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Israel as the Living Temple of God (Exod 19:5–6)

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Abstract: Exod 19:3–8 and the description of Israel's identity as a chosen nation bound by a covenant with YHWH (Exod 19:5–6: special possession, kingdom of priests, holy nation) have much in common both with statements known from deuteronomistic and priestly texts as well as from the so-called School of Holiness. This multiplicity of thematic, conceptual and linguistic connections makes the source classification and dating of this text quite difficult. The only consensus today is that it was written at the earliest just after the Babylonian exile. In this paper, the description of Israel's identity in Exod 19:5–6 is linked to the priestly concept of the portable sanctuary, in which the specific location of the sanctuary (the sanctuary in the desert) is no longer important and not only the king or the priests are responsible for it, but the entire nation. This vocation is to be realized by the nation's attitude of faithfulness to God (Exod 19:5a) in everyday life. In this way, sacred space in Israel goes beyond the walls of the temple and even Jerusalem (as according to Ezechiel), nor is it any longer limited to selected moments (visit to the sanctuary), but encompasses the entire life of the nation in all its aspects.

Keywords: Israel's identity, personal possession, kingdom of priests, holy nation, portable sanctuary

It is right to note that in Exod 19:3–8 the issue is about the Israel's identity as the chosen nation and its role in relation to other nations of the earth.[1] However, the proposal made to this nation on the eve of the covenant is not only in the context of the narrative of the events at the foot of Sinai, but is also the quintessence of a certain reflection on the essence of the bond between YHWH and his nation and on the role of the temple and the sense of *sacrum* [sacred] associated with it. It is this process that we want to look at in this paper. Its analysis – as we assume – will allow us to fully understand the meaning of the "invitation" that YHWH addressed to Israel.

1. God – Holy and Sanctifying

Holiness (*sacrum*; Hebrew: *qdš*) is an attribute belonging primarily to God himself (Isa 6:1–3). It defines the fact that he represents something completely different from the created reality, referred to as *profanum* (cf. Num 10:10). God is different,[2] therefore nothing in the world can materially represent him – wrote a later author from

1 Pikor, "Tożsamość," 93–112.

2 Etymologically, *qōdeš* (from *qd*?) can mean separation, setting something aside; cf. *HAL* II, 1003. However, the issue of etymology is the subject of unresolved debate; cf. Kornfeld –Ringgren, "qdš," 532.

the period after the Babylonian exile (cf. Deut 4:15–19),[3] commenting on the prohibition of making divine images contained in the Decalogue and the priestly concept of man in the role of *imago Dei.* However, this divine holiness can be experienced on earth. This is done first through access to the temple – a place that was constructed to be "a piece of heaven on earth."[4] On the one hand, its decor, furnishings and rules of access reflected human ideas about heaven (cf. 1 Kgs 6),[5] and, on the other hand, gave "those living under heaven" the opportunity to contact this transcendent God. The way in which this contact took place is well reflected in the instructions for the construction of the altar (Exod 20:24–26) – one of the oldest biblical testimonies about the way the ancient Israelites thought about their worship. Israel built its altars in a strictly defined way[6] and offered sacrifices on them (Exod 20:24a, 25), and YHWH "came" and blessed the participants of this ritual (Exod 20:24b).[7] Everything that served the purpose of this worship (places, objects, people)[8] was separated from the sphere of creation, sanctified by this presence of God and dedicated exclusively to him. Anyone who wanted to enter and experience this sacred space had to fulfil certain conditions – to ritually sanctify/purify themselves. Thus, holiness, even though it was an exclusive attribute of God – his "identity mark" – could also be granted to his creatures, bring them out of the *profanum* sphere and, at the same time, somehow "deify" this sphere, make it a part of the divine *sacrum*. Holiness was therefore a "cure" (cf. Exod 15:26: YHWH as physician) that could heal man himself, as well as space and time in the sphere of creation.[9]

Holiness, then – as something intrinsically divine and inseparable from him; something that best describes the identity of the God of Israel – is at the same time something that he can "physically" grant not only to places, objects and times associated with him, but also to people. Firstly, it was about the temple staff, but then also about every Israelite whom God sanctifies, purifies and heals.[10] Looking at it from the *via negativa* side, holiness can be understood as a static reality, something that is somehow taken out of the *profanum* sphere (place, objects, time, people) and dedicated exclusively to God. On the other hand, however, holiness is at the same time something dynamic, something to be realized in everyday life, a specific call to *imitatio Dei*.[11]

