, where I will meet with you... and it shall be sanctified by My glorious honor.





GRAIN OFFERING – MINCHAH

- Gift, tribute, homage, political submission
- Same function as the burnt offering for those who could not afford an animal
- Placed on top of the animal sacrifice for those bringing an animal

“Its basic sense is that of “tribute, gift.” Like many names given to sacrifices, the term minhah was appropriated by priestly writers from the administrative vocabulary because it effectively expressed the subservient relationship of the worshiper toward God. At the same time, it conveyed the duty of the worshiper to present gifts to God, often in the form of sacrifices...When we analyze the names of specific sacrifices, we observe that many of them connote a gift of some sort. We have already seen that minhah basically means “gift, tribute.”

-JPS Torah Commentary: Leviticus by Baruch Levine



PEACE OFFERING – SHELAMIM

- Well-being or “shared experience” offering
- Offered for thanksgiving, the successful fulfillment of a vow, and freewill - JOY!!!
- Sacred BBQ
- Covenant ratification
- Holy meat



SIN OFFERING – CHATTAT

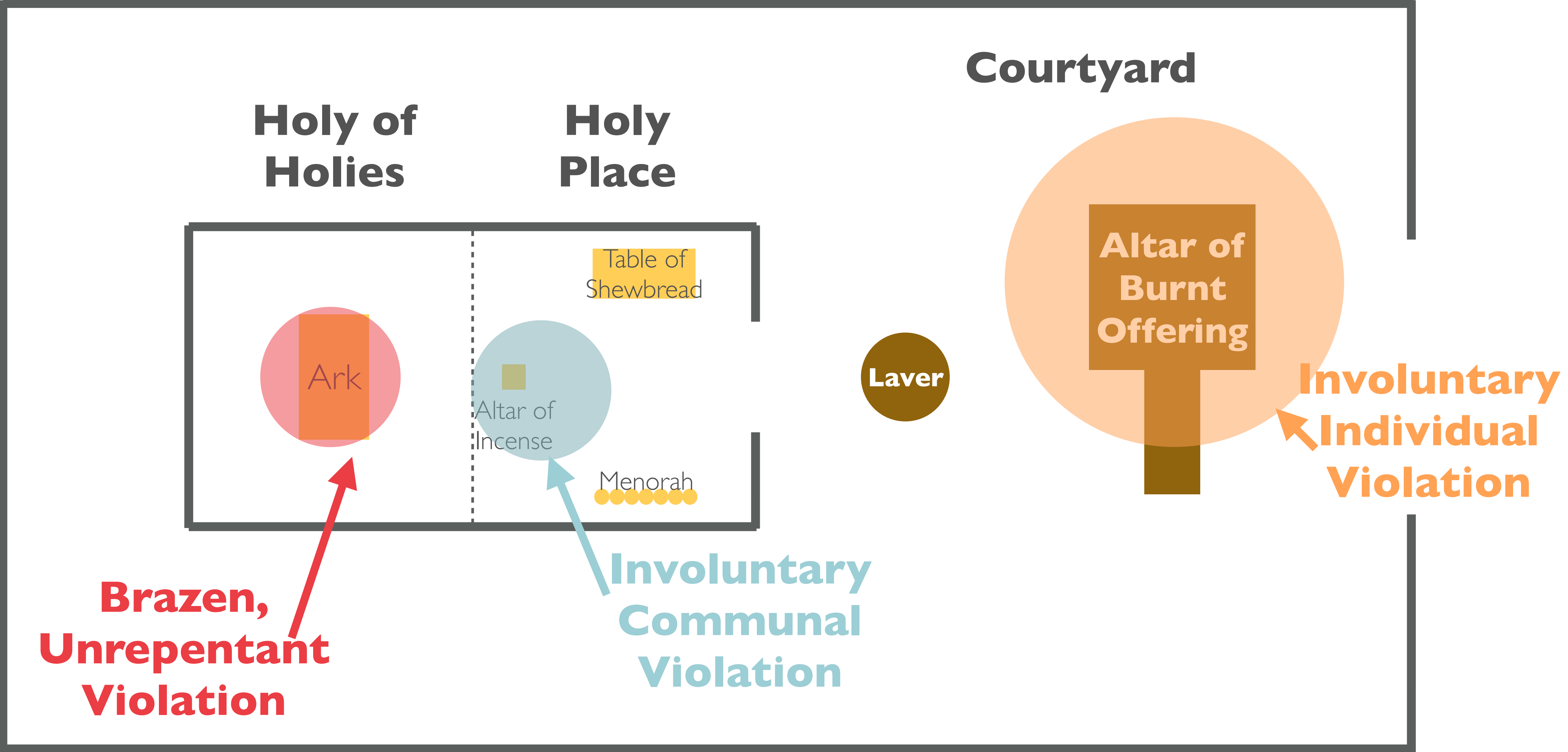
- Purification offering
 - Parturient, Nazarite, waters of purification
- What does the blood actually do?
 - Cleanse the altar (Lev 8:14-15)
 - Cost of the office - how far do sins penetrate the cosmos?
- Not caught, voluntarily coming forward
- Admission of sin can downgrade an intentional sin to unintentional

