

Priestly Offering: Law and Narrative in the *Aramaic Levi Document*

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■ Abstract

In this article, I propose a new reading for both law and narrative in the *Aramaic Levi Document* (ALD). In the first section, I show that the passage of “the law of the priesthood” pertains to the daily morning service in the Temple. In the second section, I suggest that the narrative that contains these instructions, in which Isaac speaks to Levi at Abraham’s home, exegetically connects the laws to the story of Isaac, whose father offered him up on an altar, and reflects a priestly theology that views the priest himself as an offering.

■ Keywords

Aramaic Levi Document, law and narrative, sacrifices, priesthood

In loving memory of Yossi Hershkovitz Z”L

שעקד נפשו להגנת עמו

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■ Introduction

The Pentateuchal narratives about the election of Levi refer to the singling out of a collective—the tribe of Levi—following the exodus. One central biblical tradition tells that the Levites were blessed because of their zeal for God during the sin of the golden calf (Exod 32:26–29), while another teaches that they were sanctified in place of the Israelite firstborn, who were saved during the plague of the firstborn in Egypt (Num 3:11–13, 8:5–19). There is, however, consensus that it was the tribe of Levi, rather than Levi the individual, that was chosen “to stand in attendance upon the Lord and to bless in His name, as is still the case” (Deut 10:8).¹ In Second Temple literature, on the other hand, the elevation of Levi to the priesthood becomes a personal story of Levi, son of Jacob.² Planting the priesthood in the world of Genesis allowed authors of the Second Temple–era to depict the sacralization of Levi as a personal drama.³ One of the earliest of these works, from around the third century BCE, is the *Aramaic Levi Document* (hereafter *ALD*).⁴

¹ All Hebrew Bible quotations are from NJPS Tanakh 1985. The Pentateuch does not mark Levi as a priest (see Gen 29:34; 34:25, 30; 35:23; 46:11; 49:5–7). However, his name (from the root לוי, “to accompany”), his descendants’ preference for endogamous marriage (Exod 2:1), and the singular form in which Moses blesses the tribe of Levi (Deut 33:8–11) may foreshadow a tradition that Levi himself was a priest, an idea made explicit in Mal 2:4–7. See James Kugel, “Levi’s Elevation to the Priesthood in Second Temple Writing,” *HTR* 86 (1993) 1–64, at 30–31; R. A. Kugler, *From Patriarch to Priest: The Levi-Tradition from Aramaic Levi to Testament of Levi* (SBL Early Judaism and Its Literature 9; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996) 9–22. Aside from Jethro (Exod 18:1) and the enigmatic figure of Melchizedek, “a priest of God Most High,” (Gen 14:18–20), neither of whom are Israelites, no figure from the period before the covenant at Sinai is identified as a priest in the Hebrew Bible.

² This move relates to a broader phenomenon in which the priesthood is transposed onto key figures in Genesis by reworking the very brief descriptions of cultic activity in Genesis. See Jub. 3:27; 4:25; 21; *ALD* 7:4–5; 10:3, 10. Compare also Gen 8:20–21 with Jub. 6:3 and 1QapGen X, 13–17; Gen 13:4 with Jub. 13:8–9; 1QapGen XXI, 1–2, and Gen 15:9–10 with Jub. 14:9–11. A priestly dynasty beginning with Adam and ending with Aaron and his sons can be seen throughout 5Q13; see Kugel, “Levi’s Elevation to the Priesthood,” 17–18; Menahem Kister, “5Q13 and the ³Avodah: A Historical Survey and Its Significance,” *DSD* (2001) 136–48.

³ See mainly *ALD*, Jub. 30–32, and the Testament of Levi. Other works center on Levi’s descendants (4QTestament of Qahat [4Q542]; 4QVisions of Amram [4Q543–547/9]). For traditions about Levi in Second Temple literature, see Kugel, “Levi’s Elevation to the Priesthood”; Kugler, *From Patriarch to Priest*; Cana Werman, “Levi and Levites in the Second Temple Period,” *DSD* 4 (1997) 211–25; Joseph L. Angel, *Otherworldly and Eschatological Priesthood in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Leiden: Brill, 2010); Hallel Baitner, “Levitical Singers in Rabbinic Sources: Echoes of an Ancient Dispute,” *JSJ* 52 (2021) 229–39.

⁴ Fragmentary copies of this work were found at Qumran and in the Cairo Genizah. It has also survived in Greek translation. The dating of *ALD* is a matter of some contention. The earliest manuscript (4Q214^b [4QLeviⁱ]) is dated to ca. 150 BCE (Jonas C. Greenfield, Michael E. Stone, and Esther Eshel, *The Aramaic Levi Document: Edition, Translation, Commentary* [SVTP 19; Leiden: Brill, 2004] 4; cf. Michael E. Stone and Jonas C. Greenfield, “The Fifth and Sixth Manuscripts of Aramaic Levi Document from Cave 4 at Qumran [4QLevi^e Aram and 4QLevi^f Aram],” *Le Muséon* 110 [1997] 271–92; Henryk Drawnel, *An Aramaic Wisdom Text from Qumran: A New Interpretation of the Levi Document* [Leiden: Brill, 2004] 27). Werman, who claims that *ALD* is a source for Jubilees, dates the text to the first half of the 2nd cent. BCE at the latest (“Levi and Levites,” 220–21; see also

The text offers a first-person account of Levi's priestly biography and integrates the events of Shechem (chs. 1–2) and Levi's prayer and visions (chs. 3–4) into a narrative sequence leading to Levi's election to the priesthood (ch. 5). As a priest, Levi receives instructions relating to the "law of the priesthood" from Isaac, his grandfather (5:8).⁵ This priestly education is detailed in a central section of the text (5:6–10:14).

The laws described in this section include warnings regarding sexual and bodily purity (6), laws of ritual purification (7:1–3), the laws around wood on the altar and the 'olah sacrifice (7:1–8:6), the quantities of substances offered up with sacrifices (9:1–16), and a section that deals with comparing different units of measurement (9:17–18). This cryptic text is replete with operational details to a degree that no text before (and, to a large extent, after) offers in describing the priest's service in the Temple. This raises two questions: First, what connects the random sequence of laws about sexual purity and the wood for sacrifices? Second, does the description of worship serve the overall narrative framework of Levi's ascent to the priesthood, and in what way? Scholars have offered three directions for answering these questions. Robert Kugler has argued that the common denominator of the laws in *ALD* is their stringency, compared to biblical law and the Jerusalem priesthood of the time. In his view, just as *ALD*'s narrative portrays an idealized figure of Levi as an alternative to the flawed Jerusalem priesthood, so too *ALD*'s laws provide a more stringent alternative. By retroactively projecting these laws back to the time of the patriarchs, *ALD* gives them chronological priority over the laws of the

Greenfield, Stone, and Eshel, *The Aramaic Levi Document*, 19–21). Others, who believe that *ALD* predates Jubilees and that they share a common source, date the two texts to the same general time period (Kugler, *From Patriarch to Priest*, 3, 146–55; James C. VanderKam, *Jubilees: A Commentary in Two Volumes* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 2018] 90–93). Kugel claims that *ALD* builds upon Jubilees and reflects the later Hasmonean period. However, he too dates the unit of instruction, which is the subject of this article, as an earlier source, integrated into the Levi apocalypse (James Kugel, "How Old Is the Aramaic Levi Document?" *DSD* 14 [2007] 291–312, at 310). Drawnel dated it to around the 4th cent. BCE (*Aramaic Wisdom Text*, 66–75; see also J. T. Milik, *The Books of Enoch: Aramaic Fragments of Qumrân Cave 4* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1976] 24). Importantly, all agree that the cultic instructions in *ALD* are presectarian.

⁵ This unit is preserved in Aramaic Genizah fragments (Bodleian Library MS Heb c. 27), in Greek translation (Mt. Athos, Monastery of Koutloulmous, Cod. 39 [No. 3108]), and in seven Qumran manuscripts: 1Q21 (1QLevi ar; J. T. Milik, "Testament de Lévi," *Qumran Cave I* [ed. D. Barthélemy and J. T. Milik; DJD 1; Oxford: Clarendon, 1955] 87–90); 4Q213 (4QLevi^a ar); 4Q213a (4QLevi^b ar); 4Q213b (4QLevi^c ar); 4Q214 (4QLevi^d ar); 4Q214a (4QLevi^e ar); 4Q214b (4QLevi^f ar) (all published by Michael E. Stone and Jonas G. Greenfield, "A. Aramaic Levi Document," in *Qumran Cave 4.XVII: Parabiblical Texts, Part 3* [ed. George J. Brooke et al., in consultation with James VanderKam; DJD 22; Oxford: Clarendon, 1996] 1–72). Similar instructions, albeit in Hebrew, are found in Jub. 21 (preserved partially in 4Q219 [4QJub^a]; 4Q220 [4QJub^b]; and 4Q221 [4QJub^c]). These instructions differ in their narrative, such that Abraham instructs Isaac, rather than Isaac instructing Levi. A short version of the instructions in the same narrative framework as *ALD* is found in T. Levi 9:6–14. For a comparative table, see Jacques van Ruiten, *Abraham in the Book of Jubilees: The Rewriting of Genesis 11:26–25:10 in the Book of Jubilees 11:14–23:8* (JSJSup 161; Leiden: Brill, 2012) 283. Van Ruiten points out that the author of Jubilees is likely dependent on *ALD* or a similar source about Levi, which was reworked for particular purposes.

