



3. The compatibility of Christ's ascension in the Epistle to the Hebrews and the theology of pre-advent judgement: Part 2

La compatibilidad de la ascensión de Cristo en la epístola a los Hebreos y la teología del juicio preadvenimiento (2da parte)

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Abstract

This article examines the theological significance of Christ's ascension and His role as High Priest, particularly in relation to the heavenly sanctuary motif found in both the Old and New Testaments. It highlights the evidence for a heavenly sanctuary in the Old Testament and analyzes key passages from the Epistle to the Hebrews, specifically Hebrews 6,19 and 9,12, to determine whether Jesus entered the Most Holy Place or the Holy Place at His ascension. The study addresses historical context, literary structure, and themes within Hebrews, while exploring the implications of divine investigative judgment. By reconciling differing interpretations regarding Christ's ministry in the heavenly sanctuary, this article aims to clarify His intercessory role for humanity and enhance understanding of His ascension within the broader narrative of salvation history.

Keywords

Ascension — Heavenly sanctuary — Within the veil — Investigative judgment

Resumen

Este artículo examina el significado teológico de la ascensión de Cristo y su papel como Sumo Sacerdote, especialmente en relación con el motivo del Santuario celestial, que se encuentra tanto en el Antiguo como en el Nuevo Testamento. Destaca la evidencia de un santuario celestial en el Antiguo Testamento y analiza pasajes clave de la Epístola a los Hebreos, concretamente Hebreos 6,19 y 9,12, para determinar si Jesús entró en el Lugar



Santísimo o en el Lugar Santo en su ascensión. El estudio aborda el contexto histórico, la estructura literaria y las temáticas de Hebreos, mientras explora las implicaciones del juicio investigador divino. Al conciliar las distintas interpretaciones sobre el ministerio de Cristo en el Santuario celestial, este artículo pretende aclarar su función intercesora por la humanidad y mejorar la comprensión de su ascensión en el contexto más amplio de la narrativa de la historia de la salvación.

Palabras claves

Ascension — Santuario celestial — Dentro del velo — Juicio investigador

Introduction

In the light of Elias Brasil de Souza’s work about the heavenly sanctuary motif in the Old Testament, one can find strong evidence of the presence of heavenly sanctuary in that part of the Bible.¹ Subsequently, Leonardo N. Dunes had recently done a thorough study on the heavenly sanctuary motif in the New Testament as well.² Biblical pieces of evidence of divine investigation are quite recognizable from these studies.³ Thus, in light of the foregoing sophisticated studies done by Souza and Dunes, I would not go into detail about the biblical teaching of divine investigative judgment from the Old Testament and the New Testament. In addition to these, Jiří Moskala and Frank B. Holbrook have written an insightful study regarding the functions of Christ’s ascension and His heavenly ministries which explains the meaning of Christ’s intercessory ministry—sitting at the right hand of God” (Eph 1,20; 2,6; Col 2,12; 3,1; Heb 1,1-4; 8,1; 10,12; 12,2),” and his king-priest position (1 John 1,2; Heb 2,17-18) in the heavenly sanctuary.⁴

¹ Elias Brasil de Souza, “The heavenly sanctuary/temple motif in the Hebrew Bible: Function and relationship to the earthly counterparts” (PhD diss., Andrews University, 2005). For a few examples on the biblical evidences of the sanctuary in th OT, see Mic 1,2; Hab 2,20; 18,7; Exod 25,8.9.

² Leonardo N. Dunes, “Function and nature of the heavenly sanctuary/temple and its earthly counterparts in the New Testament Gospels, Acts, and the Epistles: A motif study of major passages” (PhD diss., Andrews University, 2020).

³ Gen 3,9-13.14-19; Ps 139,1-4; 147,5; 1 John 3,20; Isa 46,9-10; Dan 7,4-7.22.25; Matt 22,11; 1 Cor 4,5; Rom 2,5.7-8; 2 Thess 1,8-9; 1 Cor 4,9; Rev 14,6-12.

⁴ See Frank B Holbrook, “Christ’s inauguration as King Priest”, *Journal of Adventist Theological Society* 5, no 2 (1994): 136-152; and Jiří Moskala, “The meaning of the intercessory ministry of

From the aforementioned studies, one may easily agree that at His ascension, Jesus went to heaven and became a High priest on behalf of humanity. This truth is based on the Epistle to the Hebrews which claims that Jesus became a high priest for us as an advocate in the heavenly sanctuary.⁵ However, the problem remains as to which compartment of the heavenly sanctuary Jesus entered at His ascension. Did He enter the second compartment known as the Most Holy Place or the first compartment known as the Holy Place? Or, is the author of the Epistle referring to the whole sanctuary without making any specific mention of the compartments of the heavenly sanctuary?

Hebrews 6,19 seems to show that Jesus as a High priest entered within the veil, in which, the nuance concerning the veil occurs. The question arises: Does the expression “within the veil” refer to the Most Holy Place or the Holy Place? In Hebrew 9,12, τὰ ἅγια⁶ has been translated variously.⁷ Consequently, one will ask, whether τὰ ἅγια is the Most Holy Place or the Holy place. Or can there be another interpretation of τὰ ἅγια? Despite all the questions being asked, Christ's ministry in the heavenly sanctuary is understood by many to have commenced in the Most Holy Place in the year 1844 to begin the investigative judgment or the pre-advent judgment (Dan 7,9-13; 8,14; 9,25-27). Such an interpretation of the Book of Daniel seems to conflict with the idea presented by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews that Jesus went into the Most Holy Place

Jesus Christ on our behalf in the heavenly sanctuary”, *Journal of Adventist Theological Society* 28, no 1 (2017): 2-25.

⁵ Hebrews 3,1; 4,14; 7,25; 8,2; 9,24; 9,12; 10,12.

⁶ Τὰ ἅγια is the phrase used for sanctuary, Holy Place, Holy of Holies, Most Holy Place, etc., based on the version of the Bible. See Barbara Friberg, Timothy Friberg, and Kurt Aland, in *Analytical Greek New Testament: Greek text analysis* (Cedar Hill, TX: Silver Mountain Software, 2001), s. v. “Hebrews 9:12”.

⁷ *American King James Version, Emphasized Bible, King James 2000 version, New Heart English Bible: Aramaic Names New Testament Edition and World English Bible* translated the word as ‘the holy place; Darby Bible, Modern Literal Version, *Voice in the Wilderness 2008 Bible*, translated the word as ‘the holy of holies’; *English Majority Text version 2011 Edition, the Logos Bible, Modern King James Version, and Smith's Literal Translation* translated the word as the ‘Holies’; *New English Translation, Unlocked Literal Bible, New International Version and New King James Version* translated the word as ‘the Most Holy Place’; *Open English Bible* translated the word as ‘sanctuary’; and *Young Literal version* translated the word as ‘the holy places’.

soon after His ascension.⁸ However, if one accepts the unity and harmony of the Scriptures, both Old and New, then it may be profitable to examine the seemingly conflicting verses more to see if there is a harmony that has been overlooked.

This article attempts to find the true meaning of what the text says in Hebrews 6,19 and Hebrews 9,12, which deal with the entrance of Christ in the inner veil and into the *τὰ ἄγια* with His blood. It begins with an investigation of the context of the Epistle to the Hebrews, which covers the historical background, literary genre, and theme of the Hebrews' epistle. The analysis of Hebrews 6,19 will follow, with a focus on the meaning of the "veil", and conclude with the theological meaning of Revelation 6,19. The next sections follow the analysis of Revelation 9,12, in which the context of Revelation 8-10 is summarily studied. This is followed by an introduction dealing with inauguration theology, which in turn will analyze whether Christ's entrance into the sanctuary in Revelation 9 points to His inauguration in heaven or the antitypical Day of Atonement. The word *σικηνή* is used as a medium of interpretation, followed by inter-textual studies on the words, *τράγων* and *μόσχων* in Revelation 9,12.13, which concludes the meaning of the texts analyzed.

Contexts of the Epistle to the Hebrews

The main focus of the study is solely on the two texts mentioned above, knowing the intent of the author and the condition of the recipients is important, which is a help for the analysis of the chapters. Thus, the section provides the background for the exegesis of the texts. The section is divided into three parts: historical setting, literary structure, and theme of the epistle of Hebrews.

⁸ According to the interpretation of Daniel 8,14, Jesus entered the Most Holy Place only by 1844 and not in His ascension. See William Shea, "Supplementary evidence in support of 457 B.C. as a starting date for 2300 day-years of Daniel 8:14", *Journal of Adventist Theological Society* 12, no 1 (Spring, 2001): 89-96.

*Historical setting of the Epistle
to the Hebrews*

Since most of the existing manuscripts of this epistle bear the name Προς Εβραιους, “to the Hebrews”, Paul Ellingworth argues that the title most likely alludes to a Jewish audience.⁹ However, Matthew Black suggested that the local synagogue in ancient Rome and Corinth was known as the “Hebrews”. He adds that early church publications referred to first-century Jewish Christians as “Hebrews”.¹⁰ On the other hand, Gareth L. Cockerill points out that the epistle is entirely devoid of any sort of ethnic differentiation. He recognized that interpreters quickly cause misunderstanding when they use the word “Jewish Christian” in an ethnic context. Thus, according to Cockerill, the term “Jewish Christian” refers to all Christians, regardless of race, who have become accustomed to and remain drawn to Jewish religious rituals.¹¹ Thus, one could agree that the hearers of the epistle could possibly be both Jews and Gentiles who felt the need for various Jewish associations or practices. Henceforth, I will use the term “Jewish Christian” as referring to both Jewish and Gentiles alike.

The external evidence implies that Jewish Christians were confused about whether they would be detached from the rituals of the temple or not because they practiced this cultic act their whole lives. It seems that they did not recognize the fulfillment of the antitype concerning the sanctuary when Christ died and became a high priest for them in heaven (Matt 27,50-51). Although the council of Jerusalem in AD 49 clearly stated that there is no Jew nor Gentile regarding salvation (Acts 15,7-11), the council made a policy for the gentiles Christian and did not make a requirement for the practice of worship in the temple (Acts 15,13-21.28.29). However, the Jewish Christians were not

⁹ Paul Ellingworth, *The Epistle to the Hebrews: A commentary on the Greek text*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1993), 21-22.

¹⁰ Matthew Black, *The scrolls and Christian origins: Studies in the Jewish background of the New Testament* (New York, NY: Scribner, 1961), 78.