3 Lemański, "Zakaz."
4 Janowski, "Der Himmel auf Erde," 229–260; Lemański, "Kilka uwag," 16–20.
5 For an interpretation, cf. Knauf, *1 Könige 1–14*, 235–241. For more on this issue, see Koch, *Gottes*.
6 Reichert, "Altar," 5–10.
7 Janowski, *Anthropologie*, 302–303.
8 Kratz, "Heiligkeit," 258.
9 For more on this issue, see Lemański, "Kilka uwag," 25–28.
10 For more, cf. Lemański, "Święty Izraela," 204–205.
11 Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 731; Hieke, *Levitikus 1–15*, 123.

2. Sanctuary among the Nation

The temple was the place where God made himself present. In it, through worship practices, one could experience him, "see His face" and hear him (Ps 42:2–4; 48:9). In this place, heaven met earth. By observing the appropriate norms, one could find oneself there, meet God and experience his blessing.[12] This way of thinking about the temple, however, has evolved.

The change in perception of the role and place of the temple in ancient Israel was significantly influenced by two historical events. The first was the religious reform associated with the times of King Josiah (traditionally 622 BC) and the theological milieu active at that time, referred to as deuteronomistic (2 Kgs 22–23).[13] One of its main assumptions was the so-called centralization of worship – officially restricted to the Jerusalem Temple only.[14] The very assumptions of this reform do not yet mention Jerusalem (cf. Deut 12), only the "chosen place" of God, but the indication of Jerusalem is already clear in the narrative contained in 1–2 Kgs. This is the first moment when there is a significant change in relation to the information from Exod 20:24a: "In every place where I cause My name to be remembered" (cf. Exod 21:6a).[15] The place for God's name henceforth will be only one central sanctuary chosen by him. This change had its consequences. The central sanctuary made it possible to organize the worship and change it from the situation when there were many sanctuaries, and therefore not always orthodox. This place then gave the certainty of God's presence, because it was there that he could always and "tangibly" be met.[16] Such a belief, however, gave rise to a false sense of "certainty" that, therefore, nothing bad could happen to this place, and thus also to those who attend it (cf. Jer 7:1–15, esp. v. 4: the so-called *Sicherheitsslogan*).[17]

This change of thinking was caused by the second important historical event: the destruction of Jerusalem and the First Temple and the Babylonian exile. The so-called Second Temple, which was reconstructed, continued to be located in Jerusalem, and the reviving community of post-exile Israel continued to find its central reference point there. Mentally, however, attitudes to the place had changed quite considerably. The beginnings of this process can already be found in Ezechiel's visions, in which the prophet sees the glory (*kābôd*) of YHWH leaving the temples (Ezek 10:18–22) and Jerusalem (Ezek 11:22–25). The place previously "guaranteeing"

12 On the theology of the temple before the Babylonian exile, cf. Koch, *Gottes*, 15–43.

13 Lemański, *Tora*, 618–626.

14 The fact that reference is made to finding the "book of the law" may suggest that the process of centralization began much earlier and only received a stronger impetus in Josiah's time; cf. Lemański, "Hezekiah," 29–62.

15 On various places of worship in the times preceding this reform, cf. Zwickel, "Orte der Heiligkeit," 243–252.

16 Fretheim, *Exodus*, 273.

17 Fischer, *Jeremia 1–25*, 296–297.

his presence and constant access to him becomes a place deprived of these privileges. It becomes a place "without (the glory of) God." This two-stage process may, like the four stages in the history of sin (cf. Ezek 8:3b–17), symbolize the total nature of the event.[18] On the other hand, the fact that God left a place that he himself had chosen as the space of his activity and presence shows that both of these realities are not limited to local and material architectural structures, but characterize a personal God[19] who now – through his "exodus" from sinful Jerusalem (the symbol of all Israel) – wants to manifest his presence among the exiles in Babylonia.[20] In his vision of the new temple (Ezek 40–48), the prophet Ezechiel emphasizes two more fundamental changes. For him, the temple was no longer the domain of an earthly king, who no longer played the role of its guardian. What's more, YHWH no longer resides in this "new" temple personally. The role of his visible manifestation in it is now played by "the glory of God" (Ezek 43). In this vision, moreover, the holy is no longer the sanctuary itself, but the entire city (Ezek 48:35). The entire Jerusalem, therefore, and not just its temple, thus becomes a sacred space.[21]