Jerusalem priests, which are attributed to the covenant at Sinai.⁶ Martha Himmelfarb has argued, however, that the *ALD* narrative carries no polemical overtones. The laws in the document are not more stringent than those in the Pentateuch but rather supplement the regulations of Leviticus with further practical details.⁷ This characterization aligns with Józef Milik's suggestion that the literary framing of the instructions (the story of Levi's initiation into the priesthood) reflects its practical use—that is, the training of apprentice priests for their service in the Temple.⁸

⁶ Kugler, *From Patriarch to Priest*, 108–10, 130, 136–47; see also Michael E. Stone, *Ancient Judaism: New Visions and Views* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011) 56.

⁷ Martha Himmelfarb, "Earthly Sacrifice and Heavenly Incense: The Law of the Priesthood in Aramaic Levi and Jubilees," in *Heavenly Realms and Earthly Realities in Late Antique Religions* (ed. Ra'anana S. Boustani and Annette Yoshiko Reed; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) 103–22, at 104–16; eadem, *A Kingdom of Priests: Ancestry and Merit in Ancient Judaism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006) 46–47; see also Cana Werman, *Book of Jubilees: Introduction, Translation, and Interpretation* (Jerusalem: Yad Itzhak Ben-Zvi, 2015) 24–25 (Hebrew); Greenfield, Stone, and Eshel, *The Aramaic Levi Document*, 157. In addition, see J. T. Milik, cited by Kugler, *From Patriarch to Priest*, 109 n. 170. Lawrence H. Schiffman has articulated a similar position, characterizing the instructions as focusing on the manner in which the worship is carried out and filling in gaps in the biblical law ("Sacrificial Halakhah in the Fragment of Aramaic Levi Document from Qumran, the Cairo Genizah, and Mt. Athos Monastery," in *Reworking the Bible: Apocryphal and Related Texts at Qumran* [ed. Esther Chazon; STDJ 58; Leiden: Brill, 2005] 177–202, at 202). The question of polemics that is reflected (Kugler) or not reflected (Himmelfarb, Schiffman) in the priestly laws in *ALD* is related to a broader question about the sociological and political context of priestly Aramaic texts (especially *ALD*, Testament of Qahat, and Visions of Amram), what Michael E. Stone termed "sacerdotal writing" ("Qahat," in *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls* [ed. Lawrence H. Schiffman and James C. VanderKam; 2 vols.; Leiden: Brill, 2000] 1:731–32) and what Drawnel (who also includes in this list the Ethiopic Astronomical Book [Aramaic Astronomical Book, 4Q208–211]) termed "priestly didactic literature" ("Priestly Education in the Aramaic Levi Document [Visions of Levi] and Aramaic Astronomical Book [4Q208–211]," *RevQ* [2006] 547–74, at 551). The more fundamental question is whether the desire to root the priestly laws in remote antiquity stems from a feeling of alienation toward the Aaronite priesthood and the Jerusalem Temple on the part of the text's composers or whether this desire arises from a pedagogic necessity (Michael E. Stone, "The Axis of History at Qumran," in *Pseudepigraphic Perspectives: The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha in Light of the Dead Sea Scroll; Proceedings of the International Symposium of the Orion Center for the Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Associated Literature, 12–14 January* [ed. Esther G. Chazon, Michael E. Stone, and Avital Pinnick; STDJ 31; Leiden: Brill, 1999] 133–49, esp. 149; see also n. 43). Robert Jones recently claimed that the polemical reading of Aramaic priestly texts relies upon shaky textual ground and that a renewed examination that takes into account fragments that deal directly with worship reveals a positive relationship to the priesthood (Robert Jones, "Priesthood and Cult in the Visions of Amram: A Critical Evaluation of Its Attitudes Toward the Contemporary Temple Establishment in Jerusalem," *DSD* 18 [2020] 1–30). Regarding the halakhic parts of *ALD*, my conclusions are identical to his.

⁸ Quoted in Kugler, *From Patriarch to Priest*, 109, 170. See also Greenfield, Stone, and Eshel, *The Aramaic Levi Document*, 157. This suggestion was further developed by Drawnel, who noted links between *ALD* and Mesopotamian "school literature" (*Aramaic Wisdom Text*, 66–67, 76–85, 283–91; idem, "Priestly Education in the Aramaic Levi Document"; idem, "The Literary Characteristics of the Vision of Levi (So-called Aramaic Levi Document)," *Journal of Ancient Judaism* 1 [2010] 303–19). This generic classification explains well the unusual technical character of the list of sacrifices in the work, which classifies offerings by size and deals in an unprecedented manner with the quantities of ingredients to be offered up with the sacrifice.

Recently, Liane Feldman has argued that the academic impulse to connect the instructions in *ALD* and their biblical source rests on an unnecessary assumption about the level of authority the Bible held in the beginning of the Hellenistic period. She believes that *ALD* presents a different idea of sacrifice than that found in Leviticus, which focuses on the function of the senses of sight and smell and limits the function of blood.⁹ Although I do not agree with Feldman's claims about the uniqueness of the sacrificial laws that appear in *ALD*,¹⁰ she is certainly correct

⁹ Liane M. Feldman, "Sanitized Sacrifice in Aramaic Levi's Law of the Priesthood," *Journal of Ancient Judaism* 11 (2020) 343–68, esp. 354–58.

¹⁰ Feldman argues that "the general ideas about sacrifice advanced in Aramaic Levi stand in notable contrast to those in the Pentateuch" ("Sanitized Sacrifice," 352). The Hebrew Bible includes, in addition to the 'olah sacrifice, sacrifices that were meant to provide meat to the sacrificer (*shelamim*) or to sanitize the tabernacle and the altar (*hattat*). In Feldman's view, "when it discusses how to treat the blood of animals slaughtered for food at home," *ALD* eliminates the *shelamim* sacrifice, and when the text attributes atonement to ritual immersion and to ethical behavior, it demonstrates that the author of *ALD* believes that these actions, and not the sacrificial blood of the *hattat*, effect atonement (362, 364). This is because, for *ALD*, "the placement of blood on top of the altar is presented as distasteful" and thus not suitable for atonement (358). I take issue with this argument, for several reasons. First, contrary to Feldman's argument (362–65), the sacrificial system in *ALD* must include the *hattat*, *shelamim*, and/or *asham* sacrifice, because it explicitly includes those sacrifices from which the fat alone is offered ("and if the fat alone is offered"). Second, it is not logically necessary that the text's discussion of animal slaughter at home means that there is no *shelamim* sacrifice. After all, the Bible, Qumranic literature, and Tannaitic literature all include instructions regarding nonconsecrated blood, and no one would argue that these systems did not include the *shelamim* sacrifice. Third, Feldman emphasizes that there is no mention of the atoning role of blood in *ALD*; however, that is because the text is referring to an 'olah (7:7; 8:3–4). The atoning power of the 'olah appears in the text of Lev 1 in association with the act of *hand-leaning* (v. 4, regardless of how one imagines this atonement to be effected); and because *hand-leaning* remains unmentioned in *ALD* (since the sacrifice is communal), atonement is not mentioned. In fact, the role of the sacrifice, according to *ALD*, is to bring "a pleasing scent before the Most High God" (8:6), as it does in Leviticus (1:9, 13, 17). Fourth, Feldman associates *ALD*'s unique image of a bloodless temple with certain ritual details like salting the organs (356), washing the animal's legs, and the quality of the wood, and with the importance of a pleasing scent as the function of sacrifice (361). However, these details are not unique to *ALD* (see Lev 2:13; Ezek 43:24; Temple Scroll [11QTemple^a (11Q19) XXXIV, 9–11]; New Jerusalem Scroll [11Q18 frg. 13, 2]; 1QapGen [1Q20] X, 17; Josephus [*Ant.* 3.227]; *m. Tamid* 4:3; see also the discussion in Andrew B. Perrin, *The Dynamics of Dream-Vision Revelation in the Aramaic Dead Sea Scrolls* [JAJSup 19; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2015] 172–73). The New Jerusalem Scroll mentions both the washing of the animal's legs and the salting and clearly does not negate the atoning role of the blood that appears later in the scroll (e.g., 11Q18 frg. 22).