¹¹ Gareth L. Cockerill, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, NICNT (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2012), 66.

given any instruction concerning their ritualistic worship in the temple (Rom 14,5-6).¹² The internal evidence also shows that the Jewish Christians were weary in their faith, and as a result, they had less confidence in the return of their Lord. Thus, there was a danger of them turning back to Judaism.¹³ Apparently, in this condition, the author attempts to explain that there is hope, and concerning the sanctuary, the antitype has come.

Structure of the Epistle

According to Johnson, there are at least four points that can be drawn out concerning the structure of the Epistle. First, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, the High Priestly Christology is dominant. One may find only a few hints regarding Jesus as a high priest in the New Testament (for example, Rom 8,34, 1 John 2,2, and Rev 1, 4, and 5), but the entire argument of the Epistle centered on the priesthood of Christ.¹⁴ Second, the Epistle is comprised of terminology such as “tabernacles, sacrifices, priests, blood, and ablutions”.¹⁵ Thus, the theological argument of the Epistle is largely based on this cultic terminology. Third, Johnson points out that the author of Hebrews is systematic in preparing the Epistle, which means the author wrote it with a wise intent of changing a system. Fourth, in reading the Epistle, the climax of the argument is fully expressed in the central section of Hebrews 7,1-10,18.

For instance, the Levitical priesthood is completely fulfilled in Christ and He has become a better priest. Chapter 8 points out that the author has come to the main point of the argument, that Christ is a better high priest in the better sanctuary in heaven, with a better covenant. Another significant aspect of the Epistle to the Hebrews is the author’s dependence on the LXX version to quote the Old Testament. Thus, the author

¹² “Daniel and Revelation committee report”, in *Issues in the Book of Hebrews*, DARCOM, 7 vols. (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1989), 4:1.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 2.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 21.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 22.

seems to read the Old Testament in Greek.¹⁶ William Lane stated on this matter: “A virtual consensus has been reached that the writer read his Bible in Greek”.¹⁷ Thus, one must borrow the eye of the author when reading the text in the epistle to the Hebrews.

Homiletical nature of the Epistle

Analyzing the structure of the Epistle, Steve Stanley suggested that the literary genre is that of a homily.¹⁸ On the other hand, Manson argues that the Epistle is not a sermon due to its epistolary ending.¹⁹ Davis also concluded that the Epistle is best considered as a letter because it meets the needs of the recipients.²⁰ However, the majority of scholars find that it is homiletic in nature.²¹ The evidence for the argument of the homiletical nature is the phrase in 13,22, where the author considered his epistle “the word of exhortation” (τοῦ λόγου τῆς παρακλήσεως).

There is only one usage of the same phrase in the New Testament, which is Acts 13,15, where the passage explicitly portrays the speech or sermon in the synagogue.²² Hartwig Thyen also suggested that the Epistle of Hebrews is written in a genre of Jewish-Hellenistic homily. The homiletical pattern he discovered is the frequent change of “we”

¹⁶ Ellingworth, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, 37, comment on the subject, saying: “There is very general agreement that the author drew his quotations, not directly from a Hebrew text, but from the LXX [...]. There is no compelling evidence that the author had access to any Hebrew text”.

¹⁷ William L. Lane, *Hebrews 1-8*, WBC (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1991), cxviii.

¹⁸ Steve Stanley, “The structure of Hebrews from three perspectives,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 45, no 2 (1994): 247.

¹⁹ W. Manson, *The Epistle of Hebrews: An historical and theological reconsideration* (London, UK: Hodder and Stoughton, 1951), 3.

²⁰ J. H. Davies, *A Letter to Hebrews* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 2.

²¹ For Instance, R. Mc. L. Wilson, *Hebrews*, NCBC (Basingstoke, UK: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1987), 16-17; H. W. Attridge, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, Hermeneia (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1989), 13; F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, NICNT (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1991), 25-26.

²² J. Swetnam, “On the literary genre of the ‘Epistle’ to the Hebrews,” *Novum Testamentum*, no 11 (1969): 261. See also David Allan Black, “The problem of literary structure of Hebrews: An evaluation and a proposal,” *Grace Theological Journal* 7, no 2 (1986): 167.

to “you” and to “I”, and he added that the style of introducing the Old Testament witnesses as the evidence is homiletical.²³ David Aune also observed that Hebrews 11,32 is evidence for its homily, which says, “And what more shall I say, for time will fail me if I tell of... (NASB)”²⁴ Thus, it seems reasonable to consider that the Epistle to the Hebrews is written in the form of a homily, which is written to be read out loud before the congregation.²⁵

The theme of the Epistle

Another concern for the Epistle to the Hebrews is its theological theme. Merland Ray Miller supplied seven theological themes that are in the epistle: faith, perfection, promise, endurance, superiority, witness, and inheritance. He also pointed out that Hebrews 11,1-12,2 contains the themes of the Epistle in a compact form.²⁶ However, Johnsson provided a theme which is throughout the Epistle. He pointed out that the key word is “better”, under which he provided the following examples: “better name (1,4), better hope (7,19), better covenant (7,22), better promises (8,6), better sacrifices (9,23), a better country (11,16), a better resurrection (11,35), and a better blood (12,24)”²⁷

Thus, as one reads the Epistle to the Hebrews, one can know the intent of the author who attempts to provide “better” things for the Jewish Christians rather than the rituals and cultic practices which is the type that has met the antitype in Jesus. With these contexts in view, we will proceed to our study.

²³ Hartwig Thyen, *Der Stil Der Jüdisch-Hellenistischen Homilie*, FRLANT 47 (Göttingen, DE: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1955), 10-23; 43-50; 62-72, quoted in Stanley, “Structure of Hebrews,” 249-250.

²⁴ David Aune, *The New Testament in its literary environment* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster, 1987), 212-214.

²⁵ J. L Bailey and L.D. Vander Broek, *Literary forms in the New Testament* (London, UK: SPCK, 1992), 193.

²⁶ Merland Ray Miller, “Seven theological themes in Hebrews”, *Grace Theological Journal* 8, no 1 (1987): 131.

²⁷ William G. Johnson, “Hebrews: An overview”, in *Issues in the Book of Hebrews*, 28.

Καταπέτασμα in Hebrews 6,19

The NASB version of Hebrews 6,19-20 reads:

This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil [εἰς τὸ ἐσώτερον τοῦ καταπετάσματος], where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever according to the priest of Melchizedek.

In 1987, George Rice in his article concluded that the LXX word *καταπέτασμα* in Hebrews 6,19 could be referring to any of the three veils of the Israelite's sanctuary, either the inner veil that separated the Holy and the Most Holy Place (Exod 26,31.33-35), outer veil at the entrance of the Holy Place (Exod 26,37; 37,5), or the screen of the court (Exod 37,16).²⁸ After supplying the variety of meanings, Rice asserted that one should not rely on the general views of scholars, especially in their conclusions and assumptions on Hebrews 6,19 as the second veil.²⁹ Accordingly, he interprets the passages as a metaphor for Jesus entering into the

²⁸ George Rice, "Hebrews 6:19: Analysis of some assumptions concerning *Katapetasma*", *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 25 (1987): 65-71. The idea of *καταπέτασμα* as possibility to refer to inner and outer veil is well known. For example, see Attridge, *Epistle to the Hebrews*, 184; Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, 199; M. Dods, "The Epistle to the Hebrews", in *The Expositor's Greek Testament*, ed. by W. R. Nicoll, vol. 4 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1956), 305. C. Schneider, "Καταπέτασμα", in *Theological dictionary of the New Testament*, 10 vols., ed. by Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964), 3:629. Early Adventist scholars agreed the same; see William G. Johnsson, "Day of Atonement Allusion," in *Issues in the Book of Hebrews*, 105-120; P. Gerard Damsteegt, "Among Sabbatarian Adventists, 1845-1850", in *Doctrine of the sanctuary: A historical survey*, DARCOM, 7 vols. (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 1989), 5:17-54.

²⁹ For the scholars who concluded that the inner veil in Hebrews 6,19 is the Most Holy Place, see Attridge, *Hebrews*, 184; Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, 155, 250-251; B. F. Westcott, *The Epistle to the Hebrews: The Greek text with notes and essays*, 2nd ed. (London, UK: Macmillan, 1892), 163; G. W. Buchanan, *To the Hebrews: Translation, comment and conclusions*, AB (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1972), 116; Otto Michel, *Der Brief an Die Hebraer*, 12th ed. (Göttingen, DE: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1966), 253-54; H. Braun, *An Die Hebraer*, Handbuch Zum Neuen Testament 14 (Tübingen, DE: J. C. B. Mohr, 1984); P. Gordon and W. Horbury, "Better promises: Two passages in Hebrews against the background of the Old Testament cultus", in *Templum amicitiae: Essays on the temple presented to Ernst Bammel*, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 48 (Sheffield, UK: JSOT, 1991); Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 347; Simon J. Kistemaker, *New Testament commentary: Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1984), 176; Donald Alfred Hagner, *Hebrews*, NIBC (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1990), 98-99; Lane, *Hebrews 1-8*, WBC 47a, 154; Thomas G Long, *Hebrews* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2012), 78-80; Beverly Roberts Gaventa

heavenly sanctuary as a whole.³⁰ However, in 2000, Roy Gane re-studied the passage and brought a new conclusion in the light of exegetical analysis,³¹ which, Norman Young expanded in 2001, to affirm that *καταπέτασμα* refers only to the inner veil.³² With these comments as background, we will provide an exegetical analysis of the phrase “within the veil”.

*Summary of Gane’s exegetical note
on “within the veil” in Hebrews 6,19*

The phrase ἐσώτερον τοῦ καταπέτασματος, “within the veil”, occurs four times (Exod 26,33; Lev 16,2.12.15) in the LXX, and for each occurrence, the meaning is the same.³³ Gane observes that each occurrence of the Greek phrase ἐσώτερον τοῦ καταπέτασματος renders the Hebrew phrase לַפְרֶכֶת מִבֵּית לְפָרֶכֶת which refers to the inner veil of the sanctuary. He sees that the LXX word *καταπέτασμα* can point to various veils, however, the rendered Hebrew word פְּרֶכֶת clearly refers to the inner veil.³⁴ One exception that Gane observes was the usage of the Hebrew חֹסֶף translated as a screen or veil at the entrance of the tabernacle (Exod 26,37-38; 38,18),³⁵ however, the word פְּרֶכֶת in relation to the word חֹסֶף specifically served as the screen that separates the Most Holy Place and the Holy Place. For example, the Masoretic Text provided that the phrase

and David L. Petersen, eds., *The New Interpreter’s Bible* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2010), 12:81-82.