Ezechiel's vision undoubtedly anticipates and partly reflects the later, priestly way of perceiving the glory of God, understood not only as a form of manifesting his power by YHWH, but also as an expression of God's constant presence among his nations (cf. *miškān*)[22] wandering in the desert.[23] The priestly description of this sanctuary (Exod 25–31; 35–40) comes from the period after the Babylonian exile. It is undoubtedly about an idealistic and at the same time archaizing projection of the *status quo* from the Second Temple period. Although the structure of the Exodus narrative still reflects the ancient Near Eastern pattern: victory over the forces of chaos (Exod 1–15) and the building of the temple (Exod 35–40), enriching it with a description of the covenant (Exod 19–24) and the conditions of YHWH's sojourn among Israel (Exod 32–34) (non-P texts),[24] the priestly supplement shows some significant corrections in relation to the old traditions. This description lacks, first of all, the signs of the former royal ideology associated with the sanctuary.[25] The very fact that the sanctuary is portable and built in the desert means that it is no longer associated with any particular place or ruler (cf. Amos 7:10–15, esp. v. 13; 2 Sam 7; Ps 132). Moreover, the priestly authors no longer even link it to Solomon and Jerusalem (so deuteronomistic theology). This is not only an anti-monarchical manifestation, but even an anti-temple one, if the temple were to be understood

18 Sedlmeier, *Das Buch Ezechiel*, 153–154, 162–163.
19 Pikor, *The Land*, 177.
20 Pikor, *The Land*, 88.
21 Zwickel, "Orte der Heiligkeit," 251.
22 Majewski, *Mieszkanie Chwały*.
23 Collins, "kbd," 581.
24 On the sanctuary-covenant relationship, cf. Lemański, "Kilka uwag," 23–24.
25 On this ideology, cf. Lemański, "Kilka uwag," 16–17.

in the traditional sense as the domain of royal power.[26] The most important now is the connection between the sanctuary and the nation itself, and for this reason the chosen nation begins its experience of God's presence in the desert, outside of any specific location of the sanctuary dedicated for him. Another experience while continuing to wander the desert in oases, places also difficult to any specific location, will only strengthen this priestly topos. In this way, the desert, a place so far associated with the forces of chaos, will turn into "a valuable place filled with importance."[27] This is a clear effect of the experience gained in the Babylonian exile and a consequence of the fall of the monarchy, which did not live up to the hopes placed in it (cf. 2 Sam 7:1–16; Ps 132).[28]

3. Kingdom of Priests and Holy Nation (Exod 19:6)

The pericope from Exod 19:3–8 was treated for a long time as a "foreign" body in the context of Exod 19, a chapter generally attributed to the so-called Yahwist,[29] and now the so-called the Non-Priestly (non-P) editors responsible for the Sinai pericope.[30] Nowadays, it is noticed that the message contained therein is part of both deuteronomistic, priestly and post-priestly theological thought.[31] However, the assessment of the context closer to this statement also changes. The aforementioned fragment appears in it not only as a later supplement (post-P),[32] but also as an integral element in the narrative of the events in Sinai (the so-called *Exodus Composition* of 530 BC[33]).

One could be looking here for some fragment of the ancient liturgy associated with the covenant renewal ceremony or its poetic summary.[34] However, the vocabulary used in Exod 19:4–6 is quite uncommon, which rather contradicts its frequent use within such a presumed liturgical celebration.[35] Its uniqueness is related to the uniqueness of the events described in a broader context, namely the ceremony of making a covenant between YHWH and Israel. This is a spectacular and one-time event, unprecedented and not repeated in the future with any other nation. Israel is

