

At the beginning of Leviticus 9, Moses commands Aaron, his sons, and the Israelites to bring forward a series of seven animals and one grain offering to sacrifice at the newly constructed tabernacle. {SLIDE 2} Milgrom once suggested that the purpose of this episode was to offer one of each kind of public sacrifice— that is, everything except for the *asham* sacrifice. Yet, there are some sacrifices offered once, but others twice and one three times. {SLIDE 3} And beyond that, the description of the procedures for the sacrifices in this chapter aren't entirely consistent with the paradigms provided in Leviticus 1–5. The types of sacrifices, the animals used, the order in which they are offered, and the procedures used to perform those offerings all provide details essential for both the identification of the function of these sacrifices and the development of the plot in the priestly story of the tabernacle inauguration. In turn, the plot itself can affect the way in which the rituals are presented in the text. This chapter offers a clear case of the mutual dependence of ritual and narrative in P. Where the performance of a ritual act deviates from the paradigms described in Leviticus 1–5, the broader narrative context provides a plausible explanation for the deviation. Far from being a random series of sacrifices or a simple run-through of each of the public offerings, the sequence of sacrifices described in Leviticus 9 possesses a strong ritual logic and make up three distinct ritual acts which together effect the inauguration of the tabernacle.

The first four sacrifices in Lev 9 are: {SLIDE 4} one *hattat* calf for Aaron and his sons (9:8–11), one *'olah* ram for Aaron and his sons (9:12–14), one *hattat* goat for the people (9:15), and one *'olah* calf for the people (9:16). This pattern of *hattat* and *'olah* offerings is not unique to Lev 9. There is a close correspondence between this sequence of sacrifices in Lev 9:8–16 and those in the *yom kippur* ritual described in Lev 16. {SLIDE 5} The first four sacrifices in Lev 9

are almost identical in kind (*ḥattat* or *'olah*) and ownership (Aaron or the Israelites) to Lev 16 {SLIDE 6.1}. Each chapter contains a pair of sacrifices for each group: a *ḥattat* and an *'olah* for Aaron {SLIDE 6.2} and a *ḥattat* and an *'olah* for the Israelites {SLIDE 6.3}. Leviticus 16, of course, contains one additional sacrifice, a *ḥattat* goat offered by the Israelites to Azazel {SLIDE 6.4}.

Naphtali Meshel has recently argued that the priestly sacrificial system is created on the basis of the five types of sacrifices and that different combinations of these sacrifices were created to serve different “functions” in the cult. Meshel takes one segment of the *Temple Scroll* as his example and shows that there is a formula to represent a “temple purification” ritual {SLIDE 7.1}. This formula consists of two *'olah* sacrifices and two *ḥattat* sacrifices, one of each for Aaron {SLIDE 7.2} and one of each for Israel {SLIDE 7.2}. The combination identified by Meshel in the *Temple Scroll* is parallel to that in Lev 16 {SLIDE 8}; its grammar expresses temple/tabernacle purification.

While Lev 9:8–16 and Lev 16 are very similar, the parallels between them are not exact and the differences between the two need to be explained before it can be safely concluded that Lev 9:8–16 is indeed a purification ritual. There are four main issues to address {SLIDE 9}. First and foremost, the procedure for offering the *ḥattat* sacrifices as it is described in Lev 9 does not conform to the description of the paradigmatic sacrificial procedure given for the *ḥattat* in Lev 4 or the parallel purification ritual in Lev 16. The variation in Lev 9 must be accounted for. Then, there are three major differences between Lev 9 and Lev 16 to be addressed. The first is the order in which the sacrifices are offered, the second is the specific animal used for each sacrifice, and the third is the presence of a third *ḥattat* sacrifice in Lev 16, the goat for Azazel.