“

The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron;
with a point of diamond it is engraved on the
tablet of their heart, and on the horns of their
altars

-Jeremiah 17:1

PENETRATION OF SIN





By sprinkling the blood seven times before the curtain, the priest ritually enacts God's seven-day creation of the world, which on the occasions of the purification offering becomes a ritual re-creation of God's primordial hopes and expectations for the world

-Samuel Balentine, Leviticus Commentary



GUILT OFFERING – ASHAM

- Reparation offering
- Experiencing guilt's consequences
- Desecration of sancta
- Confession required for priest to determine the cost of reparation.
- Restorative justice - restitution of relationship; not punitive.

YESHUA – THE LAMB OF GOD

“For God so loved the world that **He gave** his unique son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but participate in the Age of Life. For God did not send his son into the cosmos to condemn the cosmos, but in order that the cosmos may be saved through him.

—John the Beloved



Sin is a failure rather than simply a breaking of rules; it's the failure to be genuinely human - reflecting God's image. Sin presents us with a cheap alternative to humanness and we end up colluding with the dark powers.

—NT Wright



YESHUA, OUR SACRIFICE

- Matthew 20:25-28, 26:27-28
- John 1:29, 3:16-17, 19:23-37
- 1 Peter 1:15-19
- 1 Corinthians 5:6-8
- Ephesians 1:5-8, 5:1-2
- Titus 2:11-14
- Romans 3:22-26
- 1 John 1:6-8, 2:1-3, 4:9-12
- Hebrews 9:11-14, 10:1-4, 8-14
- Revelation 1:5-6, 5:11-12

HOW COULD YESHUA BE A SACRIFICE IF...

- God does not allow human sacrifice.
- Yeshua killed on a cross, not an altar.
- Blood was not manipulated in the Temple.
- Yeshua, the Lamb of God, doesn't have hooves or wool.
- No sacrifices were tortured before being offered.
- Yeshua was not burned with fire.
- The Torah forbids one man dying for another (Deut 24:16)
- Nobody ate Yeshua's flesh...

QUESTIONS FROM PREVIOUS TEACHING

- So was Yeshua's blood not then required? Or just his death?
- Was He actually a substitute for our death?
- Were the animals that died functioning to repair the stain of sin (and restore the relationship with God) for those drawing near actually a picture of the substitutionary death of Yeshua?
- What about the two goats on the Day of Atonements?
- The Passover lamb (which Yeshua is linked to) was not a sin sacrifice, but a peace offering...

YESHUA, SUBSTITUTIONARY ATONEMENT, AND THE SACRIFICES

- What is the real problem with sin?
 - What is the *function* of the Torah?
- Substitutional atonement: God cannot forgive without blood sacrifices
 - Forgiveness without sacrifice
 - What type of sacrifice is a Passover lamb?
 - Is Messiah dealing with the problem with God or the problem with evil?
- Christus Victor: God achieving a victory over sin/death/satan through Yeshua
- Representational atonement



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RESOURCES

- *Creation, Righteousness, and Salvation* by H.H. Schmid
- *Subversive Christianity: Imaging God in a Dangerous Time* by Walsh
- *Ancient Near Eastern Texts* by Pritchard
- *Graded Holiness* by Jenson
- *From the Temple of God to God as the Temple* by Andrea Spatafora
- *Blood Expiation in Hittite and Biblical Ritual* by Yitzhaq Feder
- *Sin, Impurity, Sacrifice, Atonement* by Jay Sklar
- *Blood Ritual in the Hebrew Bible* by Gilders
- *The Tabernacle Pre-Figured* by Michael Morales