Additionally, moving the giving of the blood of the 'olah from the top of the altar is a paradigmatic change that takes place in every text dealing with sacrifices in Second Temple literature and later (see Naphtali S. Meshel, "The Form and Function of a Biblical Blood Ritual," *VT* 63 [2013] 276–89). *ALD*'s caution regarding blood is reflected in diverse texts from the 3rd to 2nd cents. BCE (Cana Werman, "The Rules of Consuming and Covering the Blood in Priestly and Rabbinic Law," *RevQ* 16 [1995] 621–36). I thus prefer Schiffman's position, as recently summarized by Davila: "variations from the Pentateuch are no greater than those found in Tannaitic or Qumran halakhah" (James R. Davila, "Aramaic Levi," in *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: More Noncanonical Scriptures* [ed. Richard Bauckham, James R. Davila, and Alexander Panayotov; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013] 1:127). Feldman's only actual evidence is the text's sole engagement with the 'olah sacrifice. In what follows, I will suggest a reason for this.

about the necessity of learning the “priestly laws” of Levi in a holistic manner. Before any conceptual analysis, however, we need to understand and identify the ritual described in the seventh and eighth chapters of the text. This fundamental issue has not yet been addressed in the scholarship, and the goal of this article is to answer that question.

I begin with an analysis of the laws of ritual immersion in *ALD*. I will show that they form a ritual sequence that describes the priest’s service in the Temple, which connects the different sections of *ALD* to each other. They are all parts of one ritual order for the morning offering in the Temple. I end by returning to the narrative in which the ritual is embedded and discuss the relationship between law and narrative in *ALD*’s law of the priesthood.

■ Purification, Wood, and Sacrifice: Instructions Regarding the Order of the Morning Whole Burnt Offering

A. The Purity Laws and Their Rhetorical Structure

7:1 And when you are about to enter the house of God, bathe in water and then put on the garment of priesthood.

7:2 And when you are dressed, once again wash your hands and feet before you make any approach to the altar.

7:3 And when you take for sacrifice anything that is fit to be offered on the altar, wash your hands and feet once again.

7:4 And offer split wood, and examine it first for worms and then offer it up, for thus I saw my father Abraham acting with care.

7:5 Of any of all twelve kinds of wood which are fitting, he told me to offer up on the altar, whose smoke rises up with a pleasant odor.

7:6 And these are their names: cedar and juniper, and almond and fir and pine and ash, cypress and fig and oleaster, laurel and myrtle and asphalathos.

7:7 These are those that he told me are fitting to offer up [be]neath the whole burnt offering upon the altar.

8:1 And when you have offered up any of these woods upon the altar and the fire begins to burn them, you should then begin to sprinkle the blood on the sides of the altar.

8:2 And once more wash your hands and feet of the blood and begin to offer up the salted portions (or: limbs).

8:3 First offer up the head and cover it with the fat so that the blood of *the slaughter of* the bull(?)¹¹ may not be seen.

8:4 After it, its neck and after its neck its forequarters and after its forequarters the breast with the side and after the forequarters the haunches with the spine of the loin and after the haunches the hindquarters washed, with the entrails.

¹¹ See discussion below.

8:5 All of them salted with salt as is fitting for them in their proper amounts.

8:6 After that, fine meal mixed with oil. After all that pour the wine and burn the frankincense over them; and thus let your actions follow due order and all your sacrifices be [acceptable] as a pleasing odor before the Most High God.¹²

The purity laws begin with three instructions regarding the priest's purification. The author uses two verbs to describe the ablutions: סחי, "bathe," for the first, and רחע, "wash," for the second and third.¹³ The first instruction requires that the entire body be bathed in water upon entering the sanctuary.¹⁴ This requirement is not necessarily connected to the priest's bodily purity. It is a prerequisite for his entrance into the Temple precincts and for donning the priestly vestments.¹⁵ The following two instructions command the priest to wash his hands and feet before approaching the altar.¹⁶ The distinction between bathing upon entering the Temple precincts and washing hands and feet before approaching the altar, and again before offering a sacrifice, is grounded in a reading of Exod 30:18–21 as an *ordered sequence* of actions required for the priest's purification upon entering the Temple.¹⁷ Exod 30 reads:

¹² The translation of *ALD* is based on Greenfield, Stone, and Eshel, *The Aramaic Levi Document*, 74–82, with some minor changes.

¹³ In the Greek, סחי is rendered λούου, "bathe [the entire body]," and רחע is rendered νίπτου, "wash [the hands and feet]." A similar distinction in translation is found in LXX and Josephus. For the use of סחי and רחע in Aramaic, see Jonas C. Greenfield, "The Verbs for Washing in Aramaic," in *Semitic Studies in Honor of Wolf Leslau on the Occasion of His Eighty-Fifth Birthday, November 14th, 1991* (ed. A. S. Kaye; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1991) 588–94.

¹⁴ The identification of the biblical term רחץ with immersion (*Sifra Emor* 4:2) is an early tradition, already attested in Qumranic law (*Damascus Document* [Genizah] X, 10–13). See Aharon Shemesh, "Transmitting Regular and Irregular Semen Impurity at Qumran: A Study of 4QTohora (4Q274)," *Tarbiz* 82 (2014) 513–28, esp. 523 (Hebrew). However, it is difficult to determine whether the author of *ALD* was committed to this interpretation, since ritual baths are found only from the Hasmonean period onward. See Yonatan Adler, "The Archaeology of Purity: Archaeological Evidence for the Observance of Ritual Purity in Erez-Israel from the Hasmonean Period until the End of the Talmudic Era (164 BCE–400 CE)" (PhD diss.; Bar-Ilan University, 2011) 56–62 (Hebrew). For our purposes, it is important that *ALD*, like other ancient traditions, interpreted Biblical Hebrew רחץ as relating to two actions: bathing the entire body and washing the hands and feet.

¹⁵ Exod 29:4; 40:12–13; and Lev 8:6–7; 16:4. See also Schiffman, "Sacrificial Halakhah," 182; Drawnel, *Aramaic Wisdom Text*, 270. Other Second Temple texts also refer to abluion by immersion before entering the Temple, even for those who are not impure. See *m. Yoma* 3:3 and Menahem I. Kahana, *Sifre on Numbers: An Annotated Edition* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 2011) 299 (Hebrew).

¹⁶ See Jonas C. Greenfield and Michael E. Stone, "Remarks on the Aramaic Testament of Levi from the Geniza," *RB* 86 (1979) 214–31, esp. 221; Harm W. Hollander and Marinus de Jonge, *The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs: A Commentary* (Studia in Veteris Testamenti Pseudepigrapha 8; Leiden: Brill, 1985) 158; Kugler, *From Patriarch to Priest*, 99.

¹⁷ Cf. *ALD* 10:6, in which the instruction to bathe the entire body upon entering the Temple is absent and there is an added instruction to wash after the offering. That passage deals not with the daily order of service but with the requirement to keep distance from blood, and therefore instructions for washing are mentioned only with regard to the offering itself. There are also instructions regarding abluion in the T. Levi 9:11 and Jub. 21:16. For a full treatment of the relationship between *ALD* and Jubilees, see Hillel Mali, "Priestly Instructions in the Aramaic Levi Document and the Order of the

(18) Make a laver of copper and a stand of copper for it, for washing; and place it between the Tent of Meeting and the altar. Put water in it, (19) and let Aaron and his sons wash (וְרָחֲצוּ) their hands and feet [in water drawn] from it. (20) When they enter (בְּבֹאֵם) the Tent of Meeting they shall wash with water, that they may not die; or when they approach (אוּ בְּגִשְׁתֶּם) the altar to serve, to turn into smoke an offering by fire to the Lord. (21) They shall wash their hands and feet, that they may not die. It shall be a law for all time for them—for him and his offspring—throughout the ages.

According to the interpretation reflected in the Masoretic division of verses, verses 19 and 21a are an introduction and conclusion to verse 20, respectively.¹⁸ The two adverbial clauses in verse 20, “when they enter” and “when they approach” refer to the single law found between them, “they shall wash with water,” which is the equivalent of the phrase “they shall wash their hands and feet with water” found in the introduction and conclusion.¹⁹ Thus, the entire passage refers to washing hands and feet with water from the laver. The Samaritan text of the Torah, and the Samaritan Targum, read or reflect the reading יִרְחֲצוּ rather than וְרָחֲצוּ as the first word of verse 21.²⁰ This reading may be reflected in the Septuagint as well. In this reading, verse 21 continues verse 20, and we have two adverbial phrases modifying two separate laws:

<p>(20) When they enter the Tent of Meeting</p> <p>they shall wash with water,</p> <p>that they may not die;</p> <p>It shall be a law for all time for them, for him and his offspring, throughout the ages.</p>	<p>and (lit., “or”) when they approach the altar to serve, to turn into smoke an offering by fire to the Lord,</p> <p>(21) they shall wash (וְרָחֲצוּ) their hands and feet,</p> <p>that they may not die.</p>
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In this reading, the pericope contains two distinct instructions regarding ablutions: when the priest enters the Tent of Meeting, he must wash his entire body; then, when he approaches the altar, he must wash his hands and feet. *ALD*, the Samaritan text, and perhaps also the Septuagint, may have derived this understanding by reading Exod 40:12 into Exod 30:20–21, since Exod 40:12 commands Aaron and his sons to wash their entire bodies before donning the priestly vestments (see also Lev 16:4).