The description of the *hattat* sacrifices for Aaron and for Israel in Lev 9:8–15 offer the clearest example in this chapter of the interdependence of the narrative and ritual materials. The procedure described in Lev 9 is nearly parallel to the *hattat* procedure described in Lev 4:3–12, but it is not identical. According to Lev 4, there are two types of *hattat* sacrifices {SLIDE 11}. The first is when a *hattat* is offered on behalf of the high priest or on behalf of the entire community. In this case, its blood should be brought into the outer sanctuary in order to sprinkle it on the *paroket*, the curtain separating the inner and outer sanctuaries and smear the blood on the horns of the incense altar. Its remains are then disposed of outside the camp. For the sake of brevity, I will call this type of *hattat* a “sanctuary *hattat*.” The second type of *hattat* is offered on behalf of an Israelite leader or an individual Israelite. Its blood is kept in the courtyard and smeared on the bronze burnt offering altar. Its meat is then divided between the altar and the priests. I will call this type of *hattat* a “courtyard *hattat*.”

In Lev 9:8–11, Aaron offers a *hattat* on behalf of himself and his family {SLIDE 12.1}. Yet he does not enter the outer sanctuary, and thus does not smear the blood on the horns of the incense altar or sprinkle it on the *paroket*. {SLIDE 12.2} Instead, he smears the blood on the horns of the bronze outer altar, something he should not do if the sacrifice is for him and his household. Despite the fact that the two *hattat* sacrifices in Lev 9 are being offered first on behalf of Aaron and his sons and then on behalf of the whole Israelite community, they appear to be offered as courtyard *hattats*. Yet Lev 9:11 says that: “the flesh and the skin are burned in fire outside of the camp.” {SLIDE 12.3} This notice comes after the conclusion of the ritual in 9:10 because the burning of the remains outside of the camp is a means of disposal and not a part of the ritual itself. And according to Lev 6:23, “[the meat and skin of] any *hattat* whose blood was

brought into the Tent of Meeting for purification in the sanctuary will not be eaten; it must be burned with fire.”

The *hattat* sacrifices in Lev 9, then, are a mixed form, sharing characteristics of both the sanctuary and courtyard *hattats*. They are offered on behalf of Aaron and the Israelites (necessitating sanctuary *hattats*), but their blood is not brought into the sanctuary (as in the case of courtyard *hattats*). Despite the fact that their blood was not brought into the sanctuary, their meat and skin are burned outside of the camp (characteristic of sanctuary *hattats*).

The reason for this mixed form of the *hattat* sacrifice is found in the narrative context. The instructions for the ordination of the priests were given in Exod 29. The ordination process is considered complete only once Aaron institutes the *tamid* offering, as commanded in Exod 29:38–42. Only then will Yahweh appear to the people and take up residence in the tabernacle. Neither of these events have happened yet in the narrative; the ordination of the priests cannot yet be complete and they cannot have full access to the tabernacle complex. In P, only fully ordained priests can enter the outer sanctuary, and only a fully ordained high priest can enter the inner sanctuary, and even then only under very specific circumstances. The *hattat* sacrifices in Lev 9 require entrance to the outer sanctuary, but Aaron cannot access that part of the tabernacle complex until the completion of the ordination procedure with the institution of the *tamid*. Faced with this limitation, Aaron adapts the *hattat* ritual, and smears blood on the only altar accessible to him —the bronze outer altar. The sprinkling rite is omitted because there is no corollary to the *paroket* in the courtyard. The animal is disposed of outside the camp because it is still a *hattat* offered on behalf of Aaron or Israel. This explains the discrepancy between the *hattat* procedure

in Lev 4 and Lev 9, and removes one of the obstacles to the identification of this chapter as containing a tabernacle purification ritual.