26 As according to Fretheim, "The Priestly," 313–329; Lemański, "Kilka uwag," 20–22.
27 Dozeman, *Exodus*, 574.
28 Lemański, "2 Sm 7,8–16," 187–203.
29 Lemański, *Księga Wyjścia*, 401–402.
30 Schmid, *Literaturgeschichte*, 126–128.
31 Pikor, "Tożsamość," 95–97.
32 Ska, "Exodus 19,3–6," 139–164; Römer, "Provisorische," 132–136.
33 This, in a rather convincing analysis, is what Rainer Albertz suggests, *Exodus 19–40*, 10–11, 27.
34 Durham, *Exodus*, 261.
35 Alexander, *Exodus*, 363.

invited by God[36] to a unique relationship and to experience the related his closeness. This, however, requires Israel to maintain an appropriate state, an attitude that detaches Israel from the *profanum* sphere and transfers it to the *sacrum* sphere.

The statement from Exod 19:6 that interests us should therefore be read in this context and, above all, as something subordinated to the declaration from the verse preceding it (Exod 19:5). In it, God proposes to the Israelites that they should be his "*s*^{e}*gullāh* [chosen nation] among all the nations." This is the term sometimes used to describe the royal treasury (1 Chr 29:3; Eccl 2:8) and the objects constituting the special, private possession within it. Referring it now to the chosen nation is not surprising (cf. Deut 7:6; 14:2; 26:18; Ps 135:4; Mal 3:17). However, in the current context, it acquires a special meaning. Israel is already the chosen nation, but now is the time for it to start giving something of itself.[37] God's speech, begun in Exod 19:4–5, will find its climax in concluding a covenant (Exod 24) and fulfilling (cf. Exod 19:5a, 8) related laws and orders (Exod 20:23). This covenant will allow God to dwell among Israel and be with them wherever the nation goes. The glory of YHWH, so spectacularly manifested at the top of Sinai (Exod 19:16–19), will ultimately descend to a portable sanctuary built in the desert (Exod 40:34). The text of Exod 19:6 shows what all this will consequently mean for Israel and how the Israelites will become "*s*^{e}*gullāh* [the chosen nation] among all the nations."

The language in Exod 19:6 is ceremonial, almost poetic. The first of the phrases used in it (*mamleket kōhānîm*) has no parallel in other Old Testament statements. The second phrase (*gôj qādôš*) already has (in addition to Lev and Deut, cf. also Isa 62:12). The two first nouns *mamleket* and *gôj* can be aligned with each other, an example of which can be found in 1 Kgs 18:19 (*gôj ûmamlākāh*).[38] This fact leads to some debate. "Kingdom" seems to be a more inclusive term than "nation" and one would therefore expect the reverse order: "holy nation... kingdom of priests." Then the *kōhānîm* would be a specific example for the *qādôš*, and the *mamleket* would be a special form of organization for the *gôj.* In other biblical texts, *gôj* is usually preceded by *mamlākāh* (Ps 46:7; 79:6; 105:13 = 1 Chr 16:20; 2 Chr 32:15).[39] In Exod 19:6, however, there is a different order. However, the conjunction *waw* allows us to think that they are equivalent[40] to each other and the second lexeme does not soften or narrow the first, but only expresses the same idea differently as the first. Both lexemes then differ formally. The first consists of two nouns, and the second consists of a noun and an adjective.

36 Patrick, "The Covenant," 148–149.
37 Lemański, "Święty Izraela," 205–206.
38 Jacob, *Das Buch Exodus*, 537.
39 Propp, *Exodus 19–40*, 157.
40 GKC § 154.

