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When and Where Did Jesus Offer Himself? A Taxonomy of Recent Scholarship on Hebrews

R. B. Jamieson
Selwyn College, University of Cambridge, UK

Abstract
This article surveys how recent scholarship answers the question, 'According to Hebrews, when and where did Jesus offer himself?' Much interest has been paid to this topic in the wake of David Moffitt's 2011 monograph, but the debate is often framed in potentially reductionistic binary terms: either Hebrews depicts a sacrificial sequence beginning on the cross and culminating in heaven, or else Jesus' 'heavenly offering' is a metaphor for the cross. By contrast, this article asks how scholars correlate three variables: Jesus' death, offering, and entrance to heaven. It registers five answers that have been offered, explores the textual basis taken to support each, and articulates the issues which divide each view from the others. Further, the article surveys recent answers to two material questions that arise in the wake of this formal one. First, is Hebrews' sacrificial theology coherent? Second, in Hebrews, is Jesus' death atoning?

Keywords
Ascension, atonement, Day of Atonement, death of Jesus, exaltation, Hebrews, Levitical cult, offering, priesthood, sacrifice

Introduction

Scholarship on the epistle to the Hebrews, something of an eddy in the stream of New Testament research, is presently stirred by crisscrossing waves. The dropped stone responsible for them is David Moffitt's provocative and powerfully argued monograph *Atonement and the Logic of Resurrection in the Epistle*

Corresponding author:
R.B. Jamieson, PhD Candidate, Selwyn College, University of Cambridge, 36 Selwyn Gardens, Cambridge, CB3 9BA, UK.
Email: bobbyjamieson@gmail.com

to the Hebrews (2011; cf. the partial synopsis in Moffitt 2012). In addition to several reviews, Moffitt's monograph has already elicited a review session at the annual meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society (2013), as well as two review essays (Kibbe 2014 and Moret 2016; cf. Moffitt 2016d). Moffitt argues that Christ's bodily resurrection, rather than being passed over or transformed into spiritual translation, is crucial for Hebrews' argument, and is central to its cultic construal of the Christ-event. On Moffitt's account, Christ is appointed high priest at his resurrection; at his ascension, Christ offers himself to God in the Holy of Holies of the tabernacle in heaven, just as the Levitical high priest offered blood when he entered the earthly inner sanctum. Rather than seeing Christ's sacrifice as complete on the cross, Moffitt argues that, while Christ's death does initiate the sacrificial sequence, it is only in the heavenly sanctuary that Christ offers his sacrifice to God. This, Moffitt asserts, amounts to 'a substantive rereading of this homily' (2011: 43). Many scholars concur, since they take it as given that in Hebrews Jesus' offering begins and ends on the cross.

Moffitt's monograph is already sparking much constructive dialogue and fresh investigation of Hebrews' sacrificial theology. Yet a couple of factors, discussed below, suggest that a more detailed analysis of recent literature than those currently on offer could enhance the conversation. This review essay therefore attempts a more fine-grained analysis of the ways in which scholars have answered the question, according to Hebrews, where and when does Jesus offer himself? That is, how does Hebrews correlate Jesus' offering of himself with his death and entrance to heaven? Rather than the seemingly intuitive binary that pits a 'sacrificial sequence' involving death, resurrection, and ascension against the view that Hebrews' heavenly entrance language is a 'metaphor' for Christ's death on the cross, I will describe five ways in which scholars have aligned three elements in Hebrews' exposition of atonement: Christ's death, his entrance to the heavenly sanctuary, and his self-offering. In addition to canvassing literature on this formal question, I will engage recent scholarship on two related issues: the coherence of Hebrews' sacrificial theology and the atoning significance of Christ's death per se. I will conclude with three practical suggestions for this conversation's contributors. First, however, I will offer two comments that suggest this conversation could be served by closer analysis of recent literature, one about the debate to date and one about how the present terms of the debate fit the data of Hebrews.

The Debate to Date and the Debated Data

The first reason why this conversation can profit from a closer analysis of recent literature is that neither Moffitt's main theses nor the debate they have sparked are as new as they seem to many anglophone scholars. Kibbe has canvassed premodern and post-Reformation debates about many of the relevant issues (2014: 27-30), and Moffitt himself highlights patristic anticipations of his views in a

forthcoming article (2016b). But in terms of more recent voices, Georg Gäbel's 2006 monograph *Die Kulttheologie des Hebräerbriefes* argues that Christ only served as high priest when exalted to the heavenly sanctuary, and that as high priest he offered himself to God in the heavenly Holy of Holies, not on the cross. In three hundred and fifty pages of exegesis of all of Hebrews' relevant passages, Gäbel not only anticipates many of Moffitt's theses but offers more extensive support for his views and more thorough engagement with secondary literature. Gäbel also traces several stages of German scholarly debate over the time and place of Christ's offering from the nineteenth century to the present (2006: 3-16, 292-94). Moffitt (2011) refers to Gäbel only three times. Over against Gäbel's ambiguity regarding the manner of Christ's postmortem existence (e.g., 2006: 310-11), Moffitt's arguments for the importance of Christ's bodily resurrection in Hebrews are both original and weighty. However, many anglophone scholars seem unaware of the extent to which Gäbel anticipates Moffitt's view that Christ offers his sacrifice not on the cross but in the heavenly sanctuary.