Morning Daily Service,” *Meghillot* 14 (2018–2019) 119–138, esp. 134–136 (Hebrew).

¹⁸ As is common in P, the introduction and conclusion summarize the content of the passage in between them. (For example, Lev 22:10–13: “An outsider shall not eat of any holy thing . . . no outsider shall eat of it.”)

¹⁹ The Masoretic text must be interpreted in this manner, not only because of its division of verses but also because of the *we-qatal* form וְרָחֲצוּ with which the verse opens.

²⁰ In grammatical terms, the difference between MT and Sam can be stated as follows: *we-qatal* takes clause-initial position, whereas (nonvolitive) *yiqtol* occupies a clause-medial position; hence, the grammatical difference between וְרָחֲצוּ and יִרְחֲצוּ necessarily indicates a large-scale syntactic difference. Thanks to Naphtali Meshel for this comment.

The distinction between the two instructions is neatly reflected in the distinction *ALD* makes between “washing in water” when the priest enters the Temple²¹ and “washing his hands and feet” when the priest approaches the altar. Unlike Exodus, which prescribes different ablutions for various situations,²² *ALD* prescribes a *sequence* of ablutions for priests entering the Temple: the priest must bathe his entire body before entering the Temple precinct, and then he must wash his hands and feet after donning his vestments, and again before sacrifice. The double washing of the hands and feet before approaching the altar (7:1–3) is based on a reading of the extended phrase “when they approach the altar to serve, to turn into smoke an offering by fire to the Lord” (Exod 30:20) as a double instruction. Thus, priests are required to wash their hands and feet “when they approach the altar to serve”²³ and also “when they approach the altar to turn into smoke an offering by fire to the Lord.”²⁴

The structure of the text reflects the sequentially linked instructions that it presents: “When you are in state X, do Y, and then Z will be allowed”:

²¹ The lack of a direct object was taken by the author of *ALD* as an indication that the verb is intransitive.

²² In Exod 30:20, the commandments are separated by וְ, “or,” and they therefore should be interpreted as two distinct situations; in the summary of these instructions in Exod 40:32, however, the two situations are connected with -וּ, “and.”

²³ The verb תִּקְרַב should thus be read as the intransitive *pe'el* form and taken to refer to the man approaching the altar, with לַמִּזְבֵּחַ understood as “to the altar,” and the phrase כֹּל דְּנָה as an adverb modifying תִּקְרַב (see Greenfield and Stone, “Remarks on the Aramaic Testament of Levi,” 221). *Tqrb lmdbh' kl dnh* could also be read as “to offer anything upon the altar,” taking the verb *tqrb* as a *pa'el* or *af'el* transitive form of the preposition *l-* in *lmdbh'* in the sense of “upon,” as in 7:3, and the words *kl dnh* as the direct object of *tqrb*, as in the Greek translation πρὸ τοῦ ἐγγίσει πρὸς τὸν βωμὸν προσενέγκαι ὀλοκάρπωσιν, in which the direct object of προσενέγκαι, “to offer,” is ὀλοκάρπωσιν, “a burnt offering.” (For such use of *qrb* in *pa'el*, see Ezra 7:17 and in *ALD* 5:4 [“וקרבת כל קרבונה”], and see Takamitsu Muraoka and Bezalel Porten, *A Grammar of Egyptian Aramaic* [Leiden: Brill, 1998] 190. This is contra Edward M. Cook, *Dictionary of Qumran Aramaic* [Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2015] 211). Adopting this latter reading would mean that the first phrase in 7:3 repeats verbatim the last phrase in 7:2, and the work contains two successive instructions to wash before offering up a sacrifice.

²⁴ The Septuagint and Peshitta both added conjunctions between the two parts of the verse, reflecting this reading. An instruction to the priest to prepare himself in a different manner (by donning the vestments) before entering the tent and approaching the altar is found in Exod 28:41–43. The instruction regarding the Tent of Meeting is phrased similarly in both verses, while the instruction regarding approaching the altar is phrased differently in each case: with regard to garments, it is phrased “to serve” in general (Exod 28:43; 35:19; 39:1, 41), but with regard to ablution, the appositive phrase “to turn into smoke an offering by fire” is added. *ALD* likely read this as an additional instruction to wash before offering a sacrifice.

<i>ALD</i>	State of Being	Ablution Requirement	Activity Following Ablution
7:1	When you are about to enter the house of God	bathe in water	And then you may put on the garment of priesthood
7:2	And when you are dressed	Once again wash your hands and your feet	Before you make any approach to the altar
7:3	And when you take for sacrifice anything that is fit to be offered upon the altar	Once again wash your hands and your feet	(Implied: before actually doing it)

In this chain of instructions, the first segment of 7:2 (וכדי תהוי לביש) repeats the last segment of 7:1 (תהוי לביש לבוש כהנותא), and the first segment of 7:3 (וכדי תהוי נסב) repeats the last segment of 7:2 (עד דלא תקרב למדבחה). The different actions are concatenated into a ritual sequence that continues in the verses that follow (7:4–5), which detail what is suitable to be offered on the altar—“anything that is fit to be offered upon the altar” (כל די חזה להנסקה למדבחה) (7:3)—and then list the wood that is classified as “fitting to offer up upon the altar” (די חזין להסקה מינהון) (למדבחה) (7:5; see 7:7). From this, it is clear that the chain of purifying actions is connected to the offering of the trees detailed after it.

The instructions that follow regarding sacrificing the *‘olah* open in a similar fashion:

And when (וכדי) you have offered up any of these woods upon the altar and the fire begins to burn them, you should *then* (והא באדין) begin to sprinkle the blood on the sides of the altar (8:1).

That is, burning the wood is a condition for offering the sacrifice. The rhetorical structure describing the order of sacrificing the *‘olah*’s organs is structured in the same way: “After it, *its neck*, and *after its neck, its forequarters*, and *after its forequarters*, the breast with the side” (בותרוהי צוארה ובתר צוארה ידוהי ובתר ידוהי ניצא) (עם כן דפנא) (*ALD* 8:4).²⁵

Thus, the reason that *ALD* includes together laws pertaining to purity, wood, and sacrifices is simply because these laws form one continuous ritual sequence.²⁶ Such a sequence is indeed worthy of the conclusion: “and thus let your actions follow due order (סרך)” (8:6). That is, the essence of the instructions concerns the order (סרך; ὁ τάξις) of their proper implementation.²⁷ The ritual sequence contains

²⁵ A similar phenomenon is found in the ancient order of sacrifice preserved in *m. Tamid* 1:2; 2:3–4.

²⁶ This explains why *ALD*, unlike later works such as Jubilees and the Temple Scroll, combines the laws of purity and sacrifice in a single sequence. Jubilees distinguishes between the laws of sacrifice (21:7–14) and the laws of the ablation of the priest (21:16–17); the laws of the burnt offering in the Temple Scroll are found in column XXIV, 1–8; other laws regarding sacrifice are found in columns XXIII–XXIX, and the laws of purity are found in columns LV–LVII.

²⁷ The Rabbinic Hebrew equivalent of the word סרך is סדר (“order”). Indeed, in *m. Tamid* (7:3), the order of the morning service in the Temple is called “the order of the daily offering.” A similar use of the word סדר is also found in a description relating to the days of the Second Temple in *m. Yoma* (5:7): “All acts of the Day of Atonement, which were said in order.” The actions of Yom Kippur are described in the Torah chronologically, and the instruction of the interpretive term “said

purification (washing and immersion), burning wood, and sacrificing the *'olah*. But what is this ritual?

B. Sacrificial Laws for the 'olah and the Morning 'olah

Previous studies of this text have described the sacrificial laws without paying attention to the internal connections. Since during the detailing of the order of offering of the organs of the *'olah* on the altar (8:3) it is mentioned that the head of the sacrifice is the head of a bull—those studies have interpreted the sacrifice mentioned in the text as a bovine offered by an individual as a whole burnt offering.²⁸ The mention of a bull would ostensibly rule out the possibility that the passage refers to the daily *tamid* sacrifice, which must be a lamb (Exod 29:38; Num 28:3; Ezek 46:13), or to burnt offerings in general, which are from a variety of animals (Lev 1). However, the textual evidence is not quite so clear:

ALD 8:3 (Cairo Geniza)

ואשה (read: ראשה)²⁹ הוי מהנסק לקדמין ועלויי חפי תרבא
ולא יתחזי³⁰ לה דם נסבת (read: נכסת) תורא

First offer up the <h>ead, and cover it with the fat,
so that the blood of the s<laughter>er of the bull will
not be seen

ALD (Greek translation)

τὴν κεφαλὴν ἀνάφερε πρῶτον καὶ κάλυπτε
αὐτὴν τῷ στέατι, καὶ μὴ ὀπτανέσθω τὸ αἷμα
ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς αὐτῆς

First offer up the head and cover it with the fat,
so that the blood on its head may not be seen.