3.1. Kingdom of Priests

The combination of the terms "kingdom" and "nation" still occurs in Ps 46:7, but the combination of "kingdom" and "priests" (*mamleket kōhānîm*), is the *hapax legomenon* in the Old Testament.[41] Plural nouns can also have an abstract sense, and the lexeme could just as well be understood in the sense of "kingdom of priests" or "priestly kingdom" (cf. Vulgate: *regnum sacerdotale*), which would balance well the second of the phrases: "holy nation."[42] On the other hand, also *mamlākāh* can mean both a mode of social organization (kingdom) and dignity (royalty), so the sense of "royal priesthood" would also be theoretically possible. However, translators mostly choose the variant "kingdom of priests."[43] But there is another interpretive difficulty contained in this syntactic structure. It can be understood in two main ways.[44] In Israel there are priests who enjoy the special privilege of approaching the true God, which makes all Israelites "*s*^{e}*gullāh* [the chosen nation] among all the nations," or all of Israel acts as a "mediator" between God and other nations (cf. Latin: *pontifex* – "bridge maker"). One other interpretation variant assumes the possibility that this is in fact a hierocracy, that is, a form of organization of the Judean community that dominated in the Persian era. Israel would then be a nation ruled by priests. However, later (Maccabean times) the king and the priest had separate functions. So this is not about hierocracy, but something that should characterize more than just a "privileged" priestly group in access to the holiest places of the sanctuary. Compared to other nations, all of Israel has the privilege of being particularly close to the true God, and therefore all of Israel should also be distinguished by its special holiness.[45] Assuming a parallel status between the terms "kingdom" and "nation," we can conclude that the first statement also refers to the entire nation that enjoys royal and priestly privilege (cf. the LXX: *basileion hierateuma*).[46] The idea expressed by this phrase is later well described by the prophet Isaiah (Isa 61:6), and the first realization of this prediction may be the fact that Moses designated young men (not priests, whom he had not yet appointed!) to offer sacrifices related to the making of the covenant (Exod 24:5).[47] There are more arguments for such an interpretation.[48] In the immediate context, reference is made to the need for the entire nation to maintain ritual purity before getting close to YHWH (Exod 19:10–15), although throughout the description of the preparation for this meeting, hierarchy is clearly maintained and

41 New Testament adaptations: "royal priesthood" cf. 1 Pet 2:9; later also Rev 1:6; 5:10; 20:6.
42 Propp, *Exodus 19–40*, 157.
43 Propp, *Exodus 19–40*, 157.
44 Hamilton, *Exodus*, 304. In more detail, there are even four ways, cf. Lemański, "Święty Izraela," 206.
45 Albertz, *Exodus 19–40*, 41.
46 Alexander, *Exodus*, 359.
47 Rendtorff, "Covenant," 389.
48 Propp, *Exodus 19–40*, 157.

the nation can only proceed to the foot of the mountain (Exod 19:23). In Exod 22:30, the call to be "holy men for Me" also refers to the entire nation, and the sacrifices completing the covenant are offered – by the aforementioned young men (Exod 24:5; however, there are still no priests; cf. Lev 8). The deuteronomistic statements, which will be discussed below (Deut 7:6; 26:19; 28:9), being an interpretative reworking of Exod 19:6, also indicate being/becoming holy and concern the entire nation. Korah's objections to Moses and Aaron are also based on the belief that "the entire nation is holy" (Num 16:3). Ps 114:1–2 may also refer to Exod 19:5–6.[49] Judah/Israel are mentioned there as "his sanctuary" (*qådšô*) and "his dominion" (*memšālāh*), respectively.[50] All of the requirements for the Israelites, i.e. the issue of their diet, marriages, conjugal life, mourning, hygiene (cf. Deut 14) are about all of Israel being a holy nation (cf. Deut 7:1–11, esp. v. 6). As William Propp[51] correctly concludes, this does not mean that Israel no longer needs priests. It only means that all of Israel should watch over the quality/holiness of its everyday life (cf. Lev 19:2). In a sense, we can talk about a kind of royalization of all Israel. A similar idea concerning man as such (male and female) also appeared in the priestly description of creation (Gen 1:1–2:3), in which man is perceived by God as a kind of viceregent ruling over other living creatures and over the earth.[52] This mission of man begins to be realized if the two texts are linked, starting with choosing and sanctifying Israel.[53]

Such an extension of priestly "competence" is not entirely new. The religious tradition of Israel has preserved the idea of offering the eldest, firstborn son to God (Exod 13:2, 11–16). Micah – one of the characters in the Book of Judges – introduced one of his sons into priestly activities (Judg 17:5; cf. 1 Sam 7:1), before he was finally replaced by an wandering Levite (Judg 17:12). This change is of course an element of the later orthodox correction[54] and a trace of a certain evolution in which the right to serve as priests was gradually taken over by the Levites (cf. Num 16:3 and the already mentioned Korah's objections), and then by the clan of Aaron. This was not without internal conflicts and disputes over who among the Levites ultimately had the right to serve as priests, as is evident in many texts.[55] Nevertheless, the concept of a "universal priesthood" remained. It is mentioned in the so-called Trito-Isaiah (Isa 61:6), ultimately expanding the priestly circle even to representatives of foreign nations (Isa 66:21).[56] Israel is the firstborn son of YHWH among them (cf. Exod 4:22–23),