After the first *ḥattat* sacrifice, Aaron offers his ram as an *'olah*. The ritual as it is described here conforms precisely to the ritual described in Lev 1:10–14, the procedure for sacrificing an *'olah* from the flock. Lev 9:15 then narrates that Aaron offered the *ḥattat* goat on behalf of the Israelites, slaughtering it and making purgation with it just as he had done with the first *ḥattat* sacrifice (כְּרֵאשׁוֹן), which can only refer to the *ḥattat* he offered for the sake of himself and his household in Lev 9:8–11. This is precisely as one would expect: according to Lev 4, the ritual for a *ḥattat* sacrifice on behalf of the entire Israelite community is identical to that of a *ḥattat* sacrifice on behalf of the high priest. The adjustments that had to be made with the high priestly *ḥattat* in vv. 8–11 are also made here for the same reasons. Aaron then performs the *'olah* sacrifice with the calf of the Israelites כַּמִּשְׁפַּחַת, according to the regulation (9:16). In this case the narrator cannot say כְּרֵאשׁוֹן as he did in Lev 9:15 with regard to the *ḥattat* sacrifice because the *'olah* of the Israelites is a calf from the herd and not of the flock as the *'olah* of the priest. Thus the מִשְׁפַּחַת referred to in v. 16 is the instruction in Lev 1:3–9, the procedure for sacrificing an *'olah* from the herd.

The identification of these first four sacrifices in Lev 9:8–16 conforms to the paradigmatic priestly procedures in Lev 1 and 4 with only slight variation due to narrative constraints. With the type and ownership of the individual sacrifices in Lev 9:8–16 clearly identified, it is now possible to examine the pattern of these four sacrifices and its variations from the tabernacle purification ritual in Lev 16. There are three major differences between Lev 9 and Lev 16 that must be accounted for: the first is the animal being used for each of the

sacrifices, the second is the difference in the order in which the sacrifices are offered, and the third is the presence of a third *ḥattat* goat in Lev 16.

The discrepancies in the animals being offered are two-fold: Lev 9 and 16 do not match each other, and neither matches the prescriptions for the two relevant *ḥattat* sacrifices in Lev 4:3–21. According to Lev 4, both the high priest and the community of Israel are supposed to offer a bull for their *ḥattat*. In Lev 9 Aaron offers a calf and Israel offers a goat. In Lev 16 Aaron does offer a bull, but Israel offers a goat. Lev 9 and 16 seem to be in agreement against Lev 4: Israel's *ḥattat* for a tabernacle purification ritual is a goat. The calf offered by Aaron in Lev 9, on the other hand, is an anomaly in P. It is the only sacrifice of a calf for a *ḥattat* anywhere in P, and there is no clear explanation as to why. The best that can be said is that it is a bovine (מן הבקר), but not fully grown like the bull. In terms of the categories set up by P, the substitution of a calf for a bull is entirely appropriate. The procedure for its sacrifice would be identical. Additionally, recognizing that the ritual being described is part of a literary composition and not as prescriptive ritual offers another explanation: the use of an immature animal of the bovine category may be for rhetorical effect. The cult is, at the point of these sacrifices, also immature; the animal used in its inauguration reflects that.

The goat offered as a *ḥattat* by the Israelites, somewhat problematically, is not a bovine like the bull or calf, but is rather an ovine (מן הצאן). According to Lev 4, a *ḥattat* offering can take one of four forms depending on whose behalf it is offered. A sanctuary *ḥattat*, on behalf of Aaron or the Israelites as a whole, is a male bull. The courtyard *ḥattat*, if offered by a leader of the community is a male goat, and if it is offered by an individual Israelite it is a female goat or sheep. The form of the *ḥattat* in Lev 9 is mixed. It is somewhere in between the sanctuary *ḥattat*

and the courtyard *hattat*. The choice of sacrificial animals reflects this intermediary position. The procedure for the sacrifice of the *hattats* in Lev 9 best match those of the courtyard *hattat* and thus the use of an animal from the flock. However, the instructions for the disposal of the animal's remains in Lev 9:11 best matches the sanctuary *hattat* and thus the use of an animal from the herd. What Lev 9 prescribes is one of each: an animal from the herd (עגל) for Aaron and his sons, and an animal from the flock (שעיר עזים) for the Israelites.

The animals used in Lev 9 differ from those prescribed in Lev 4 and Lev 16 in most cases, but typically conform to the broader categories (bovine or ovine) in the paradigmatic instructions. Where they do not conform, the narrative context helps to provide a plausible explanation. These differences are often for rhetorical effect and have to do with the unique nature of the inauguration event in Lev 9. The use of an immature bovine rather than the mature bovine prescribes matches the nascent status of the cult itself.