In contrast to the Genizah version, the Greek text, which is fully preserved, here makes no mention of a bull. The text does not specify which animal is being offered up but simply warns against leaving the blood of the sacrifice's head exposed, which reflects the Aramaic phrase: ואל יתחזי דם על ראשה. Moreover, the use of the feminine personal pronoun (αὐτῆς) rules out the possibility that the Greek translator had a Greek word for “bull” in mind.³¹ Additionally, the word immediately preceding the word תורא in the Geniza version of ALD is erroneous; the phrase נסבת תורא is emended by all editors to נכסת<תורא and rendered “the slaughter of the bull.”³²

in order” is that the implementation needs to reflect the order in which it is said. For this term, see Yakir Paz, “From Scribes to Scholars: Rabbinic Biblical Exegesis in Light of the Homeric Commentaries” (PhD diss., The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2016) 274–75 (Hebrew).

²⁸ Kugler, *From Patriarch to Priest*, 104–6; Himmelfarb, “Earthly Sacrifice and Heavenly Incense,” 104–5; Schiffman, “Sacrificial Halakhah,” 186–87; Drawnel, *Aramaic Wisdom Text*, 275–76; Yonatan Sagiv, “Leviticus 1 and 6: From Contextual to Extra-Textual Exegesis,” *JIS* 63 (2012) 49–61, esp. 57–58.

²⁹ 4Q214 2, 3 רשאןשא 1Q21 45

³⁰ 4Q214 2, 4 ואל יתחזי

³¹ Greek equivalents of תורא, such as ταῦρος (9:1) and μόσχος (9:2) and the like, are grammatically masculine. Apparently, the pronoun used is f. sg. since it agrees with ὀλοκαῖρωσις (burnt offering), the implied subject—which actually appears in 7:2 and is still the topic of the paragraph (even though the animal offered is, in any case, a male specimen).

³² Greenfield and Stone, “Remarks on the Aramaic Testament of Levi,” 222; Greenfield, Stone, and Eshel, *The Aramaic Levi Document*, 83; cf. Kugler, *From Patriarch to Priest*, 100; Drawnel, *Aramaic Wisdom Text*, 134–35. Davila’s fresh proposal that נסבת should not be emended and means

The only parallel to this unique law of *ALD* appears in Hebrew in Tractate Tamid of the Mishnah in an identical context; that is, in the order of sacrificing the organs of an *'olah*: “He took the fat and placed it on the place of slaughter on the animal’s head above” (*m. Tamid* 4:2; see also 4:3).³³ The law in the Mishnah that details the concealing of blood mentions the place upon which one must place the fat (“the place of slaughter”) but not the type of animal being slaughtered. Since the Greek version does not mention an animal, the Hebrew parallel does not mention an animal, the reference to תורא in the Geniza version does not accord with any of the surrounding regulations (see below), and the Geniza version in this sentence is generally recognized as corrupt, the most plausible conclusion is that the Greek translation preserved the original formulation, where the type of animal is not mentioned.³⁴ This textual correction is necessary in order to understand the text in full. *ALD* does not describe a specific sacrifice brought as a voluntary offering but rather a sacrifice brought in connection with the priest entering the Temple and burning the fire on the altar. This is why the description of the sacrifice omits both the act of *semikha* (hand-leaning) and the atoning function of this action (Lev 1:4). There is no apparent reason for offering this sacrifice, such as a vow or a sin, and it has no apparent owner. All this shows that the sacrifice in question is part of the order of “the house of God” (בית אל) into which the priest enters, as described in the beginning of the section (7:1). In other words, this is an *'olah* which the priests must offer, not a voluntary *'olah* by the animal’s owner. A command of this sort to sacrifice an *'olah* in the morning when entering the Temple is found in Lev 6. It describes the sacrifice of the *'olah* as part of the ritual of burning the altar fire:

The fire on the altar shall be kept burning, not to go out: every morning the priest shall feed wood to it, lay out the burnt offering on it, and turn into smoke the fat parts of the offerings of well-being. A perpetual fire shall be kept burning on the altar, not to go out (Lev 6:5–6).

“freewill” (*Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 1:137 n. 11) must be rejected, aside from being contextually unlikely (at this point in the text, the context is the organs, not the motivation for the sacrifice); נסבת in this sense is attested only in much later strata of Aramaic. The first word in the verse, וראשה, is also undoubtedly corrupt, as all scholars have recognized. There is a possible connection between the first corruption (ראשה → ראשה), diverting a focus from the organ (head) to the sacrifice as a whole, and the second corruption (צורא → תורא), which shifts the focus from the organ (the neck) to the animal as a whole.

³³ Like *ALD*, the Mishnah also spends time on the order of sacrificing the organs; like *ALD*, the Mishnah also rules that it is required to bring the head and fat first among the organs of the *'olah*; and like *ALD*, the Mishnah is careful to say that one must cover the head of the animal with fat.

³⁴ The corruption preserved in the Geniza Aramaic version can be explained in at least one of two ways: (1) תורא was inserted by a scribe who did not identify the context; or (2) the original formulation that underlies the Geniza’s version also addresses not the type of the animal but the organ (the neck of the animal, as in the parallel in Tamid)—perhaps “the slaughter-[place] of the neck” (my thanks to Menahem Kister for this suggestion). Note the orthographic similarity between צורא and תורא (the standard spelling in Qumranic Aramaic is without the *alef* preceding the *resh*; see 11QtgJob XXXIV, 7 [Job 41:14, MT]; 4Q197 4 III, 10; 4Q538 1, 6; and once even in Qumranic Hebrew, in contrast to Biblical Hebrew, see 4Q266 2 I, 22).

ALD also describes the sacrifice of the *'olah* that follows the beginning of the daily order (washing, donning vestments, entering the Temple) and describes the sacrifice of the *'olah* as part of burning the altar fire. Moreover, *ALD* emphasizes that the order of actions includes burning the fire only once the *'olah's* blood has been dashed (8:1): “And when you have offered up any of these woods upon the altar and the fire begins to burn them, you should then begin to dash the blood (והא באדין תשרא למזרק דמא) on the sides of the altar.” This order of action could not match a description of an *'olah* brought by an individual, in which burning the wood is done after the dashing of blood (Lev 1:5–7).³⁵

The connection between the morning *'olah* and the order of instructions in *ALD* is stronger. According to the Torah, in the morning, the priests need to burn the wood, then place the *'olah*, and then offer the fat of the *shelamim* on it (Lev 6:5).³⁶ This description, which appears elsewhere in P as well, reflects a widespread view in priestly literature according to which sacrifices are offered “on” the morning *'olah*.³⁷ P's view regarding the function of the morning sacrifice is reflected at the

³⁵ Moreover, the assumption according to which *ALD* includes burning the wood as part of sacrificing an individual's *'olah* is problematic for an additional reason: as Yonatan Sagiv has shown, all Second Temple authors who paraphrase or comment on Lev 1 eliminated the description of the lighting of the altar fire from their descriptions of the individual burnt offering (Sagiv, “Leviticus 1 and 6”). This rare uniformity of interpretation includes the Temple Scroll (11QTemple^a XXXIV, 8–14), Philo (*Spec.* 1.199), and Josephus (*Ant.* 3.227). These sources read the instructions of Lev 1:7–8 as a future perfect (see, e.g., Josephus *Ant.* 3.227). It would thus be a description of an event that would have occurred earlier, in the morning, and not as part of the service for the offering of the individual's bull. Similarly, the *Sifra* eliminates the lighting of the fire from the description of the offering of a bull, insisting that it does not belong there but rather in the description of the offering of a lamb, namely, the morning *tamid* offering (*Sifra Nedava* 5:2–3 [ed. I. H. Weiss; Vienna, 1862] 7a–7b). See also *m. Tamid* 2:4 and the discussion in *b. Yoma* 27a–b. It is possible that *ALD* refers to feeding the fire and not to its kindling, as Milgrom interpreted the instruction in Lev 1:7 (*Leviticus 1–16*, 157–58; contra Martin Noth, *Leviticus: A Commentary* [OTL; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1977] 23; see also James W. Watts, *Leviticus 1–10* [Leuven: Peeters, 2013] 202). However, I reject this possibility, because *ALD* clearly did not interpret Lev 1:7 in this manner. If that had been the case, *ALD* would have placed the law following the dashing of the blood, rather than beforehand.