49 Cf. Hossfeld – Zenger, *Psalmen 101–150*, 266; Ross, *A Commentary*, 402.
50 It is a term related to *mamlākāh/malkût* (cf. Jer 34:1; Ps 145:13) – meaning "an area of someone's reign, someone's dominion"; *HAL* I, 564.
51 Propp, *Exodus 19–40*, 158.
52 Lemański, "Człowiek," 97–118, esp. 101–103.
53 Alexander, *Exodus*, 368.
54 On this issue, cf. Samuel, *Von Priestern*, 327–335, esp. 331.
55 In Samuel, *Von Priestern,* cited above, there is a comprehensive discussion of this process and related texts.
56 Lemański, "I także z nich," 151–172.

and therefore every firstborn son and every firstborn of the cattle and small flock in it is sanctified to God (Exod 22:28–29). The quintessence of this logic is the call for the Israelites to be holy people (Exod 22:30). This concept would later be developed and translated into the requirements for every Israelite in everyday life by authors from the so-called School of Holiness (H).[57] Exod 19:5–6 also has the prophet Malachi in mind when he writes about Israel as the possession of YHWH of Hosts and about the son from whom he expects obedience (Mal 3:17). Although both cases involve a future prediction, in Deut 7:6, and thus in the context of making the covenant, it will ultimately already be mentioned that this choice has been made and Israel has become the possession of YHWH (cf. Jer 2:3). Malachi, however, moves everything into the future again, reminding of the conditions to be met (Mal 3:16).[58] This means, as one commentator concludes, that "Israel remains 'treasures possession' *de jure*, but during the Day of Yahweh the privilege and status concomitant with Israel's divine election will be manifest *de facto*."[59] More importantly, the prophet, unlike in all other places where Israel is referred to as *s*^{e}*gullāh* YHWH, does not see this status as a privilege belonging to all Israelites, but attributes it to those among them whom he describes as "those who feared YHWH" (Mal 3:16).[60]

3.2. Holy Nation

This phrase (*gôj qādôš*), unlike the previous one, has numerous equivalents in the Old Testament, especially in the deuteromistic context (cf. Deut 7:6; 14:2, 21; 26:19; 28:9). There, however, the emphasis is on *ʿam* in the sense of "nation," since *gôj* is a term usually reserved for foreign nations. This is a rather sharp distinction, which, however, disappears in later texts.[61] Already in the first of the patriarchal promises, Abraham hears that he is to become a "great nation" (*gôj gādôl*) (Gen 12:2; cf. 18:18; 35:11; 46:3). The current change of the adjective therefore clearly shifts the emphasis from quantitative to qualitative gain.[62] Basically, there is not much difference in the use of the adjective "holy" for the nation between the complex of texts from Exodus and Leviticus and Deuteronomy (cf. Exod 19:6; 22:30; Lev 11:44–45; 19:2; 20:7, 26; 21:6). However, a significant shift of emphasis is noticeable. In this first complex, holiness is, as it were, just given. Israel is to "be" a holy nation. Meanwhile, in Deuteronomy it is assumed that Israel is "already" a holy nation (cf. Deut 7:6; 14:2, 21[63]).

57 Olyan, "Ihr Sollt," 167–173.
58 Kessler, *Maleachi*, 283–284. Verses 16–17 are probably a later gloss; cf. Schart, *Maleachi*, 133.
59 Hill, *Malachi*, 341.
60 Schart, *Maleachi*, 128.
61 Cody, "When," 1–6.
62 Hamilton, *Exodus*, 305.
63 In this case, the status of being "possession" and "holy nation" for YHWH (vv. 2, 21) is related to the division of animals into clean and unclean and rules regarding diet (these regulations were later reworked in Lev 11).