³⁰ Rice, “Hebrews 6:19”, 70-71; George E. Rice, “Within which veil?,” *Ministry*, June 1987, 20-21. For the scholars who have the same idea about the metaphorical notion of the inner veil in Heb 6,19 as a figurative for heavens as a whole, see Marvin Richardson Vincent, *Word studies in the New Testament* (Charleston, SC: Nabu Press, 2010), 453; Long, *Hebrews*, 78-79; Kistemaker, *New Testament commentary*, 176; Walter Bauer, William F. Arndt, Felix W. Gingrich, and Frederick W. Danker, *Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press, 2000), 416.

³¹ Roy E. Gane, “Re-opening *Katapetasma* ‘(veil)’ in Hebrews 6:19”, *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 38 (2000): 5-8.

³² Norman H. Young, “‘Where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf’ (Hebrews 6:19)”, *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 39, no 2 (2001): 165-173.

³³ Gane, “*Katapetasma*,” 6; Ballenger, *Cast out*, 28.

³⁴ Gane, “*Katapetasma*,” 6.

³⁵ Ballenger and Bruce notice these differences in terminology; see Ballenger, *Cast out*, 20-27; and Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, 199.

הַמָּסָךְ הַפְּרֻכֶּת refers to the inner veil (Exod 35,12; 39,34; 40,21; Num 4,5), thus, according to Gane, פְּרֻכֶּת almost always refers to the inner veil within the category of מָסָךְ which is in accordance with the etymology of the Sumerian word *bara*, that is a loan-word from Akkadian word *paraku*, which means “cultic base/ pedestal, high seat; shrine/ apartment (of deity)”.³⁶

Gane also pointed out that there are various spatial terminologies concerning the veil, in which one can recognize the differences between the terms. For example, for the location of the ark of the covenant, the Hebrew phrase uses מִבֵּית לְפָרְכֶת “within the veil,” which in the LXX is translated as ἐσώτερον τοῦ καταπετάσματος (Exod 26,33), whereas, for the location of the lampstand and the table, the Masoretic Text rendered מִחוּץ לְפָרְכֶת which means “outside the veil”, and the LXX translated as ἔξωθεν τοῦ καταπετάσματος (Exod 26,35; 27,21). Another usage of a spatial term is לְפָנֵי הַפְּרֻכֶּת which means “before the veil,” and the LXX translates as ἀπέναντι τοῦ καταπετάσματος (Exod 30,6).³⁷ Thus, Gane concluded that the phrase בֵּית לְפָרְכֶת (LXX, ἐσώτερον τοῦ καταπετάσματος) is reserved only for the inner veil in contrast to the other spatial term such as “outside the veil” and “before the veil”.³⁸

Grammatical significance of τὸ ἐσώτερον

Rice, in his article “Hebrews 6:19: Analysis of some assumptions concerning *Katapetasma*”, asserted that ἐσώτερον is merely a positive adjectival degree, which means that it must be simply translated as “within”

³⁶ Roy E. Gane and J. Milgrom, “פְּרֻכֶּת”, in *Theological dictionary of the Old Testament*, ed. by G. Johannes Botterweck, Helmer Ringgren, and Heinz-Josef Fabry, trans. by Douglas W. Stott, vol. 12 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003), 95-97. *The Sumerian dictionary of the University Museum of the University of Pennsylvania*, ed. by Sjoberg (Philadelphia, PA: Babylonian Section of the University Museum, 1984), 2:134-143.

³⁷ Gane and Milgrom, TDOT, 96.

³⁸ Gane, “*Katapetasma*”, 8. Young, “Where Jesus has gone”, 167, also affirmed that the word פְּרֻכֶּת rendered for the phrase “inner veil” in MT for twenty-five times (Exod 26,31.33.35; 27,21; 30,6; 35,12; 36,35; 38,27; 39,34; 40,3.21.22.26; Lev 4,6.17; 16,2.12.15; 21,33; Num 4,5; 18,7; 2 Chr 3,14), in which, twenty two of these passages rendered καταπετάσμα in LXX.

and indicates the outer veil of the sanctuary implicitly. However, Young argued with this conclusion by asserting that ἐσώτερον is a comparative adjective, and if it were to be translated as a positive adjective, the word ἐσώ would be used.³⁹ Thus, comparing the usage of ἐσώτερον in the other texts, it is impossible to restrict the translation of ἐσώτερον to a positive adjectival degree.⁴⁰ The NRSV seems to translate Acts 16,24 in the right manner: “Following these instructions, he put them in *the innermost cell* and fastened their feet in the stocks”, rendering τὴν ἐσωτέραν φυλακὴν. Young also pointed out that Hellenistic Greek would usually consider the comparative adjective with an article as a superlative degree, as in the case of Hebrews 6,19.⁴¹ One must also note that the phrase ἐσώτερον τοῦ καταπετάσματος occurs only five times in the Greek Bible, one in the New Testament (Heb 6,19) and four in the LXX (Exod 26,33; Lev 16,2.12.15). All four occurrences in the LXX refer to the Most Holy Place. Therefore, the meaning of “within the veil” in Hebrews 6,19 unequivocally denotes the veil separating the Most Holy Place and the Holy Place.

In light of this conclusion, Young strongly suggested that the context of Hebrews 6,19 is the Day of Atonement setting. He pointed out that there is only one place in the Old Testament that described the high priest going into the veil (Lev 16), and it is all related to the Day of Atonement. He disregards Exodus 26,33 because it dealt with the command of God to Moses to set up the tabernacle, which, according to him, is not a “cultic service”.⁴² Another argument he brought out for the case of supplying

³⁹ Young, “Where Jesus has gone”, 168. Cf. George E. Rice, “Hebrews 6:19: Analysis of some assumptions concerning *Katapetasma*”, in *Issues in the Book of Hebrews*, 232-233.

⁴⁰ For Example, in 1 Samuel 24,4, David and his men sit in the innermost part of the cave (ἐσώτερον τοῦ σπηλαίου), 2 Chr 4,22 uses the word as to describe the inner door of the Most Holy Place (ἡ θύρα τοῦ οἴκου ἢ ἐσωτέρα εἰς τὰ ἔθνη τῶν ἁγίων), likewise the word ἐσώτερον is almost always employed as the inner part of the court (Esth 4,11; Ezek 44,27; 45,19; 46,1; 1 Macc 9,54; 2 Chr 23,20). See Horn, *SABD*, s. v. “temple”, 1098.

⁴¹ Young, “Where Jesus has gone”, 169. For the grammar, see Archibald T Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the light of historical research* (London, UK: Hodder and Stoughton, 1919), 667-668; Friedrich W. Blass, Albert Debrunner, and Robert W. Funk, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and other early Christian literature* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1961), 32-33.

⁴² Young, “Where Jesus has gone”, 171.

the evidence for the Day of Atonement setting in Hebrews 6,19 is the aorist tense employed in the passage. For example, “having become a high priest” (ἀρχιερέως γενόμενος) has an aorist tense which denotes something that happened only once in the past. It is similar in the case of the phrase, “Jesus entered” (εἰσῆλθεν Ἰησοῦς), thus, Young argues that the event of Jesus in his entering within the veil is not repetitive.⁴³

In 1981, Rice wrote a scholarly article presenting the chiasmic parallel of Hebrews 6,19-20 and 10,19-20, showing that the veil referred to in Hebrews 6,19 must be similar to the veil in Hebrews 10,20.⁴⁴ Thus, he concluded that the veil could also refer to outer veil as the language preference in Hebrews 10,20 implies. However, Young rejected this conclusion by pointing to the context of Hebrews 10,20, asserting that the background is the Day of Atonement setting which is solely relative to the Aaronic priesthood and the entrance to the inner veil. In addition, he asserted that any first-century Jew would support his argument concerning the usage of Day of Atonement as the background of Hebrews 6,19.⁴⁵ Due to Young's conclusion on Hebrews 6,19 as the accomplishment of Day of Atonement, Richard M. Davidson proposed an alternate interpretation regarding this subject.

Hebrews 6,19 in the context of Old Testament typology

Davidson pointed out that Hebrews 6,19 uses the Old Testament references, as in the case of “the coming priest after the order of Melchizedek (Ps 110,4) and not after the order of Aaronic priesthood.”⁴⁶ Moreover,

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ Young, “Where Jesus has gone”, 172. For the reference to chiasmic parallel of Hebrews 6,19 and 10,20, see George E. Rice, “The chiasmic structure of the central section of the Epistle to the Hebrews”, *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 19, no 3 (1981): 243-246.

⁴⁵ For the articles by Young on attempting to provide evidence that the Day of Atonement as the background of Hebrews 6,19, see Norman H. Young, “ΤΟΥΤ' ΕΣΤΙΝ ΤΗΣ ΣΑΡΚΟΣ ΑΥΤΟΥ”, Heb X. 20: Apposition, dependent and explicative?, *New Testament Studies* 20 (1974): 100-104; Norman H. Young, “The Gospel according to Hebrews 9”, *New Testament Studies* 27 (1981): 198-210.

⁴⁶ Richard M. Davidson, “Christ's entry ‘within the veil’ in Hebrews 6:19-20: The Old Testament background”, *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 39, no 2 (Autumn 2001): 176.

he found that Numbers 18,7 has a similar usage of the phrase “within the veil” with Hebrews 6,19.20, subsequently, he disclosed that Numbers 18,7 may not merely refer to the second veil, because the passage seems to connect both Aaron and his sons to the work of the priesthood “within the veil”. As a result, the phrase “within the veil” in Numbers 18,7 could possibly indicate both the veils at the first entrance and the second. Thus, the question regarding the meaning of the phrase “within the veil” remains somewhat ambiguous to Davidson, although he acknowledges that a good case can be made for it referring only to the inner veil.⁴⁷

The order of Melchizedek as the background of Hebrews 6,19

Davidson points out that Melchizedek is a king-priest who can encompass both Old Testament characters, Moses the ruler, and Aaron the priest. Accordingly, Jesus as the antitypical priest according to the order of Melchizedek required fulfilling the roles of Moses and Aaron together. Accordingly, the author of Hebrews draws a parallel between the faithfulness of Moses and Jesus in the house of God (Heb 3,1-6), which is expounded again in Hebrews 10,20 where the “High priest over the house of God” is the subject dealt with. Hebrews 9 also had the same motif where Moses was compared to Jesus in terms of priesthood (Heb 9,16-24). Thus, as Jesus is the priest “according to the order of Melchizedek” in Hebrews 6,19, one cannot merely apply to the Aaronic priest.⁴⁸ Consequently, the Day of Atonement with its Aaronic priesthood may not be the most favorable background of Hebrews 6,19.