³⁶ It is not explicit that the *'olah* in Lev 6:5 refers to the morning offering (*tamid*). Milgrom, following traditional commentators, argued that 6:5 refers to the *tamid* (*Leviticus 1–16*, 388; T. M. Willis, *Leviticus* [AOTC; Nashville: Abingdon, 2009] 60). Rolf Rendtorff argued that the verse at least invokes it (*Leviticus* [BKAT 3; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag des Erziehungsvereins, 1992] 235). However, even if Lev 6:5 does not refer to the *tamid* in its original context in a prefinal form of the Priestly document in the Pentateuch, *ALD*—like all noncritical readers in antiquity—surely linked it to Exod 29:38–46 and Num 28:1–8 and understood חלבי השלמים to include any offerings of *shelamim*-suet placed throughout the day upon whatever remains of the morning *tamid*.

³⁷ A similar relationship between the daily *tamid* offering and the other sacrifices is found in Num 28, which lists the sacrifices for festivals. The chapter begins with the *tamid* (1–8) and then lists the festival sacrifices, repeating with each that it is offered “upon” (Num 28:10, 15, 24) or “in addition to” the daily offering (Num 28:23, 31; 29:6, 11, 16, 19, 22, 25, 28, 31, 34, 38). The lexicographers understood that על, as a technical phrase in P, was an instruction that meant “in addition to” (see *BDB*, על, 755) or “after” (as indeed it appears in the Temple Scroll XX, 3; XXIII, 8; XXV, 7–8); see Elisha Qimron, “The Biblical Lexicon in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls,” *DSD* 2 (1995) 300–302. However, in my opinion, the instructions given by the word are more clear-cut,

end of the section about the sacrifice of the *'olah* in *ALD*: “and thus let your actions follow due order and all your sacrifices be [acceptable] as a pleasing odor before the Most High God” (8:6). The correct implementation of the altar fire and the offering of the *'olah* will lead to “your sacrifices” (וכל קורבניך, in the plural form) being accepted. The reference to the totality of the sacrifices at the conclusion of the description of offering the sacrifice of an individual does not make any sense. On the other hand, because the sacrifices are all offered “on the *tamid* offering,” it is indeed reasonable to conclude the ritual of its offering by referencing the acceptance of all of the sacrifices “as a pleasing odor before the Most High God” (לריח ניחח קודם אל עליון).

The identification of this sacrifice as the morning *'olah* also explains the relationship between the ritual described in chapters 7 and 8 and the chapter that follows, which surveys the various sacrifices and prescribes the exact quantities of wood, salt, fine meal, oil, wine, and frankincense that must be brought with each. These quantities depend on the type of sacrifice (burnt offering or well-being offering) and on the type of animal offered.³⁸ The relationship between chapters 8 and 9 of *ALD* is thus similar to the relationship between the daily *tamid* sacrifice, the first to be offered in the morning, and the other sacrifices, offered “upon it” (Lev 6:5). We can now solve the thematic problem—why *ALD* chooses to engage only with the *'olah* brought by an individual (without any discussion of a *hattat*, *asham*, or *shelamim*). The text is addressing a priestly apprentice engaging in the daily priestly order, which includes the requisite morning *'olah*, upon which all other sacrifices are offered.

C. Summary

ALD thus contains three units of instructions that together describe a sequence of sacrificial actions performed at the start of each day. This sequence begins with the entrance of the priest into the Temple precincts, followed by the priest’s ablutions upon entering, the lighting of the altar fire with the appropriate wood, and finally the sacrifice of the whole burnt offering. These activities—ablution, kindling, and sacrifice—are the main components of the morning service in the Temple.

and על simply means “on,” as P describes the sacrifices as stacked on top of each other: “every morning the priest shall feed wood to it, lay out the burnt offering on it, and turn into smoke the fat parts of the offerings of well-being” (Lev 6:5; cf. 1:8; for the syntactic structure, see Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 388; and see *b. Pesah.* 58b).

³⁸ This chapter is based on Num 15 but differs from it on several substantial counts. See Kugler, *From Patriarch to Priest*, 106; Anders Hultgård, “The Burnt-Offering in Early Jewish Religion: Sources, Practices and Purpose,” in *Gifts to the Gods: Proceedings of the Uppsala Symposium 1985* (ed. Tullia Linders and Gullög Nordquist; Uppsala: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, 1987) 83–92, esp. 86–88; Himmelfarb, “Earthly Sacrifice and Heavenly Incense”; Schiffman, “Sacrificial Halakhah,” 190–93.

Understanding the text as an order of service allows us to place this work as a link in a rich and variegated tradition of “orders” of Temple service, beginning with instruction manuals for priests in the ancient Near East³⁹ and down to the Mishnah.⁴⁰

This analysis supports the generic classification of *ALD* as instructional literature for priests, as an inductee into the priesthood who is expected to learn the laws of sacrifice needs a practical order of service. However, even if this hypothesis about the original function of the law of the priesthood as an instructional manual is accurate, it is of course important to distinguish between deciphering *ALD*'s sources and the way in which these sources were compiled at the beginning of the Hellenistic period into the literary composition we now have depicting the ascent of Levi to the priesthood.⁴¹

ALD in its present form combines dreams and ritual instructions, which are intertwined into one first-person account, the characteristics of which are not fully described by classifying it as “a manual for priests.”⁴² In light of the new explanation proposed so far for the section of instructions, I will attempt in what follows to address the connection between the law (the order of sacrificing the daily offering) and the story in which it is combined.

³⁹ Examples of similar instructional literature were found in the archives of several temples throughout the ancient Near East. For a survey of literature, see James Watts, *Ritual and Rhetoric in Leviticus: From Sacrifice to Scripture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007) 39–46. We know of dozens of prescriptive texts from the Hellenistic period, formulated in the second or third person, which contain instructions of how to perform daily, monthly, and annual rituals. See Julia Krul, *The Revival of the Anu Cult and the Nocturnal Fire Ceremony at Late Babylonian Uruk* (Leiden: Brill, 2018) 58–60, 107–8, 140. An example of a text detailing the morning service from the Egyptian sphere is the papyrus from the Temple of Amon-Re (10th–9th cent. BCE); see *The Context of Scripture* (ed. William W. Hallo; 4 vols.; Leiden: Brill, 1997–2017) 1:55–56.

⁴⁰ “They read before him from the order of the day” (*m. Yoma* 1:3); “This is the order of the *tamid* offering for the service of the house of the Lord our God” (*m. Tamid* 7:3).

⁴¹ There is no doubt that *ALD* is a collection of sources. One of the best proofs of this is connected to the priestly instructions themselves: Levi twice meets Isaac in *ALD*; the first time (5:1) he receives a blessing, and the second time he receives instruction (5:8 ff.). These traditions do not fit into a single narrative sequence: Isaac is said to have first learned of Levi's priesthood in the second meeting, even though he himself had already blessed him with the priesthood at the first meeting. Levi also officiates as a knowledgeable priest at Bethel even before he is instructed by Isaac. Werman has suggested that *ALD* combines two originally independent traditions regarding Levi's meeting with Isaac (“Levi and Levites,” 216–18; cf. Kugel, “Levi's Elevation to the Priesthood,” 27–33, 52–58, 60–64).

⁴² Drawnel's characterization of *ALD* as a pedagogical text in light of its Mesopotamian context does not account for other features of the text that are better understood when the text is placed in its Hellenistic context (see Drawnel, “Literary Characteristics of the Visions”; Annette Yoshiko Reed, *Demons, Angels, and Writing in Ancient Judaism* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020] 19, 116–28).

■ The Narrative Framework

The instructions regarding the order of the *tamid* offering are related by Levi, quoting his grandfather, Isaac (“he said to me . . .,” *ALD* 6:1; “thus I saw my father Abraham . . .,” *ALD* 7:4), who taught him the laws of the priesthood in Abraham’s house (5:8). Since these instructions form a pedagogic text directed toward neophytes, such a discursive situation is justifiable even on purely rhetorical and pedagogic grounds.⁴³ However, it is not entirely clear why *ALD* specifically casts Isaac as the instructor, rather than Jacob, Levi’s own father.⁴⁴ In what follows, I suggest that it is in the light of intertextual connections between the “law of the priesthood” in this unit and the biblical narrative of the binding of Isaac that the “recruitment” of Isaac as the priestly teacher makes perfect sense.