From the point of view of the synchronic analysis, both lexemes (*ʿam qādôš; ʿam s*^{e}*gullāh*) used in the first of the deuteronomistic texts cited above are derivatives of the prediction in Exod 19:5–6. It can be assumed that the editing of the Pentateuch or the Hexateuch, combining the complex of Exod-Num with Deut, was aimed at closing a certain process related to the formation of Israel as the chosen nation. In Moab, the nation is already not only the "possession" of YHWH, but also the "holy nation." Holiness in this case means the separation of Israel from all other nations and its destiny to be a special possession. This situation marks a kind of demarcation line between Israel and the other nations of the earth in the likeness of God's holiness, which distinguishes him from his creation (cf. Deut 10:14–15). Since Israel is a chosen nation and destined to be the special possession of YHWH, in practice this also means a special privilege of being close to YHWH. Going "to His side" and thus separating (*qdš*) from other nations belonging to the *profanum* sphere (cf. Lev 10:10: *haḥol*). This holiness thus justifies the orders in Deut 7:2b–5. At the same time, however, it is about quality that is not something given by nature. It was given to Israel precisely because it was chosen (*bḥr*) by YHWH.[64] The statements in Deut 26:19; 28:9, however, are already closer to the logic known from the Exodus and Leviticus.[65] However, this refers to the post-exile supplements (German: *Fortschreibung*) added in the first case to the deuteronomistic formula of the covenant (Deut 26:16–17 + 26:18–19), and in the second case (Deut 28:7–14) to the prediction in Deut 28:1b about the exaltation of Israel.[66] In Deut 26:18–19, there are both phrases from Deut 7:6 (*ʿam qādôš; ʿam s*^{e}*gullāh*). Their attribution to each other now takes the form of chiasmus (ABBA). In both versions, however, it is, generally speaking, about the idea of separation from other nations.[67] Only this status changes from passive to active. However, while it is a fact that a later editor had Exod 19:3–6 in mind, we are not certain that the latter text is later than the statements in Deut 7:6; 14:2, 21.[68] The dynamic understanding of holiness from Exod 19:6 as a way of confirming being the "special possession" of YHWH (Exod 19:5b) is not related to a change of concept in relation to Deut 7:6; 14:2, 21, but with a new understanding of the role of the temple itself, as already mentioned. Thus, it was rather the editor responsible for combining the tradition of the Deuteronomistic history with the earlier version of the Sinai pericope who wanted to see the "holiness" of Israel as something static, resulting from the very fact of being chosen, making a covenant, and at the same time distinguishing Israel's normative practices from Canaanite customs.[69] On the other hand, it is hard to resist the impression that we find in the phrases in Exod 19:6 some reminiscence of the theological

64 Otto, *Deuteronomim 4,44–11,32*, 865–866.
65 Hamilton, *Exodus*, 305.
66 Otto, *Deuteronomim 4,44–11,32*, 849–858; Otto, *Deuteronomium 23,16–34,12*, 1991–1992.
67 Propp, *Exodus 19–40*, 157.
68 Ska and Römer have already been cited in this way, followed by Otto, *Deuteronomium 4,44–11,32*, 850.
69 Cf. Exod 23:23–26; 34:11–16; Deut 7:1–6, 25–26; 12:2–4; 18:9–14; 20:17–18; Geller, "The Sack," 9–12.

thought of the milieu referred to as the School of Holiness. The phrase "kingdom of priests" is somewhat reminiscent of the concept of this school. Also, the idea of a holy nation and being the special possession of YHWH fits well with its way of thinking about the chosen nation. Thomas Römer[70] recalls that this school aimed at making a certain synthesis between the deuteronomistic and priestly concepts present in the Pentateuch. According to him, similar tendencies can be seen in Exod 19:3–8. Indeed, there one finds phrases and topics close to both earlier schools. The idea of "separating" Israel was then close to both the former and the School of Holiness. On the other hand, the special event of Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and seventy of the elders approaching God (Exod 24:1[2]9–11) clearly interrupts the ritual of having thrown the blood out over the entire nation (Exod 24:3–8). This fragment, for this reason, is often attributed to the same editing as Exod 19:3–8. The double throwing out mentioned here (Exod 24:6, 8) is a close parallel to a similar action performed during the consecration of priests (cf. Exod 29:19–21; Lev 8:22–30). This time, however, it refers to the entire nation, which corresponds to the theological thought of the priestly school.