Davidson supplied another possible background apart from the Day of Atonement motif in Leviticus 16 which Young had strongly introduced.⁴⁹ Davidson exposed the only occurrence in the Old Testament where one enters the Most Holy Place apart from the Day of Atonement, which is when Moses inaugurated the sanctuary. Moses did the priestly

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 175.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 177.

⁴⁹ Young, “Where Jesus has gone”, 171-172.

work of anointing before Aaron was a priest (Exod 40,1-9; Lev 8,10-12; Num 7,1). Hence, one can conclude that Moses did the king-priest ministry at this time of inauguration which is analogous to the dedication of the sanctuary during the reign of Solomon (2 Chro 6,12-43; 7,5). Exodus 26,33 also points to the event when the ark was brought to the Most Holy Place “within the veil,” at the time when the inauguration of the sanctuary was carried out (Exod 40,3.9). In explaining the aorist participle of Hebrews 6,19, Davidson plainly stated that the aorist participle would indicate that Jesus inaugurated the sanctuary once in the past and at that time became a high priest.⁵⁰

The chiasmic parallels as medium of interpretation

The presence of chiasmic parallels in Hebrews 6,19-20 and Hebrews 10,19-20 was early identified by Albert Vanhoye.⁵¹ William Shea also identified these parallels in the epistle and produced a more detailed chiasmic structure.⁵² Subsequently, Davidson expanded the work of William Shea with a minor change in the chiasm as illustrated below:

Chiasmic structure of Hebrews 6, 19-20 to 10, 19-20

- A. The veil – 6,19-20
- B. The priesthood – 7,1-25
- C. The sacrifice – 7,26-28
- D. The sanctuary – 8,1-5
- E. The covenant – 8,6-13
- F. The sanctuary – 9,1-10

⁵⁰ Davidson, “Christ’s entry ‘within the veil’”, 177.

⁵¹ Albert Vanhoye, *Structure and message of the Epistle to the Hebrews*, Subsidia Biblica 12 (Rome, IT: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1989), 40a-40-b. See also Albert Vanhoye, *La Structure Littéraire de l’Épître Aux Hébreux*, 2nd ed. (Bruges, BE: De Brouwer, 1976), 228/29.

⁵² William Shea, “Literary and architectural structures in the sanctuary section of Hebrews (6:19-20 to 10:19-20)”, (unpublished paper), n. d., 2.

F'. The sanctuary – 9,11-14

E'. The covenant – 9,15-22

D'. The sanctuary – 9,23-28

C'. The sacrifice – 10,1-10

B'. The priesthood – 10,11-18

A'. The veil – 10,19-20⁵³

Concerning members A and A' above, one may notice that they constitute the two parallels regarding the “veil” (6,19-20 and 10,19-20). Davidson affirmed the conclusion of Vanhoye in analyzing these passages regarding “the veil” because Vanhoye suggested that A' is the reiteration of the same point into more explicit exposition.⁵⁴

Utilizing the argument of Vanhoye, Davidson disclosed that the parallels are not merely applied to “the veil” but also to the overall background of the event. Thus, just as the LXX is significant for the interpretation of Hebrews 6,19, he maintained that the same equity concerning the usage of LXX as a background must also be applied to Hebrews 10,19-20.⁵⁵ Accordingly, he asserted that although Hebrews 6,19 in itself does not provide a clear understanding of the meaning of the passage, Hebrews 10,19-20 is the key to interpreting Hebrews 6,19-20.⁵⁶

Grammatical significance of ἐνεκαίνισεν in Hebrews 10,20

The NASB version reads “by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh (Heb 10,20). The term “inaugurated” in the passage is ἐνεκαίνισεν as the LXX rendered, which means “to bring about the beginning of something, with the implication

⁵³ Davidson, “Christ’s entry ‘within the veil’”, 178.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.* Vanhoye, *La structure*, 228-229. See also George Guthrie, *The structure of Hebrews: A text linguistic analysis*, NovTSup 73 (Leiden, NL: E. J. Brill, 1994), 99-100.

⁵⁵ Davidson, “Christ’s entry ‘within the veil’”, 179.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

that it is newly established, to ratify, inaugurate, dedicate”.⁵⁷ The LXX mostly used nominal derivatives as a cultic term for the inauguration of the temple.⁵⁸ In the Pentateucal passages of the LXX, there are only four occurrences of the root word which deals with the sanctuary cultus, all these words are from Numbers 7, and all of them are in the context of the inauguration of the sanctuary.

The noun *ἐγκαίνισμός* is found in Numbers 7,10.11.84, and the other noun *ἐγκαίνωσις* occurs in Numbers 7,88. Davidson points out that all this inauguration is done in the context of Numbers 7,1, which describes Moses as the one who inaugurates the sanctuary.⁵⁹ Some scholars have recognized this conclusion but have not drawn out the implications.⁶⁰ Thus, Davidson suggested that the author intentionally used the cultic term inauguration instead of using the common Greek term “open”. In addition, the translation of *ἐνεκαίνισεν* as “inaugurated” is compatible with the only other occurrence of the word that is found in Hebrews 9,18, which unequivocally denotes the cultic meaning of “inauguration/dedication”.⁶¹

Concerning the entering motif in Hebrews 6,19.20 and 10,19.20, the literary parallels can be illustrated in table 1:

⁵⁷ Bauer, Arndt, Gingrich, and Danker, *Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament*, s. v. “ἐγκαίνιζω”.

⁵⁸ For example, 1 Kgs 8,63 and 2 Chr 7,5 described about the dedication of Solomon's temple, in which the verb *ἐνεκαίνισεν* is employed, 2 Chr 15,8 also dealt with the rededication of the temple after they had defiled. This passage uses the same verb. In Ezra 6,16.17, the noun form *ἐγκαίνια* is employed when there was a rededication of the temple in the postexilic period.

⁵⁹ Davidson, “Christ's entry ‘within the veil’”, 179.

⁶⁰ For Example, Erich Grasser, *An Die Hebraer*, Evangelisch-Katholischer Kommentar Zum Neuen Testament (Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1997), 14-15; and Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 518; N. A Dahl, “A new and living way: The approach to God according to Hebrews 10:19-25”, *Int* (1951): 401-92.

⁶¹ Davidson, “Christ's entry ‘within the veil’”, 180. See also, Dahl, “A new and living way”, 405.

Table 1. Literary parallels in Hebrews 6,19-20 and 10,19-20

6,19-20	10,19-20
<p>This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and one which <i>enters</i> within the veil, where Jesus has <i>entered</i> as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.</p> <p>V. 19, εἰσερχομένην (go in, enter), present participle of εἰσέρχομαι</p> <p>V. 20, εἰσῆλθεν (go in, enter), an aorist form of εἰσέρχομαι</p>	<p>Since therefore, brethren, we have the confidence to <i>enter</i> the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He <i>inaugurated</i> for us through the veil, that is, His flesh.</p> <p>V. 19, εἴσοδον (entrance, access), non-temporal noun of εἴσοδος</p> <p>V. 20, ἐνεκαίνισεν (to inaugurate) aorist form of ἐγκαίνιζω</p>

In the table above, Hebrews 6,19 uses the common root word for “entering,” *εἰσέρχομαι*,⁶² and Hebrews 10,19 employs *εἴσοδος* which is more of the nature of entrance, it means, “acceptance, entrance, access”.⁶³ Both verses in Hebrews 6,19 and 10,19 describe the access that is bestowed upon humanity. Subsequently, Hebrews 6,20 employed the aorist form of *εἰσέρχομαι*, which is a common usage word of “enter” again, however, the aorist tense indicates its completeness and unrepentive nature. Hebrews 10,20 deals with the nature of entrance again, using the aorist form of *ἐγκαίνιζω*, which means “to bring about the beginning of something, with an implication that it is newly established, *ratify, inaugurate*”.⁶⁴ Both verses in Hebrews 6,20 and 10,20 elaborate on the nature of Christ’s entrance to the heavenly sanctuary for the inauguration, at a specific point in time (as an aorist form of the word would indicate). Therefore, the various parallels inform that believers have ongoing access to the heavenly sanctuary because Christ had entered and opened/inaugurated access for humanity.

⁶² Bauer, Arndt, Gingrich, and Danker, *Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament*, s. v. “εἰσέρχομαι”.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, s. v. “εἴσοδος”.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, s. v. “ἐγκαίνιζω”.

Theological implications of Hebrews 6,19.20

Since Hebrews 6,19.20 is not adequate in itself to give the background event of the passage, the cultic parallel in Hebrews 10,19.20 can help elaborate the theology of the author. The context of Hebrews 10,19.20 primarily points to the inauguration of the new covenant. For instance, Hebrews 10,1-10 describes the establishment of the new system through the sacrificial body of Christ and the abolishment of the earthly sacrificial system (vv. 9, 10), the passage continued with Jesus as being sitting at the right hand of God (the author is quoting Ps 110) in verse 12, and verse 16 describe the establishment of the new covenant (*cf.* Jer 31,33.34), followed by his dedication of the new covenant, “new living way”, in the sanctuary in verse 20 (*cf.* Heb 9,18). Davidson observes the background and points out the chronological terminology, namely “sacrificial system, covenant, high priesthood, and sanctuary”.⁶⁵

According to the context, the focus of the chapter is more on the inauguration of the sanctuary. Thus, in the light of Hebrews 10,19-20 as a context, Hebrews 6,19-20 implies that Jesus entered within the veil to inaugurate the sanctuary and open access for the believers. Jesus as the high priest became the forerunner⁶⁶ for humanity, thus inviting the believers to boldly enter the heavenly sanctuary through the merit of Christ.

Tὰ ἅγια in Hebrews 9,12

The NASB reads “and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His blood, He entered the Holy Place (τὰ ἅγια) once for all, having obtained eternal redemption (Heb 9,12). The word τὰ ἅγια in regard to Christ’s ascension plays an important role in defining the geographical location and the nature of Christ entry to heaven and the sanctuary in particular. Thus it calls for a careful study of the inter-textual usage of

⁶⁵ Davidson, “Christ’s entry ‘within the veil’”, 181.