ALD’s Isaac has seen Abraham examining the wood for worms and arranging upon the altar logs that were “split” (מִהַצֵּלֶחֶךְ, σχισμένα) (7:4).⁴⁵ This particular instruction is based on the biblical description of Abraham splitting the wood before departing to sacrifice Isaac (Gen 22:3). In *ALD*, Isaac attributes to Abraham the instructions regarding the twelve acceptable types of wood (“He said to me”) (7:5).⁴⁶

⁴³ Isaac addresses his grandson as “my son” three times in *ALD* (6:1, 2, 3). The literary framework of a father-son talk is appropriate in a text devoted to the transmission of wisdom, ethics (Ps 34:12), law, or astronomic lore (1 En. 76:14; 79:1; 82:1); see Drawnel, *Aramaic Wisdom Text*, 256.

⁴⁴ Kugel maintained that Levi was not instructed by Jacob, because the latter was not considered a priest in the Levi traditions. However, as Himmelfarb correctly notes, Jacob was a priest in Jubilees: he offers sacrifices (32:4–7, 27), establishes festivals (32:27–28), and it is he who consecrates Levi (32:3) (“‘A Kingdom of Priests’: The Democratization of the Priesthood in the Literature of Second Temple Judaism,” *The Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy* 6 [1997] 89–104, at 92). Christoph Berner (“Jacob or Levi—Who Is the Officiating Priest in *Jubilees* 30–32?,” *JSP* 26 [2016] 20–31) demonstrates that the traditions in Jub. 30–32 about Levi’s ascendance to the priesthood while Jacob was still alive (30:18–19, 31:13–17, 32:1, 3, 8–9) are not original Jubilees traditions. Accordingly, the tradition about Isaac’s priestly blessing to Levi is a secondary expansion of an earlier version of Jubilees. If so, the motivations for that tradition must be found in its original context, be it *ALD* itself or another untraceable Second Temple tradition. Jubilees 21:6–20 presents a different framework for the transmission of sacrificial laws, which derive from the books of Enoch and Noah found by Abraham (21:10; see below, n. 50). Within this framework, Abraham uses these books to instruct Isaac in sacrificial laws (45:16 indicates that Isaac served as a conduit for transmitting this sacred knowledge, via Jacob to Levi). By contrast, as we shall see, *ALD* 7:4, 5, 7 has Isaac learn the laws of sacrifice directly from observing Abraham’s actions.

⁴⁵ This is probably to avoid bringing even the smallest unclean animals to the altar (Greenfield and Stone, “Remarks on the Aramaic Testament of Levi,” 121). *ALD* uses the verb *bqr* for the inspection of the wood (see Lev 27:33). This may be a homiletical interpretation of ‘עֲצִים בְּבִקֵּר בְּבִקֵּר’ (thanks to Naphtali Meshel for this note). The rabbis use the verbs from the *pi’el* of *bqr* to describe the inspection of the offerings themselves for blemishes (*m. Tamid* 3:4; *Sifra Nedavah* 4; *Sifre Num* 142; *m. ‘Arak.* 2:5). Inspecting wood for worms appears in the Mishnah using other verbs; see *m. Mid.* 2:5. On the apparent contradiction with Jub. 21:13, according to which “any wood split and dark” is unfit for the altar, see VanderKam, *Jubilees*, 639; and cf. James L. Kugel, *A Walk through Jubilees: Studies in the Book of Jubilees and the World of Its Creation* (JSJSupp 156; Leiden: Brill, 2012) 123.

⁴⁶ A list of types of wood is also found in Jub. 21:12–13 and is mentioned in T. Levi 9:12. *M. Tamid* 2:3 seems to be responding to such a list when it states that “all wood is fit for the altar

These instructions are apparently rooted in a reading of the phrase עצי עולה, “wood for a burnt offering” (Gen 22:3), as if it were a genitive of quality: “whole burnt wood.”⁴⁷ While the lexical connection between the two texts has been noted in passing,⁴⁸ the implications of this subtle reference are worthy of consideration: Abraham, according to Genesis, is commanded to sacrifice Isaac as an *‘olah* sacrifice, and Isaac’s role, according to Genesis, is to carry the wood for the whole burnt offering (22:6). Accordingly, the author of *ALD* places the order of the sacrifice of the *‘olah* and the instructions regarding the wood in Isaac’s mouth. Thus, as the one bound to be offered as an *‘olah* in his youth, *ALD*’s Isaac has become an expert in the order of the *‘olah* sacrifice; and as the one who in his youth bore the wood upon his own shoulders, *ALD*’s Isaac becomes the expert in the laws of the *‘olah* wood.

The speaker’s identity as someone who was bound for sacrifice and the fact that the source of his priestly knowledge stems from the fact that his own body was to be offered as an *‘olah* is reflected in Isaac’s rhetoric as well: “For I saw my father Abraham being careful in this manner” (7:4).⁴⁹ Unlike the usual Second Temple motif that attributes the origin of priestly law to written works, Isaac describes the source of his knowledge as lived experience: he saw how Abraham prepared to sacrifice him as an *‘olah*. Isaac’s knowledge is, so to speak, inscribed in his own flesh, from firsthand experience,⁵⁰ since he himself was bound to the altar as a “lamb for the burnt offering” (Gen 22:7–8).⁵¹ In conclusion, the reference to the story of

fire” (with the exception of olive wood and that of the grapevine), although Rabbi Eliezer there presents a more “priestly” view and lists five more prohibited types of wood (*t. Men.* 9:14 [ed. M. S. Zuckerman, *Tosephta* (Jerusalem: Bamberger & Wahrman, 1963) 526]). On these lists, see VanderKam, *Jubilees*, 637–39.

⁴⁷ Thanks to Naphtali Meshel for this comment. See Bruce K. Waltke, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990) 145–46 (thanks to Gary Anderson for this reference). This understanding is reflected in Targum Pseudo-Jonathan to Gen 22:3: וקטע קיסין דויתא וקטע קיסין דויתא, ותאנתא ודיקלא דהזיין לעלתא, “he split the wood of olive, fig, and palm trees, fit for a burnt offering.” Perhaps, the criterion ‘די ריה תננהון בשים סליק’ is a literal interpretation of the phrase עצי עולה, meaning wood that goes up as smoke (thanks to Amit Gvanyahu for this suggestion). Note that Tg. Onq and Peshitta for Gen 22:3 employs the Aramaic verb צלה for rendering Hebrew בקע.

⁴⁸ Drawnel, *Aramaic Wisdom Text*, 272–73.

⁴⁹ In the Greek translation, there is no equivalent to ‘ארי כדנה חזיתי לאברהם אבי מיוזרה’, but the Geniza reading is supported by evidence from Qumran, ארנן ארי כדן חזית לאברהם (4Q214b fig. 2–6, 2); see Greenfield, Stone, and Eshel, *The Aramaic Levi Document*, 164.

⁵⁰ This is a unique attribution. Other units of instruction attribute their rituals to a written source (e.g., Jub. 4:19; 21:10; 45:16; *ALD* 10:10; 1QapGen XIX, 25; 4Q542, fig. 1 II, 10–12) or to oral tradition (Jub. 7:38–39). On the phenomenon of imaginary books in Second Temple literature and to the list of references to these books, see Lawrence H. Schiffman, “Pseudepigrapha in the Pseudepigrapha: Mythical Books in Second Temple Literature,” *RevQ* 21 (2004) 429–38.

⁵¹ The translation I employ here follows several English translations of Gen 22. While it is inaccurate for Gen 22:7–8 (in Biblical Hebrew, שׁ almost invariably denotes not “lamb” but “member of the flock,” i.e., a sheep or goat of either sex and of any age; however, in Gen 22, this שׁ turns out to be a mature ram), it may be correct for our purposes if, in the Hebrew used in the milieu of the author of *ALD*, שׁ had already come to be used in the narrower sense of “lamb” (see Naphtali S. Meshel, *The “Grammar” of Sacrifice: A Generativist Study of the Israelite Sacrificial System in*

“the binding of Isaac” is reflected in the identity of the speaker, his rhetoric, and the legal details.

ALD is thus one of the first examples in Jewish literature of the connection between the one-time *act* of the binding of Isaac and the daily Temple service. This connection is found already in the narrative itself, which identifies the place of which “it is said *to this day* on the mount where the Lord is seen” (Gen 22:14) with “one of the mountains” in “the land of Moriah,” upon which the binding of Isaac took place (Gen 22:2).⁵² In *ALD*, however, this connection goes beyond the location of the sacrificial cult, touching upon the ritual’s very nature.⁵³ *ALD* reads the story of the binding of Isaac in Gen 22 as the source for the order of the morning offering. The daily sacrificial cult of the Jerusalem Temple is thus cast as a perpetuation of the constitutive, seminal binding of Isaac.⁵⁴ As I have shown, the legal structure of the document reflects the idea that the *‘olah* is the ultimate sacrifice upon which the rest of the sacrifices are offered. The narrative framework shows that the *‘olah* sacrifice is based upon an even more significant sacrifice—the near sacrifice of Isaac on Mount Moriah. It is upon *this* primordial *‘olah* that all other sacrifices are offered.