Holiness, as has already been mentioned, is related to the closeness, the possibility of approaching and the presence of God among Israel. This fact obligates the Israelites to a certain behavior, the details of which are described, on the one hand, by ritual and worship regulations and, on the other, by the ethical and social requirements contained in the Torah.[71] The latter are often invoked in prophetic social criticism, part of which is a critique of worship detached from the practice of everyday life.[72] The need to maintain symbiosis in both these spheres – worship and everyday life in accordance with God's will – is also precisely reminded by the Psalmist:

> Who may Ascend to the hill of the Lord?
> Who may stand in his holy place?
> The one who has clean hands and a pure heart,
> Who has not lifted up his soul to falsehood
> And has not sworn deceitfully (Ps 24:3–4).[73]

Life within holiness is therefore not limited to worship and to priests. It is required of every Israelite. It is not only sought in the walls of the temple and the worship performed there, but also in everyday life. This shift from the temple to everyday life emphasizes the aforementioned ethical aspect,[74] which worship should only complement. This idea will later be developed especially strongly by the already

70 Römer, "Der Pentateuch," 117.
71 Hieke, *Levitikus 1–15*, 124.
72 Janowski, *Anthropologie*, 303–307.
73 Translation by Ross, *A Commentary*, 573.
74 Hieke, *Levitikus 1–15*, 124.

mentioned School of Holiness (cf. Lev 11:44; 19:2; 20:26).[75] "In this way, the *sacrum* goes beyond the boundaries of the temple, pours out, as it were, on the worshippers of God – the Holy One of Israel, both collectively (holy nation) and individually ("be holy"; Lev 19:2)."[76] Exod 19:6 refers, for the time being, to the collective dimension. Israel is to be a "holy nation." Different than other nations because of the gift of God's presence attached to it. While the aforementioned Ezechiel also spoke about Jerusalem itself, the author of Exod 19:6 extends this domain of holiness to the entire nation. Every Israelite is to listen diligently to the voice of God and to keep the covenant made with YHWH (cf. Exod 19:5a). In this way, every Israelite will fulfill their election and the associated call to holiness (Exod 19:5b–6). As other biblical texts show, this choice of Israel and this covenant, however, are not made at the expense of other nations, but because of them. In other words, Israel among these nations is to perform the same function as the temple in Israel – to make God present on earth, to attract other nations to YHWH and to sanctify them with their example.

Conclusions

The status of Israel described in Exod 19:5b–6 (God's special possession, the kingdom of priests, the holy nation) results not only from the fact that it was chosen by God (cf. Deut 7:6). It is a kind of task to be fulfilled by a specific way of life that respects the presence of God among Israel by fulfilling his will (Exod 19:5a). It is not only about maintaining formal (worship-ritual) rules anymore, but also about ethical requirements. It is the style of everyday life that makes every Israelite similar to a priest, who has close access to God (the kingdom of priests) and sanctifies them (the holy nation) not only when they go to the temple, but at every moment of this life. In this way, it is no longer just the temple itself or the city in which it is located, but the entire nation becomes a "living temple" of the God of Israel. This God dwells not only in a specific architectural complex located in a specific place and supervised by a king, but wherever an individual Israelite, feeling part of the chosen nation, will also feel – in the likeness of a king or priest – responsible for this sacred space worthy of God's presence. Not only on the occasion of visiting the sanctuary, but in their ordinary, everyday life, the chosen nation will keep this holiness resulting from the election and at the same time being worked out by their everyday life attitude. There is undoubtedly a certain closeness in this concept to the thinking of the School of Holiness (cf. Lev 20:26). However, this does not necessarily mean that the analyzed fragment of Exod 19:5–6 (*or* 19:3–8) was written by authors belonging

75 Nihan, *From Priestly*, 478–479; Trevaskis, *Holiness*; Lemański, "Święty Izraela," 208–209, 213–216.
76 Lemański, "Święty Izraela," 216.

to this milieu. However close to it is also the concept of a dynamic understanding of holiness as a task to be fulfilled in everyday life (cf. Deut 7:6: a static concept), in this case the proposal is – for the time being – for the entire nation, who is invited to create *sacrum* sphere already not only around the temple, but wherever it is. This concept derives from the priestly vision of a "portable sanctuary" that is wherever the chosen nation is.

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