⁶⁶ Felix Cortez rightly points out that the word “forerunner” has the same function to the word ἀρχηγὸν in Heb 2,10, meaning “pioneer”, and ἀπόστολος in Heb 3,1, meaning “one who is sent”. Thus, according to him, Jesus is the forerunner as a pioneer from humanity who leads “many children to glory”. See Cortez, “Letter to the Hebrews,” 301, n. 1.

the term in the LXX and the New Testament. A study of the context of the chapter also provides the theological implication of the text. This section will attempt to assess the proper meaning of τὰ ἅγια in Hebrews, particularly in 9,12.

*Translation variants of τὰ ἅγια
in Hebrews 9,12*

The word ἅγιος denotes something *dedicated to God, holy, sacred* in a cultic sense.⁶⁷ The opposite word is κοινός, which means *not consecrated, common*.⁶⁸ The phrase τὰ ἅγια and its variants occur only ten times in the New Testament and all of them are in the Epistle to the Hebrews.⁶⁹ Moreover, table 2 reveals the variety in translation:

Table 2. Various translation of τὰ ἅγια in the Epistle to the Hebrews

Τὰ ἅγια	Different kinds of Bible versions		
Holy Place	KJV	ASV	ERV
Holy Places	YLT	–	–
Sanctuary	JUBT	Goodspeed	NEB
Holy of Holies	DBY	Wuest's expanded translation of New Testament	PNT
Most Holy Place	NIV	NLT	ISV

⁶⁷ Bauer, Arndt, Gingrich, and Danker, *Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament*, s.v. “ἅγιος”. ἅγιος occurs 230 times and distributed all over the NT except from Galatians, James and 2,3 John. It occurs 20 times in Luke, 53 times in Acts, 20 times in Romans, 18 in Hebrews. See Robert H. Balz, “ἅγιος”, in *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 3 vols., ed. by Robert H. Balz and Gerhard Schneider (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990-1993), 1:16.

⁶⁸ Timothy Friberg, Barbara Friberg, and Neva F. Miller, *Analytical lexicon of the Greek New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 2000), 32.

⁶⁹ Hebrews 8,2; 9,1.2.3.8.12.24.25; 10,19; 13,11. A. P. Salom in his article clearly portraits that different sort of translations had been done by different scholars. See A. P. Salom, “Ta Hagia in the Epistle to the Hebrews,” *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 5, no 1 (1967): 59-70.

The table identifies that there is a vast array of variants in the translation of the word τὰ ἅγια into English. For instance, while Jubilee, Goodspeed, and New English Bible translate as “sanctuary”, Darby, Wuest, and Phillips New Testament translate as “Holy of Holies”. The common usage of translation for today could be NIV, NLT, and ISV which rendered the phrase, “Most Holy Place” .

Τὰ ἅγια in LXX and its usage

The survey on the usage of τὰ ἅγια and their meanings in the LXX is a crucial step to understanding the concept of τὰ ἅγια because the author of Hebrews seems to rely heavily on the LXX as a primary source.⁷⁰ Salom, in his survey on the usage of τὰ ἅγια and its variants across the LXX, found that 170 uses of the phrase and its variants are related to the “tabernacle or temple”, out of which 142 refers to the sanctuary in general. He noticed that τὰ ἅγια usually occurs randomly in a form of plural or singular, in which the plural is about twice more frequent than the singular. He also recognized that the singular form of the phrase is merely employed for specifying the outer and inner parts of the sanctuary as spatial terms. He added that there are only four exceptions without a singular, and these exceptions are with the article.⁷¹ Among the 98 expressions that denote sanctuary as a general in the LXX, Salom pointed out that 36 of them had the same Hebrew expression שְׂדֵדָה which has the expression of sanctuary in general. The remaining 62 are translated from

⁷⁰ For scholars who concluded that the author of Hebrews rely on the LXX as a primary source, see Westcott, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, 469-480; R. A. Steward, “The Old Testament usage in Philo, rabbinic writings, and Hebrews” (M. Litt. Thesis, University of Cambridge, 1947); F. C. Syngé, *Hebrews, and the Scriptures* (London, UK: SPCK, 1959); Kenneth J. Thomas, “The Old Testament citations in Hebrews”, *New Testament Studies* 11 (1965): 303-325; Kenneth J. Thomas, *Use of the Septuagint in the EH* (Manchester, UK: University of Manchester, 1959); Susan E. Docherty, *The use of the Old Testament in Hebrews: A case study in Early Jewish Bible interpretation* (Tubingen, DE: Mohr Siebeck, 2009); Markus Barth, “The Old Testament in Hebrews”, in *Current Issues in NT Interpretation*, ed. by W. Klassen and G. F. Snyder (New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1962), 53; George Howard, “Hebrews and the Old Testament Quotations”, *Novum Testamentum* 10 (1968): 208-216; Gert J. Stein, *A quest for the assumed LXX Vorlage of the explicit quotations in Hebrews* (Göttingen, DE: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011).

⁷¹ Salom, “Ta Hagia in the Epistle to the Hebrews”, 60; For discussion on the plural form of τὰ ἅγια, see Blass, Debrunner, and Funk, *A Greek grammar of the New Testament*, 78.

שֹׁהַבֵּית which is similar to ἅγιος.⁷² Thus, most of the usage suggested that the phrase and its variants are employed to define the sanctuary as a whole. Salom organize a table that may be easier to understand (see table 3).

Table 3. The use of τὰ ἅγια in the LXX⁷³

	Sanctuary	Outer compartment	Inner compartment
Total number of uses	142	19	9
Singular	45	13	8
Plural	97	6	1
Articular	138	19	9
Anarthrous	4	-	-

According to the table above, the expression of τὰ ἅγια as a sanctuary, in general, is 142 which outnumbered the other expressions such as 19 for the outer compartment and 9 for the inner compartment. Thus, τὰ ἅγια is regularly an expression referring to the whole sanctuary in LXX. Salom also argued that τὰ ἅγια in Hebrews, chapter 9 in particular, must be connected with the seven uses of the phrase in Leviticus 16, because in his view, Hebrews 9 has an allusion to the Day of Atonement setting. However, in relating this, he acknowledged that Leviticus 16 uses the singular form for the inner sanctuary, while the Hebrews expression uses the plural form with one exception. Thus, he argued that if the author borrows the words from Leviticus 16, the author must surely employ the singular form. He concluded that the author is influenced by “the general tendency of the LXX”, which relates τὰ ἅγια predominantly to the sanctuary as a whole bipartite structure.⁷⁴

⁷² Salom, “Ta Hagia in the Epistle to the Hebrews”, 62.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 59-70.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.* Salom clearly supplied that there are specific terms used for the inner compartment of the sanctuary in the LXX, for example, the phrase τῶ ἁγίῳ τῶν ἁγίων in Exodus 26,34 is used only for the inner sanctuary, out of which four of them are (plural/plural) and the remaining seven

Usage of ἅγιος and its variants outside the Bible

Surveying the usage of ἅγιος outside the Bible is another crucial step for understanding the meaning of τὰ ἅγια since τὰ ἅγια is the plural articular form of ἅγιος. Carl P. Cosaert published an article on this subject, built on his MA thesis; supplying evidence that τὰ ἅγια in the Jewish contemporary world refers to the sanctuary as a whole.⁷⁵ Based on Cosaert's work, a survey on the usage of τὰ ἅγια in the Old Testament pseudepigrapha, the works of Philo and Josephus will be done.

Usage of ἅγιος in the Old Testament pseudepigrapha

The survey on the usage of ἅγιος in the Old Testament pseudepigrapha is significant since it is the Jewish literature in the contemporary time of the LXX translation and covers between 200 BCE to 200 CE.⁷⁶ Thus, it defines the perspective of the Jews during this duration of time. There are four books among the Old Testament pseudepigrapha where ἅγιος occur 11 times in relation to the sanctuary.⁷⁷ A brief survey concerning the occurrence of ἅγιος and the variants will be done on these books such as *Sibylline oracles*, *Testament of Levi* and *Testament of Asher*, and *Psalms of Solomon*.

ἅγιος and its variants in *Sibylline oracles*

In the book *Sibylline oracles*, there is only one reference to ἅγιος which refers to the sanctuary in heaven. The story narrates that Babylon will

are (singular/plural). For the biblical references see, 1 Kgs 6,16; 7,36; 8,6; 1 Chr 6,49; 2 Chr 3,8.10; 4,22; 5,7; Ezek 41,4; Dan 9,24; Lev 16,33; Num 18,10. This clearly shows that LXX uses different terms for inner sanctuary.

⁷⁵ Carl P. Cosaert, "The use of ἅγιος for the sanctuary in the Old Testament pseudepigrapha, Philo and Josephus", *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 42, no 1 (2004): 91-103. See also, Carl P. Cosaert, "A study of *Ta Hagia* in the LXX, pseudepigrapha, Philo, and Josephus, and its implications in Hebrews" (M.A. thesis, Nazarene Theological Seminary, 2000).

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 92.

⁷⁷ *Sibylline oracles* 3,308; *Testament of Asher* 7,2; *Testament of Levi* 8,17; 9,9.11; 18,2b.18.19.53; *Psalms of Solomon* 1,8; 2,13; 8,11.

receive judgment from heaven.⁷⁸ J. J. Collins translated this as “the holy ones”,⁷⁹ but Cosaert argues that the context is more likely implying the heavenly sanctuary because the judgment normally comes from the heavenly sanctuary.⁸⁰

Ἅγιος and its variants in the Testament of Levi and Asher

Another book in relation to the usage of ἅγιος in the Old Testament pseudepigraphy is *The testaments of the twelve patriarchs*. This book seems to be closer to the Jewish community than LXX itself during the time it was composed.⁸¹ Among the twelve patriarchs, *The testament of Levi* and *The Testament of Asher* contain the variants of ἅγιος. It occurs four times with a plural form (*T. Levi* 18,2b.18.19.53), once with a singular form in *Levi* (*T. Levi* 8,17) and occurs once in *Asher* (*T. Ash* 7,2).