The transmission of cultic instructions from Isaac to Levi carries additional meaning regarding the connection between priest and sacrifice. In the priestly biblical tradition, the Levites’ service is “instead of every firstborn” (Num 3:12, 41).⁵⁵ The Israelites, who owe God their firstborn sons, offer God the tribe of Levi instead (Num 3:11–13): like a sacrificial victim, the Levites are subject to the rituals

the Priestly Writings with A “Grammar” of Σ [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014] 31–32.

⁵² 2 Chr 3:1 further reports that Solomon built his temple on Mount Moriah. (See also Jon D. Levenson, *The Death and Resurrection of the Beloved Son: The Transformation of Child Sacrifice in Judaism and Christianity* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993] 114–24).

⁵³ The idea that laws can be derived from the story of the binding of Isaac is found in the Aramaic Targumim (see Joseph A. Fitzmyer, “The Sacrifice of Isaac in Qumran Literature,” *Bib* 83 [2002] 211–29, esp. 218–19) and in rabbinic midrash (see Jane L. Kanarek, *Biblical Narrative and the Formation of Rabbinic Law* [New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014] 31–66). In both cases, however, the laws derived concern slaughtering animals in particular and not the general order of the larger sacrificial rite.

⁵⁴ The identification of Isaac as the first *tamid* burnt offering is alluded in *m. Tamid* 4:1: “They would not tie up the lamb but rather bind (מעקידין, cf. Gen 22:9) it [hand and foot] . . . and this was its binding [עקידתו] . . .” A *baraita* says explicitly that the use of the verb עקר here is an allusion to the binding of Isaac: “hand and foot, like the binding of Isaac son of Abraham” (*b. Tamid* 31b). This connection, found also in *Lev Rab.* 2:11, describes the daily sacrificial service as a way of memorializing the heroic self-offering of Isaac; see Levenson, *Death and Resurrection*, 174; 185; Gary Anderson, *Sin: A History* (Yale University Press, 2009) 167; 201; 228 n. 11.

⁵⁵ For the obligation to offer up the firstborn not only of livestock but also of people (Exod 13:12–13; 22:28b), see Baruch J. Schwartz, “The Molek Prohibition,” *Shnaton: An Annual for Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern Studies* 12 (2000) 65–81, esp. 73 (Hebrew). In Num 18, the Levites are “a gift given to the Lord,” (6–7) a term used to describe animal and vegetable sacrifices as well (e.g., Exod 28:38; Lev 23:38). See Ada Taggar-Cohen, “Law and Family in the Book of Numbers: The Levites and the Tidennūtu Documents from Nuzi,” *VT* 48 (1998) 74–94.

of hand-laying and “elevation” (תנופה; Num 8:5–26).⁵⁶ This is a case not only of exchanging the firstborn for the Levites but also of exchanging sacrifice (of the firstborn) with service (of the Levites). This ancient idea—portraying the priest as a sacrifice and his service as a sublimation of sacrifice—is given new expression in *ALD* where Isaac, the educator of Levites, himself served as a sacrifice, and his ritual knowledge was acquired through his experience as victim. Isaac teaches the laws regarding the wood he carried on his back during his journey to the land of Moriah to be bound, and he instructs Levi in the laws of sacrifice, while remembering his father, who had prepared to sacrifice him (7:4).⁵⁷

The unique, unfulfilled human sacrifice translates into the regular, quotidian priestly service. While in the biblical story, *Abraham* offers up a ram as a burnt offering “instead of his son” (22:13), in *ALD* the passive biblical figure of Isaac⁵⁸ is transformed into the figure of the priestly teacher, and human sacrifice is sublimated into priestly service.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ These practices are found in the Hebrew Bible only with regard to animal sacrifice. See Jacob Milgrom, “The Literary Structure of Numbers 8:5–22 and the Levitic Kippūr,” in *Perspectives on Language and Text: Essays and Poems in Honor of Francis I. Andersen’s Sixtieth Birthday, July 28, 1985* (ed. Edgar W. Conrad and Edward G. Newing; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1987) 205–9, esp. 207. In addition, the description of the consecration of the Levites carries sacrificial overtones (והקריבה את הלויים, Num 8:9; see also Exod 40:12, 14; Lev 8:6; Num 16:9; Ezek 43:19, 44:15). *ALD* uses similar terminology in Levi’s prayer, where he asks to become a priest: “and bring me near (וקרביני) to be your servant” (3:10). Levi’s proximity to “God and all his holy ones” (6:5) is the basis for his induction into a life devoted to holiness and purity; see T. Levi 4:2 (Hollander and Jonge, *The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, 141).

⁵⁷ It is possible also that this composition, portraying a grandfather teaching his grandson how to offer sacrifices in accordance with his father’s sacrifice of himself, is an echo of the constitutive ethos of the tribe of Levi: “who said of his father and mother, ‘I regard them not’” (Deut 33:9). *ALD* sublimates the parental sacrifice of a son into a moment of priestly education: Abraham did not sacrifice his son in the end, but he taught him to sacrifice; and Isaac, who was nearly sacrificed himself, becomes the instructor of priestly lore.

⁵⁸ The character of Isaac, who, in the biblical story, serves as an object of his father’s actions, comes to life in later traditions, which emphasize Isaac’s willingness to be sacrificed (4QPseudo-Jubilees^a [4Q225]; see Florentino García Martínez, “The Sacrifice of Isaac in 4Q225,” *Qumranica Minora II: Thematic Studies on the Dead Sea Scrolls* [ed. Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar; Leiden: Brill, 2007] 131–44, esp. 139–40; 4 Macc 13:10–12; LAB 32:3, 40:2; Josephus, *Ant.* 1.232; 1 Clem. 31:3 [for later NT references see R. J. Daly, “The Soteriological Significance of the Sacrifice of Isaac,” *CBQ* 39 (1977) 45–75, esp. 48]; Tg. Ps.-J. Gen 22:10; Tg. Neof. and Frg. Tg. P for Gen 22:10; *Sifre Deut* 32 [ed. L. Finkelstein (New York, 1969) 58]; *Gen. Rab.* 56:8). However, *ALD* casts Isaac, not as a heroic prototype of Jewish martyr, but rather as the father of the priesthood.

⁵⁹ The idea is also found, in a different way, in Jubilees, which describes Levi himself as a human tithe. According to Jubilees (32:3), Jacob tithed his children and counted them backwards from Benjamin to Levi, who landed “in the Lord’s share” (see also Tg. Ps.-J. Gen 32:25; Kugel, “Levi’s Elevation to the Priesthood,” 5). Levi’s “share” thus stems from his being a tithe offering to the Lord from the fruit of man. The image of the priest as a sacrifice takes yet another form in the Epistle to the Hebrews, which describes Jesus as a high priest (2:17), appointed to the priesthood despite his origin in the tribe of Judah (7:14) by God (5:4, 10), after he offered himself up as a sacrifice (5:9–10). Jesus’s ultimate sacrifice atones for the sins of the people with his own blood (9:12, 14) and thus replaces the sacrificial cult (7:27, 10:10–12). Several scholars have dealt with

■ Conclusion

There are three legal sections that describe the actions of the priest from the moment he enters the Temple until the ascent of his sacrifice as the Lord desires (chs. 7–8): purification, burning the wood, and offering the *'olah*, which combine into one order of actions that describes the daily worship done at the beginning of the day of service in the Temple. The identification of the type of ritual explains the internal connection between the laws that appear in these chapters, as well as the connection of these chapters to the list of sacrifices that follows after; since according to biblical priestly literature, all sacrifices are offered “on” the *'olah* sacrifice, *ALD* describes the materials offered together with all sacrifices as being “on” the sacrifice of the *'olah*, in accordance with the biblical rhetorical model. These chapters, therefore, do not include a random collection of laws or a collection of stringent laws but rather a full display of the laws of sacrifices that emphasizes the connection of all of the sacrifices to the *'olah* sacrifice. These laws appear in the text as given by Isaac to Levi. The connection between narrative and law is portrayed in two ways: First, *ALD* codes the one-time extreme event of the binding of Isaac into the cultic system by basing all sacrifices on the daily *'olah*, the laws of which are in turn derived from the story of the ultimate sacrifice of Isaac. Second, *ALD* articulates the connection between priest and the sacrifice through the identity of the speaker and the description of priestly education as the transmission of “living knowledge” from Isaac (the sacrifice) to Levi (the priest).

the relationship between the messianic-angelic characterization of Levi in Second Temple sources and the messianic priesthood of Jesus (see Eric Mason, “*You Are a Priest Forever*”: *Second Temple Jewish Messianism and the Priestly Christology of the Epistle to the Hebrews* [STDJ 74; Leiden: Brill, 2008]). We can now say that this motif of the priest as an offering is foreshadowed by *ALD*.