The second major difference between Lev 9 and Lev 16 is the order in which the sacrifices are offered. In both cases Aaron's *hattat* is sacrificed first, and the *'olah* for Israel is sacrificed last. What is different is that Lev 16 attests that the two *hattat* sacrifices are offered first and then the two *'olah* sacrifices, whereas Lev 9 describes Aaron's sacrifices (*hattat* and *'olah*) being offered first followed by both of Israel's sacrifices. There are two ways of explaining this difference in sacrificial order. One is by making recourse to ritual logic and the other is by understanding the presentation of these ritual processes as an element of the rhetoric of the story. I will explain the difference in both manners. Without first understanding the ritual logic of the text, its rhetorical effect cannot be adequately explained.

From the perspective of ritual logic, the presence of the third *ḥattat* goat for Azazel in Lev 16 triggers the change in the order of sacrifices. There are two general requirements for ritual sequences in P: 1) if Aaron sacrifices a *ḥattat* on for his own sake, he does so before he sacrifices a *ḥattat* for the sake of the community, and 2) an *'olah* sacrifice must be offered last in a ritual sequence. Once these two requirements are fulfilled, the options for the insertion of the *ḥattat* goat for Azazel are limited. The two goats in Lev 16, one for Yahweh and one for Azazel, are each one part of the two-part purification of the tabernacle on behalf of the Israelites (Lev 16:7–22). Their function in the sequence of the tabernacle purification in Lev 16 demands that they be used one after another. Interrupting the offering of these two by introducing an *'olah* would undermine the ritual's logic. In Lev 16 goat for Azazel is placed immediately after the *ḥattat* goat designated for Yahweh and offered on behalf of the Israelites (Lev 16:15-16).

The high priestly *'olah* could, in theory, have been offered prior to the two *ḥattat* goats on behalf of the Israelites in Lev 16. However, the placement of the three *ḥattat* sacrifices at the beginning of the ritual sequence effects a full purification of the tabernacle complex prior to the offering of the *'olah* sacrifices in this chapter. This level of full purification is not necessary in Lev 9 because the tabernacle is not yet contaminated with a large degree of impurity. Victor Turner has suggested that initiation rituals like the priestly ordination in Lev 8 are seen as polluting to persons, objects and events. Simply by transitioning from one status to another, pollution (impurity) is generated. This pollution would render the sacred space, the tabernacle in the case of P, impure and in need of its own process of purification. The amount of impurity that has had time to accumulate is minimal, but the presence of any impurity at all could be thought to impede the deity's inhabitation of the space. Indeed, descriptions of purification



rituals during an inauguration ceremony are present in several inscriptions describing temple restorations in the ancient Near East, notably prior to the installation of the statue of the deity in the sacred space.

The narrative context of the ritual in Lev 9 and that of the one described in Lev 16 also provides a compelling reason for the different ordering of the sacrifices. In Lev 9, the hierarchy of the priestly cult is still being established. By placing Aaron's two sacrifices prior to the two sacrifices belonging to the Israelites, the narrator is marking the distinction in priestly hierarchy between the priesthood (Aaron and his sons) and the Israelites. The ritual in Lev 9 ultimately joins the priests and the Israelites together in that it is not complete until all four sacrifices have been offered. The distinction made between the priests and the Israelites in the performance of that ritual, however, is a critical one at this stage of the cult: there is now an ontological distinction between the priesthood and the laity; the mediation of Aaron and his sons is a necessary component of the public worship of Yahweh.

Lev 16, on the other hand, is situated at a place in the priestly narrative where the establishment of cultic hierarchy is no longer necessary. Rather, the force of Lev 16 is that the responsibility for contaminating the tabernacle falls equally on the priests and the Israelites, and that both parties are equally responsible for its purification. The interweaving of priestly and Israelite sacrifices within the permissible limits of the adaptation of a ritual makes good ritual sense in this context. Additionally, in Lev 16 the cult has already been established and the purification of the Tabernacle is the dominant theme; thus the performance of the purification sacrifices is instructed first.