Further, a number of works that contribute substantively to this discussion are either absent from Moffitt's monograph or make only cameo appearances (e.g., Cody 1960; Davies 1968; Laub 1980; Young 1981; Mackie 2007). More broadly, it is also worth noting that Franz Delitzsch's two-volume commentary, which appeared in English translation in 1886 and 1887, is valuable both for its interpretation of Christ's sacrifice and for its broad engagement with the history of interpretation, yet is widely neglected in modern research. In brief, this debate would be served by a closer look at recent literature because many of the issues have been treated more thoroughly, and often more recently, than the current state of the debate might suggest.

Second, the predominant terms in which the post-Moffitt debate has been framed so far are somewhat limiting, and perhaps even distorting, with respect to both the data of Hebrews and the range of positions represented in the pre-Moffitt literature. That is, the binary choice between 'sacrificial sequence' and 'metaphor for the cross' is something of a straitjacket. For instance, Moffitt argues,

> [M]odern interpreters tend to argue that the author's appeal to Yom Kippur enables him to explicate the theological meaning of the historical event of Jesus' crucifixion from both an earthly/historical and a heavenly/spiritual perspective. On the one hand, Yom Kippur allows the author to envision the cross in terms of the slaughter of the sacrificial victim. The cross is the place of Jesus' self-sacrifice... On the other hand, the imagery/metaphor of the high priest's entry into the holy of holies allows him to reflect on the heavenly/spiritual significance of that event... In Hebrews, Yom Kippur functions as a theological prism through which the manifold significance of the singular event of the crucifixion can be refracted and seen distinctly (2011: 216).

As we will see, this accurately describes one alternative to Moffitt's approach (View 2 below), but obscures the breadth and complexity of the dialogue to date.

For example, it fails to accurately describe approaches that see Christ's sacrifice as complete on the cross and regard Christ's entry to heaven as a real event subsequent to this offering (View 1). To be sure, Moffitt occasionally engages with views that fall between the cracks of this binary (e.g., 2011: 274 n. 134; 293 n. 160). But he does not systematically engage the full scope of views present in the literature.

In addition to Moffit, Kibbe, for instance, offers a similarly binary summary of the key issues. The position Kibbe critiques is that of 'conflating' the cross and Jesus' offering (2016: 165). Specifically, Kibbe warns against the danger of conflating the heavenly sanctuary with 'the location of Christ's crucifixion', then asks, 'How can Christ be *presently* in heaven...if the event of his arrival there was only a metaphorical way of discussing the cross?' (2016: 165, emphasis original). Thus Kibbe presents the same two choices: either Christ's self-offering took place at his entrance to the heavenly sanctuary, an event subsequent to his death, or Christ's entrance to heaven is simultaneous to, and hence a metaphorical description of, his death on the cross.

The problem with this binary is that at least three variables are at play in Hebrews: Jesus' death, entrance to heaven, and self-offering. The first variable I will describe is Jesus' death, considered as to how it might or might not relate to his offering. As is too infrequently noted, Hebrews frequently mentions or alludes to Jesus' death, but never explicitly identifies Jesus' as his 'sacrifice' or 'offering'. Davies, for instance, rightly observes, 'Where Christ's death is the subject of a passage (2,9-14; 5, 7-10; 6,6; 9,15; 12,2; 13,11-13) προσφέρω and such words do not appear' (1968: 387). In other words, Hebrews never explicitly says something like 'Jesus offered himself in his death' or 'Jesus offered himself on the cross'. Hebrews arguably ascribes objective soteriological significance to Jesus' death per se (2.9, 14-15; 9.15), and 9.28 likely alludes to Jesus' death when it borrows the language of Isa. 53.12 to say that he *was offered* 'to bear the sins of many'. But the only time Hebrews explicitly mentions Jesus' death in the context of its predominant sacrificial framework is 13.12, where the cross is correlated not with the slaughter of the animals but with the postrequisite disposal of corpses at the end of the Yom Kippur rite. How other references to Christ's suffering (5.8; 9.26) and blood (9.12, 14, 22; 10.19; 13.20) factor into the time and place of Christ's self-offering is the focus of substantial debate, as we will discuss below.

In a second set of passages, Jesus is said to have entered the true sanctuary in heaven (6.19-20; 9.11-12, 24; cf. 8.1-2). When and how Christ entered heaven is debated, as Moffitt rightly notes (2011: 1-43). Some see Christ's entrance to heaven in Hebrews as his spiritual translation there at the moment of death; others argue that Hebrews presupposes Jesus' resurrection, so that Jesus ascends bodily to heaven.