The one occurrence in the singular in *Testament of Levi* describes the vision given to Levi concerning their responsibilities for Hebrew cultus. It reads: “From among them will be high priests, judges, and scribes, and by their word, the (τὸ ἅγιον) sanctuary will be administered” (*T. Levi* 8,17). Baruch Levine commented on this the passage saying that it is an allusion to Numbers 3,38 (LXX) in which Moses and Aaron were given the responsibility of the sanctuary (which is expressed as a sanctuary in general).⁸² The plural form expression is found in *T. Levi* 9,9 and 11 where Isaac warned Levi to beware of fornication which will defile the sanctuary (τὰ ἅγια) in the future. Isaac told Levi to marry a virgin and

⁷⁸ *Sibylline oracles* 3,308.

⁷⁹ J. J. Collins, “Sibylline oracles: A new translation and introductions”, in *Old Testament pseudepigrapha*, ed. by J. H. Charlesworth, 2 vols. (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1983), 1:369.

⁸⁰ Cosaert, “The use of ἅγιος for the sanctuary”, 93. For the concept of judgment that comes from heavenly sanctuary, he supplies reference such as Isa 26,21, Jer 25,30.32; and Ps 20,2; 19,3; which are taken from the LXX version.

⁸¹ H. C. Kee, “Testaments of the twelve patriarchs: A new translation and introduction”, in *Old Testament pseudepigrapha*, 777-78.

⁸² Baruch A. Levine, *Numbers 1-20: A new translation with introduction and commentary*, AB 4 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1993), 161.

bathe before entering the τὰ ἅγια. Thus, the plural form refers to the sanctuary in general.

Ἅγιος and its variants in *The psalms of Solomon*

The last book for this section that contains a variant of ἅγιος is *The psalms of Solomon*, the collection of 18 psalms that the Jews composed in their response to the Romans when Pompey captured Jerusalem in 63 BCE.⁸³ The plural form of ἅγιος is employed three times regarding the sanctuary in this book (*Pss. Sol* 1,8; 2,3; 8,11). *Pss. Sol* 1,8 refers to the wickedness of Romans in profaning the τὰ ἅγια. *Pss. Sol* 2,3 also refers to God's judgment of the "sons of Jerusalem" through the actions of the Romans and Pompey in particular, because the people of God had desecrated the τὰ ἅγια.

With the examples of references being given, τὰ ἅγια is most likely referred to as the sanctuary in general. Additionally, in *T. Levi* 3,4, the author employed the phrase ἀγίω ἀγίων which is used for the inner part of the sanctuary in the LXX (Exod 26,34), which implies that the author uses this phrase to describe the inner sanctuary.⁸⁴

Usage of ἅγιος in the works of Philo

Cosaert pointed out that Philo employed several terms for sanctuary such as ναὸς, ἱερὸν, σκηνὴ, ἁγίασμα,⁸⁵ however, the survey will merely cover the usage of ἅγιος in a plural and singular form. The singular form of ἅγιος has only two occurrences in *Legum Allegorice*.⁸⁶ Although Philo quotes "the Holy Place" from Exodus 28,30, he used the verse to clarify his allegorical explanation. Thus, it is not helpful for the evidence of the usage of

⁸³ R. B Wright, "Psalms of Solomon: A new translation and introduction", in *Old Testament pseudepigrapha*, 639.

⁸⁴ For more discussion on the inner sanctuary in *T. Levi*, see Kee, "Twelves patriarchs", 789.

⁸⁵ Cosaert, "The use of ἅγιος for the sanctuary", 96.

⁸⁶ *Leg.*, 3: 119, 125.

the ἄγιος. On the other hand, plural usage has twelve occurrences.⁸⁷ One of them is *Post* 173, where Whitaker and Colson translated this way: “He (Moses), the seventh from Abraham, do not, like those before him, haunt the outer court of the Holy Place (τῶν ἁγίων) as one seeking initiation, but as a sacred Guide has his abode in the sanctuary (ἐν τοῖς ἁδυστοῖς)”.

Philo expounded on the seventh seed of Abraham, Moses, who did not need to relate to God from the outer sanctuary but can talk to God in the inner sanctuary. Cosaert recognized that Whitaker and Colson failed to make a difference between τῶν ἁγίων and τοῖς ἁδυστοῖς. He asserted that Philo used the two terms to refer to the outer sanctuary and the holy of holies respectively.⁸⁸ Hence, τοῖς ἁδυστοῖς is a unique usage to refer to the Holy of Holies.

Cosaert points out the remaining 11 occurrences speak of the sanctuary in general with one exception in *Her.* 226, where Philo employed τοῖς ἁγίοις to the sanctuary containing “the candlestick, table and the altar of incense”, which can imply the outer part of the sanctuary. However, the works of Josephus supply another possibility that refers to the entire sanctuary.⁸⁹ Concerning the Holy of Holies, the noteworthy point is that Philo used specific terms such as ἁδυστοῖς⁹⁰ and τὰ ἅγια τῶν ἁγίων,⁹¹ in which the latter in particular, to refer to the Holy of Holies in Leviticus 16,17

⁸⁷ *Post.* 173; *Her.* 226; *Somm.* 1,207.216; *Migr.* 104; *Fug.* 93; *Mos.* 2,87.114, 155; *Spec.* 1,115.296.

⁸⁸ Similar differentiation occurs in *Mos.* 2:87. Cosaert, “The Use of ἄγιος for the sanctuary”, 97, n. 29.

⁸⁹ Another possibility that Cosaert draws out was the work of Josephus which narrates that when Pompey had taken the city of Jerusalem, Pompey reported that “the lampstand and the lamps, the table, the libation cups and censers [...] and a great heaps of spices and the sacred money” was all he saw in the sanctuary. Cosaert suggested that Josephus’ later description of the Holy of Holies can be related to the report of Pompey. Josephus states: “Nothing at all was kept in it; it was unapproachable, inviolable, and invisible to all, and was called the Holy of Holies”. Thus, according to Josephus, the only ritualistic material that had been there may be “the candlestick, the table, and the altar of incense”. See *ibid.* For the quote of Josephus and Pompey, see Flavius Josephus, *The works of Josephus: Complete and unabridged*, trans. by William Whiston (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2008); *J. W.* 1.152; 5. 219. Note that all the translation of Josephus are taken from the translation of William Whiston. See also Flavius Josephus, *The Jewish War*, trans. by G. A. Williamson, rev. ed. (Random House Tower, NY: Penguin, 1981), 491.

⁹⁰ *Legat.* 306 and *Somm.* 1,216.

⁹¹ *Leg.* 2,56; *Her.* 84; *Mut.* 192; and *Somm.* 2,189.231.

LXX, where LXX in Leviticus 16,17 renders τῷ ἁγίῳ as to refer to the Most Holy Place. This shows that Philo uses different terms for referring to the Most Holy Place.⁹² Thus, the work of Philo indicates that the plural form of ἅγιος most likely speaks of the sanctuary as a whole bipartite structure of the building.

Usage of ἅγιος in the works of Josephus

Josephus is a crucial figure for identifying the usage of ἅγιος and its variants because he is the contemporary of the author of Hebrews and could contribute to an understanding of the prevailing terminology which the Jewish nation at that time as a community would use for describing the sanctuary, the Holy place, or the Most Holy Place. Cosaert points out that the first work of Josephus, namely *The Jewish war*, employed different variants of ἅγιος forty times in the book which dealt with the sanctuary. However, the second work, *The antiquities of the Jews*, contain merely two occurrences, and the final works, such as *The life* and *Against Apion* surprisingly cease to use ἅγιος, but employed other terms for a sanctuary such as ναὸς and ἱερὸν.⁹³

Josephus uses a singular form of ἅγιος thirteen times⁹⁴ in *The Jewish war*. Cosaert asserted that though Josephus ἅγιος refers to the sanctuary in general, he also uses the term for describing the Most Holy Place. As a result, Cosaert concluded that the singular form is not likely employed for the Holy place.⁹⁵ However, when Josephus describes the temple of Jerusalem, he makes a distinction between the court of the Gentiles and the inner court which Gentiles are not allowed to enter. In his narration, he states: “For the second court of the temple (ἱερὸν) was called the sanctuary (ἅγιόν).⁹⁶

⁹² Cosaert, “The use of ἅγιος for the sanctuary”, 98.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 99.

⁹⁴ *J. W.* 1,26.152; 4,150.151.159; 5,194.195.385.394; 6,73.95.99.260.

⁹⁵ Cosaert, “The use of ἅγιος for the sanctuary”, 99.

⁹⁶ *Bellum Judaicum* 5. 184-247. See also, E. Mary Smallwood, “Introduction, notes, and appendixes to Josephus,” in *The Jewish war*, trans. by G. A. Williamson (Random House Tower, NY:

Thus, Josephus used ἅγιόν to refer to the inner court, in which one can assume that he may refer to the whole sanctuary precinct as compared to the Gentile's court outside, or it is possible that he referred to the inner court only. Another reference is found in *B.J* 1,152, where Josephus portrays Pompey's entrance to the Jewish sanctuary, saying:

But there was nothing that affected the nation so much, in the calamities they were then under, as that their holy place [τὸ ἅγιόν], which had been hitherto seen by none, should be laid open to strangers." Here, the usage of τὸ ἅγιόν may seem to be only the Most Holy Place, but the later description narrates that what Pompey saw was "the candlestick, with its lamp and the table.

Thus, while the singular form is also used for the Most Holy Place (Lev 16 LXX), the description of Josephus suggested that it can refer to the whole sanctuary.⁹⁷

Apparently, Josephus seems to use another terminology to differentiate the innermost part of the sanctuary. In *B.J* 1,25-26, in his plan to explore the sanctuary for his work, he makes an outline for "the defense of the city and the plan of the sanctuary (τοῦ ἱερῶν) and the Temple (τοῦ ναοῦ); and the exact measurement of these and the altar [...] and a description of the Holy of Holies (τοῦ ναοῦ τὸ ἅγιόν)".⁹⁸ Translators like Whiston, Williamson, and Thackeray translated τοῦ ναοῦ τὸ ἅγιόν as the Holy of Holies.⁹⁹ Smallwood translated these words to make it simple. For instance, she suggested that ναὸς is best translated as "central shrine" of the sanctuary and ἱερὸν as the "enclosure and everything within".¹⁰⁰ Thus, one can assume the τοῦ ναοῦ τὸ ἅγιόν refers to the Holy of Holies since Josephus employed unique words together.¹⁰¹

Penguin, 1981), 48.

⁹⁷ For more reference on the usage of the singular form which refers to the entire sanctuary, see *B.J* 5,194-195; *A.J.* 3,125; 12,413.

⁹⁸ *B.J* 1,25-26.