The presence of the ḥattat goat for Azazel in Lev 16 was part of the reason for the difference in the order of sacrifices between Lev 9 and Lev 16. But is a purification ritual still a purification ritual if the goat for Azazel is absent? The use of this goat is described in Lev 16:20b–22:

He will bring forward the living goat and Aaron will place his two hands on the head of the living goat and confess on it all of the iniquities of the Israelites, and all of their transgressions, and all of their sins. He will put them on the head of the goat and send it with a designated man into the wilderness. The goat will bear upon it all of their iniquities into a desolate region. He will send the goat into the wilderness.

והקריב את השעיר החי וסמך אהרן שתי ידו על ראש השעיר החי והתודה עליו את כל עונות בני ישראל ואת כל פשעיהם לכל חטאתם ונתן אתם על ראש השעיר ושלח ביד איש עתי המדברה ונשא השעיר עליו את כל עונות אל ארץ גזרה ושלח את השעיר במדבר

According to this passage, the ḥattat goat for Azazel in Lev 16 serves to purify the tabernacle from Israel's iniquities, transgressions, and sins, but not from its impurities. The distinction between impurity and sin becomes even more important here. Impurity is an inevitable fact of human existence. There is no negative connotation to impurity, other than Yahweh's aversion to too much of it in his dwelling place. At this point in the narrative, the Israelites have only been given instructions about how to perform certain sacrifices. They have not been given many instructions about what constitutes a sin. They have only been told what to do when they accidentally commit an act that Yahweh has prohibited (Lev 4) and what to do if they have defiled a sacred object (Lev 5). Sacred objects exist only once their consecration is complete, which has not yet happened in the story and thus the scenario in Lev 5 is not yet applicable. And, while the Israelites know that they must offer a ḥattat sacrifice if they do something Yahweh

commanded them not to do, Yahweh has not yet commanded them not to do anything that they would have had the opportunity to do.

Finally, the instructions for cleansing oneself and the sanctuary from various impurities have not yet been given in the story. These appear in Lev 11–15. This does not mean, however, that impurity does not exist yet; it only means that the Israelites do not know that they are responsible for its effects. These regular impurities can become a sin only if they are ignored for an extended period of time; not enough time has elapsed in the story for this to have happened yet. Therefore, there has been no opportunity for the Israelites to commit the kind of brazen sin described in Lev 16:20b–22, and thus the goat for Azazel is unnecessary in Lev 9. The purification in Lev 9 addresses the minor impurities that have accrued over the previous seven days and generates, quite literally, a clean slate.

Each of the discrepancies between Lev 9 and Lev 16 have been addressed, as has the difference in sacrificial procedure between Lev 4 and Lev 9. Where Lev 9:8–16 varies from the chapters containing paradigmatic instructions, it does so predictably and either because of constraints given within the narrative context or for rhetorical effect. Far from being incoherent or simply an offering of each public sacrifice as Milgrom suggested, these four individual sacrifices combine into a single ritual act, a tabernacle purification ritual. The implementation of this purification ritual allows for the priestly cult to begin in its ideal pure state, and thus establish the baseline by which the maintenance of the Tabernacle can be measured. The identification of this sequence as a tabernacle purification ritual also enables a better understanding of the priestly worldview being constructed within the story and communicated through the narrative.

After the first *ḥattat* sacrifice, Aaron offers his ram as an *'olah*, then the *ḥattat* goat on behalf of the Israelites in the same way as first *ḥattat* sacrifice (כראשון). Aaron next performs the *'olah* sacrifice with the calf of the Israelites כמשפט, according to the regulation (9:16). In each of these cases, the procedure for offering the sacrifices is easily explained. In the case of each *olah* sacrifice, their offering conforms to the instructions given in Lev 1. In the case of the *hattat* for the whole Israelite community, it is offered in the same way as the first *hattat* for Aaron and his sons, precisely as we would expect according to the categories established in Lev 4. ]