⁹⁹ Whiston, *The work of Josephus*, 545; Williamson, *The Jewish war*, 30; and Josephus, *B. J* 1,26 (Thackeray, LCL).

¹⁰⁰ Smallwood, "Appendixes to Josephus", 409-410.

¹⁰¹ Cosaert, "The use of ἅγιος for the sanctuary", 101.

ἅγιος in its plural form occurs twenty-three times in the book *The Jewish wars*, and all the passages refer to the sanctuary in general.¹⁰² For example, the Roman leader Cestius sent Neopolitanus to assess the attitude of the Jews in Jerusalem. The story provided that Neopolitanus was impressed by the positive spirit of the Jews, thus, “after paying his devotions to the sanctuary (τὰ ἅγια) of God from the permit area, he returned to Cestius”.¹⁰³ The “permitted area” here refers to the court of the Gentiles.¹⁰⁴ Another interesting unique term that Josephus employed for describing the Holy of Holies is ἁγίου δὲ ἁγίον, which is the only place in Old Testament pseudepigraphy, LXX, and even in the works of Philo where δὲ (conjunction) between the word ἅγιος.¹⁰⁵

Summary

According to the brief survey on the usage of ἅγιος in the Old Testament pseudepigraphy, the works of Philo and Josephus, it is apparent that the plural form of ἅγιος is never employed to refer to the Holy of Holies alone. The plural form of ἅγιος almost always points to the sanctuary in general. Besides, the terminology for denoting the Most Holy Place seems to be different in most of the cases. For instance, Philo employed ἀδυστοῖς and τὰ ἅγια τῶν ἁγίων to refer to the Holy of Holies and Josephus used the phrase such as τοῦ ναοῦ τὸ ἁγίον which is unique compared to the typical variants of ἅγιος. Therefore, it is evident that the plural form of ἅγιος and specifically the phrase τὰ ἅγια is understood as the sanctuary as a whole during the first century. Cosaert provided a table for the usage of ἅγιος in the Old Testament pseudepigrapha.

¹⁰² *J.W.* 2,341.401.539; 4,162.171 (2).173.182.183.191.201.242.323.397; 5,406.412; 6,104.120.124.128. 165.267.346. See Cosaert, “The use of ἅγιος for the sanctuary”, 101, n. 44.

¹⁰³ *J. W.* 2,341.

¹⁰⁴ Smallwood, “Appendixes to Josephus,” 432-433.

¹⁰⁵ *B. J.* 5,219; see Cosaert, “The use of ἅγιος for the sanctuary”, 102.

Table 4. The usage of ἅγιος by itself for the sanctuary in the Old Testament pseudepigrapha, Philo, and Josephus¹⁰⁶

	Sanctuary in general	Holy Place	Most Holy Place
Singular	14	2	2
Plural	44	0	0
Total number of uses	58	2	2

The above table portrayed that the plural and singular usage of ἅγιος is understood most likely as the whole sanctuary. Thus, one can assume that the Jewish understanding of τὰ ἅγια in the Epistle to the Hebrews and Hebrews 9,12 in particular, must be the entire sanctuary.

The word Σκηνή as a medium of interpretation

To understand the meaning of τὰ ἅγια in Hebrews 9,12, it is essential to study the usage of the word σκηνή in the context of chapter 9. This section explores the appropriate understanding of τὰ ἅγια according to the study on the usage of σκηνή in relation to τὰ ἅγια in the Epistle to the Hebrews. Thus, the word σκηνή occurs in the New Testament 20 times and 10 times in the Epistle to the Hebrews.¹⁰⁷ In the LXX, it translates the word for “shelter”. For example, from the cultural-historical perspective, Abraham’s faith was manifested by his dwelling in tents (Heb 11,9). Σκηνή is also the sacrificial tent of the Levites and the gentiles (Heb 13,10; Acts 7,43). The Book of Revelation also described σκηνή as the heavenly tabernacle (Rev 15,5).¹⁰⁸ Thus, one can define σκηνή generally as tent or tabernacle. Consequently, to understand the meaning of τὰ ἅγια

¹⁰⁶ Cosaert, “The use of ἅγιος for the sanctuary”, 103.

¹⁰⁷ Σκηνή occurs 4 times in the Gospel (Matt 17,4; Mark 9,5; Luke 9,33; 16,9), 6 times in Acts of Apostles and Revelation (Acts 7,43.44; 15,16; Rev 13,6; 15,5; 21,3), and 10 times in Hebrews (Heb 8,2.5; 11,9; 13,10), in which most of its occurrences is in Hebrews 9 (Heb 9,2.3.6.8.11.21).

¹⁰⁸ J. A. Bühner, “σκηνή”, in Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament, 3:251.

in Hebrews 9,12, one requires to understand the elaboration of *σκηνή* from the immediate context.

Firstly, it is clear that the author employed *σκηνή* as a whole part of the earthly sanctuary and described the articles inside the bipartite sanctuary (Heb 9,2).¹⁰⁹ Moreover, for the second compartment after the second veil *δεύτερον καταπέτασμα*, the author terms it as a part of the tent (Heb 9,3). Thus, it does not indicate that the second compartment is the other tent (*σκηνή*). The author implied that the second apartment is a part of the general *σκηνή* (Heb 9,2-3).¹¹⁰ After these, it seems that the author is not focusing on the detail of the sanctuary. The author “ends abruptly with a declaration, ‘we cannot speak in detail now about these things’”.¹¹¹

Secondly, the author employed the word “now”, which “marks the minor step of the argument”,¹¹² elaborating the function of the cultus in the earthly sanctuary, where two services namely, daily, and yearly ministration of the priest and high priest are mentioned respectively (Heb 9,6.7). The author continues to use the term *σκηνή* in verse 6, but adds the word *πρώτην*, meaning “*first, outer, anterior*”,¹¹³ which referred to the outer part of the sanctuary. Accordingly, the passage in verse 7 begins with the word *δὲ*, a conjunction, which indicates that the verse “completes and develops the contrast (*δὲ*) with verse 6”.¹¹⁴ In verse 7, the author did not employ *σκηνή*. The usage of *δεύτεραν* implicitly connotes the second tent. Thus, he separates the priestly functions of the first and the second part of the tent by using terms such as the first tent and the second.

¹⁰⁹ The author explained that the tabernacle (*σκηνή*) has two compartments, and the first section contains the candlestick, the table and the shewbread, and the author called the first section as *ἅγια*, meaning the holy place as NASB rendered (Heb 9,2), and the author identified the second compartment located after the second veil, which he termed as *ἅγια ἁγίων*, meaning the Holy of Holiest as NASB rendered (Heb 9,3).

¹¹⁰ Here the author introduced a *σκηνή* as a whole in Hebrews 9,2.

¹¹¹ Lane, Hebrews 9-13, 220.

¹¹² Paul Ellingworth and Eugene Albert Nida, *A handbook on the Letter to the Hebrews* (New York, NY: United Bible Society, 1994), 183.

¹¹³ Bauer, Arndt, Gingrich, and Danker, *Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament*, s. v. “πρώτος”.

¹¹⁴ Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 434.

Thirdly, in proceeding to elaborate the argument of Hebrews 9,6-7, the author explained that the Holy Spirit indicates (as in a form of constituting a special insight which is not “previously available to readers of the OT”)¹¹⁵ that the way into τοῦ ἁγίου (“the holy place”, NASB) was not revealed yet while the first tent is standing (Heb 9,8).

The concern here is about the first tent, which in the earlier explanation the author defined in spatial terms and refers to the outer compartment (Heb 9,2,6). However, here the author uses the first tent as a metaphor for the “cultic ordinances” in the Israelite’s sanctuary, signifying that access to the heavenly true tent is possible only after the first tent is set aside (Heb 8,2; 9,11).¹¹⁶ The author clarifies in verse 9 that the description of the first tent in the earlier verse is a *symbol* or *parable* for them in their time. Thus, the outer compartment metaphorically “represents the sanctuary as a sphere of cultic activity, which constitutes a barrier to the presence of God”.¹¹⁷

Subsequently, Hebrews 9,11 has now introduced Christ as the High Priest who came with a more perfect σκηνή, reiterating the argument in Hebrews 8,2, which described the true σκηνή in heaven. Thus, comparing verses 8 and 11, there are two σκηνή, namely, the metaphorical “first tent” that is the barrier into the Holy Place, and the true perfect tent where Jesus ministers. In the light of the immediate contexts, the author comes to the climax that Jesus with his blood entered into the τὰ ἅγια (Heb 9,12). It is clear that the author points to the true and more perfect tent than the first tent which has a limitation in its cultic activity. Thus, that true tent is τὰ ἅγια where Jesus ministers as our High Priest (Heb 8,2). Another mediate context that confirms the nature of Jesus’ entrance to the true tent is Hebrews 9,21, where Moses inaugurates the sanctuary with the blood of animals. The author was paralleling the old covenant

¹¹⁵ Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, 223.

¹¹⁶ Hebrews 9,8 explained that the author employed a temporal particle ἔτι, meaning “while”, which renders a temporal significance to the passage. Thus, the author uses the first tent as a metaphor to represent the early sanctuary and its services. The first tent “showed the limitation of the Levitical system”. See Vincent, *Word Studies in the New Testament*, 4:478.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

inaugurated by Moses and Jesus in his inauguration of the new covenant in the heavenly sanctuary (Heb 9,19-20). Hence, Jesus went into the τὰ ἅγια to inaugurate the new covenant with his blood.

*Inter-textual studies on τράγων
and μόσχων*

The NASB reads “and not through the blood of goats (τράγων) and calves (μόσχων), but through His blood, He entered (εἰσῆλθεν) the Holy Place (τὰ ἅγια) once for all, having obtained eternal redemption (Heb 9,12)”. Commentators have usually argued that the sacrificial animals mentioned in Hebrews 9,12 such as “goats and calves” are an allusion to the Day of Atonement in Leviticus 16 because these similar animals are used for sacrifices on that day.¹¹⁸ However, though it seems that Hebrews 9,12 have only the allusion to Leviticus 16, another background for Hebrews 9,12 concerning “goats and calves” is also possible. Thus, through inter-textual analysis, this study will seek the best possible context of Hebrews 9,12 in the LXX.

The word μόσχος is employed commonly for the Day of Atonement and the Inauguration Day in relation to the cultic services.¹¹⁹ On the other hand, the word τράγος occurs 13 times in the Pentateuch, and all of them are in Numbers 7, which solely describes the inauguration of the sanctuary and not the Day of Atonement.¹²⁰ The term “goat” used in Leviticus

¹¹⁸ For discussion on Hebrews 9,12 as a Day of Atonement allusion, see “goats [...] calves” [Heb 9,12], Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown, *A commentary, critical and explanatory, on the Old and New Testaments* (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, 1997); Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, 238; J. J. Moffatt, *A critical and exegetical commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews*, 120; Westcott, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, 260; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 452; Aelred Cody, *Heavenly sanctuary and the liturgy in the EH* (St. Meinrad, IN: Grail, 1960), 170-172; The SDA commentary also give a cross reference to Lev 16 suggesting the Day of Atonement allusion. See “Blood of goats and calves” [Heb 9,12], *SDABC*, 7:453.

¹¹⁹ For references on the word μόσχος usage in the inauguration services, see Numbers 7 and 8 (7,3.15.21.27.33.39.45.51.57.63.69.75.81.87; 8,8.8.12) which occurs 17 times in LXX, and for the Day of Atonement, see Leviticus 16 (16,3.6.11.14.15.18.27), which appears 7 times.

¹²⁰ For reference of the word τράγος usage in Pentateuch, see Numbers 7 (7,17.23.29.35.41.47.53.5.9.65.71.77.83.88). There are other occurrences of τράγος outside the Pentateuch such as Jacob's animals (Gen 30,35; 31,10.12; 31,15), the promises of God expressed in the song of Moses (Deut 32,14). Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 452, rightly comment on this subject saying, “The only

16 (in the context of the Day of Atonement) is χιμάρους, which occurs thirteen times,¹²¹ and the Hebrew word rendered for χιμάρους is צִיָּאֵר which is a different noun. The word χιμάρους does not appear at all in the New Testament despite its known usage as “goat” in the first century including in the works of Josephus and Philo,¹²² and τράγος only appear in the Hebrews in the New Testament, which implies that the author of Hebrews intended to use the term in the context of the inauguration of the sanctuary in the LXX.

Moreover, the only chapter where τράγος and μόσχος appear together with a background of cultic service in the LXX Old Testament is Numbers 7, which is the chapter on the inauguration. Davidson rightly comments on this matter saying that “the author of Hebrews inter-textually links with the OT inauguration service and not the Day of Atonement”.¹²³

Hebrews 9,19, the passage which clearly describes Moses’ inauguration services, unambiguously suggest the best possible background for Hebrews 9,12. The mediate context of Hebrews 9,12 also support the context of inauguration as well as the implication found in the passage.¹²⁴ Therefore, one can conclude that the reference to the blood of goats and

reference in the Pentateuch to the sacrifice of goats is in Nu. 7:17-88, of peace offerings (θυσιαί σωτηρίου) at the dedication of the altar”.

¹²¹ Lev 16,5,7,8,9,10,15,18,20,21,22 (2),26,27.

¹²² Bauer, Arndt, Gingrich, and Danker, *Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament*, s. v. “χιμάρους”. The other term for “goat” is rendered in the Gospel (Matt 25,32,33; Luke 15,29) which is ἔριφος, however, this word can be translated as “kid” or “goat” alternatively according to the context and did not have any cultic background. See Bauer, Arndt, Gingrich, and Danker, *Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament*, s. v. “ἔριφος”.

¹²³ Davidson, “Christ’s entry ‘within the veil’”, 185.

¹²⁴ Hebrews 9,13 and 10,14 also supported that Hebrews 9,12 have a context of inauguration service in the OT LXX. These two passages employed the phrase τράγων καὶ ταύρων instead of using τράγων καὶ μόσχων as in Hebrews 9,12. Here, there is a change in the term for bulls, that is, μόσχων is not employed anymore in Hebrews 9,13, instead, the author used ταύρων. Now, the phrase τράγων καὶ ταύρων occurs only in four places in the OT and NT. Obviously, two occurs in the EH (Hebrews 9,13; 10,24), one in Deuteronomy which is not related to cultic activity, and the last one occurs in Isaiah, which says: “And I take no pleasure in the blood of bulls, lambs, or goats” (Isa 1,11,12). In this passage, God used the blood of bulls and goats for describing the whole sacrificial services. Thus imply that the usage of this phrase τράγων καὶ ταύρων implicitly indicate the whole sanctuary sacrificial system and not the Day of Atonement.

calves points back to the inauguration service also and not only the Day of Atonement.

*Theological implications
of Hebrews 9,12*

The transition of the old covenant into the new covenant in the immediate context has been elaborated through the word study on *σκηνή* (Heb 9,1-11). Commentators also have supported this idea of transition.¹²⁵ Therefore, in light of the context, the theological implication in Hebrews 9,12 is the efficacy of the blood of Christ compared to the blood of animals, where Jesus entered into the perfect tent (Heb 9,11) in heaven (Heb 8,2). MacArthur suggested three significant points on Hebrews 9,12.

First, Christ went into the heavenly sanctuary with his blood, thus, “the Sacrificer is the sacrifice”. Second, His sacrifice is only once, which is sufficient for the whole generation of humanity. Third, Christ’s redemption is permanent, and eternal, unlike the old cultic service of Atonement.¹²⁶ In addition, Hebrews 9,13 mention “the ashes of the heifer,” which has the Old Testament background in Numbers 19. The ashes of the heifer were used for ceremonial cleansing, especially for people who came in contact with the corpse so that they will continue in the “tabernacle or temple worship”. With this mediate context, the author of Hebrews expounded on the cleansing power of the blood of Jesus which can clean the internal conscience contrary to the ceremonial or external cleansing.¹²⁷ This again added the significance of Christ’s entrance to the heavenly sanctuary once with His blood to cleanse us completely. The author uses an argument “from the lesser to the greater”. The lesser is the blood of bulls, goats, and ashes of

¹²⁵ For discussion on the transition of old covenant to new covenant, see Richard M. Davidson, “Typology in the Book of Hebrews”, in *Issues in the Book of Hebrews*, 179-183; Cody, *Heavenly sanctuary*, 147-148; Dahl, “Living way”, 405; Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, 194-195; Ellingworth, *Hebrews*, 438; Jean Hering, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (London, UK: Epworth, 1970), 70-75.

¹²⁶ John MacArthur, *Hebrews* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1996), 229.

¹²⁷ Jon Courson, *Jon Courson's application commentary* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2003), 1486.

the heifer, which is offered by the high priest in the earthly sanctuary, the greater is “blood shed by Christ”.¹²⁸

Conclusion

The problem of this study focused on Hebrews 6,19-20 and Hebrews 9,12 which seems to bring out puzzling questions on which compartment in the heavenly sanctuary Christ entered. The findings of the study suggest the best possible biblical resolution. Regarding Hebrews 6,19-20, the contextual study of the text demands that Jesus must have indeed gone inside the inner veil, that is, the Most Holy Place. However, the results clearly show that the context is more likely not to be the Day of Atonement, but the day of inauguration.

This conclusion is achieved through surveying the possible contexts of Hebrews 6,19-20, including the Old Testament typology, the immediate context of the text, the chiasmic parallels, and thorough inter-textual study. According to all these lines of evidence, one may conclude that Jesus entered within the veil in the order of Melchizedek and not in the order of Aaron's priesthood. These differences are significant because Aaron is only a High priest, contrasted with Melchizedek who is a king-priest. The only possible Old Testament typology that relates to cultic activity is the day of the inauguration of the sanctuary in Numbers 7, where Moses as a ruler and a priest dedicated the sanctuary. The notable point here is that Moses entered within the veil to inaugurate the sanctuary and it is before the Levitical priesthood was established. Thus, Hebrews 6,19-20 concluded Jesus in His ascension entered within the veil for the inauguration of the sanctuary.

In addition to this, Hebrews 9,12 had the same conclusion as Hebrews 6,19, reached through surveys on the word τὰ ἅγια, along with contextual and inter-textual studies of the text. According to the survey on the usage of the phrase τὰ ἅγια through the LXX, Old Testament pseudepigrapha, Philo and Josephus, the term dominantly refers to the sanctuary as a whole and not the Most Holy Place. Moreover, the contextual study

¹²⁸ Luder G. Whitlock et al., *The reformation study Bible: Bringing the light of reformation to Scriptures* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1995), s. v. “Hebrews 9:13”.

supports this conclusion too; the word study on *σκηνή* explicitly indicates that the author intended to employ *τὰ ἅγια* as the general term for the heavenly sanctuary. Furthermore, the inter-textual studies on *τράγων* and *μόσχων* support an inauguration motif in Hebrews 9,12. Therefore, Hebrews 9,12 concluded that Jesus went into the perfect tabernacle, the heavenly sanctuary as a whole.

Now, one may ask the question of compatibility with the pre-advent judgment. The basic measuring rule that the researcher constantly employs is the inspiration of the Scripture (2 Tim 3,16) and that there is only one Spirit who moved the biblical writers as they produced the Holy writ (2 Pet 1,21). Thus, the same Author of the Scripture should not contradict Himself. In these contexts, the inauguration motif of Hebrews 6,19-20 and Hebrews 9,12 is compatible with the prophecy of the Messiah in the Book of Daniel where it was predicted that Jesus will anoint the Most Holy (Dan 9,24). In history, Jesus died on the cross and ascended to heaven (Acts 1,9), and the prophecy was fulfilled. This prophecy is a part of the longer time prophecy, that is the 2300 day-year prophecy (Dan 8,14). Subsequently, one understands that 70 weeks is cut off from the larger prophecy, and it ends at 34 A. D, which further indicates that the end of 2300 day-year prophecy is 1844, to be precise on October 22.

Therefore, when Jesus ascended to heaven, He anointed/inaugurated the heavenly sanctuary, and became an intercessor for humanity. Furthermore, Jesus began the antitype of the Day of Atonement in 1844, which is called the pre-advent judgment. In this way, Christ's ascension is compatible with the pre-advent judgment because the Epistle to the Hebrews explained Christ's early ministry from His ascension, and the pre-advent judgment is the second phase of Christ's ministry in the heavenly sanctuary.

However, the nature of the ministry is still the same in regard to the mediatory ministry, but the only difference is the change in the Old Testament typology, that is from the Holy Place ministry to the Most Holy Place ministry, the daily to the yearly, inauguration day to the Day of Atonement. Therefore, the pre-advent judgment is not in contradiction with the ascension of Christ in the Epistle of Hebrews.