Our third variable: Hebrews frequently asserts that Jesus offered himself, yet without explicitly specifying when and where this offering takes place (7.27;

9.14, 25, 26, 28; 10.10, 12, 14; cf. 8.3-4). And other passages that construe Christ's saving act in cultic terms similarly leave the time and place implicit (1.3; 2.17; 13.12). Thus our three variables consist of one event (Jesus' death on the cross), one item that some take as an event and others as a metaphor (Jesus' entrance to heaven), and one expression of cultic and theological significance that may or may not describe an event in its own right (Jesus' 'offering'). The variety of ways in which scholars have construed and correlated all three invites us to map a much more diverse set of positions than a simple binary.

Before working through the taxonomy, two more introductory comments are in order. First, this survey primarily focuses on literature published since 1950. This allows a depth of engagement with a breadth of literature that, for instance, the broader scope of Kibbe's brief history precludes (2014: 27-30). Second, many recent works on Hebrews address some of the relevant issues, but are not treated here because they do not answer enough of the questions that distinguish each position in our taxonomy from the others. These include Johnsson (1973); Hurst (1990); Lehne (1990); Dunnill (1992); R.W. Johnson (2001); Gelardini (2007); Rascher (2007); D.M. Allen (2008); McCruden (2008); Jipp (2010); Stewart (2010); Easter (2014); Peeler (2014); and Filtvedt (2015).

Jesus' Death, Entrance to the Heavenly Sanctuary, and Offering: Five Views

How then does Hebrews formally relate Jesus' self-offering to his death on the cross and his entrance into the heavenly tabernacle? At least five answers can be discerned in the literature; these are summarized in Figure 1. In what follows I will rehearse the primary arguments offered for each view, giving special attention to the interpretive decisions that distinguish each from the others. How each view navigates these issues is depicted in Figure 2. These five views are somewhat idealized types. Sometimes scholars' stances on the issues are discernible only by inference. So, my placement of scholars into these categories should be taken as heuristic, not definitive. Further, as we will see, Views 2 and 3 overlap somewhat, and the boundary between certain versions of Views 1 and 4, and Views 4 and 5, can be thin. Nevertheless, discernible decisions distinguish each view from the others. For every switch I identify, there are some scholars who flip it on or off.

View 1: Jesus' Self-Offering Precedes his Entrance to Heaven

Many modern scholars argue that Jesus' self-offering begins and ends on the cross. Jesus' singular, completed earthly offering precedes his entrance into heaven. On this view, all of Hebrews' statements about Jesus offering himself, his body, and his blood refer to his death. Some of these scholars find positive

Summary of Views 1–5
(1) Jesus' self-offering begins and ends on the cross. His earthly offering precedes his entrance into the heavenly sanctuary.
(2) Jesus' self-offering is an earthly event with heavenly significance. His offering is metaphorically described as his entrance into the heavenly sanctuary.
(3) Jesus' self-offering begins with his death and culminates in his immediately subsequent spiritual exaltation to the heavenly sanctuary.
(4) Jesus' self-offering begins with his death and culminates in his post-resurrection entrance into the heavenly sanctuary.
(5) Jesus offers himself at his post-resurrection entrance into the heavenly sanctuary.

Figure 1. Five views on Jesus' death, entrance to Heaven, and self-offering in Hebrews.

Taxonomy of Views 1–5					
Distinguishing Interpretive Decision	**View 1**	**View 2**	**View 3**	**View 4**	**View 5**
Jesus' self-offering begins and ends on the cross	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Jesus' 'entry' into heaven metaphorically describes the cross	No	Yes	No	No	No
Jesus' exaltation is spiritual ascension, not bodily resurrection	Either	Either	Yes	No	No
Jesus offers himself in heaven, not on the cross	No	No	No	No	Yes

Figure 2. Taxonomy of Views 1–5.

evidence for identifying Jesus' offering with his death in the assertion that Jesus' unrepeatable suffering was necessary for his singular offering (9.25-26), and in the comparison between the universal human fate of dying once and Christ's saving act of being offered once (9.27-28; e.g., Loader 1981: 185-86; Richardson 2012: 39-40). Further, the way 10.5-14 presents Christ's offering of his body (10.10, 14) as the goal of his coming into the world (10.5) is seen as establishing that earth, not heaven, is the theater of Christ's self-offering (Loader 1981: 186; Richardson 2012: 40-42). Richardson argues further that the reference in 13.12 to Jesus' suffering outside the camp 'includes both the location and means of sanctification', and indicates 'that God's people have been truly, though paradoxically, sanctified by Jesus' high-priestly action on earth, *not* in the heavenly sanctuary' (2012: 44, emphasis original). Finally, Richardson draws parallels

between Hebrews' explicit discussions of Jesus' death and its references to his offering, comparing 2.14 with 2.17, and 2.14-15 with 9.26 and 10.10, and interpreting the latter in light of the former (pp. 34, 41-42).

The interpretive decision that most sharply distinguishes this view from the others, particularly Views 3–5, is the conviction that the author of Hebrews deliberately refashions the sequence of events from the Day of Atonement such that, unlike the earthly high priests, Jesus does not enter the Holy of Holies *in order to make* his offering (cf. προσφέρει, 'offers', in 9.7), but *having already made* his offering. So Bruce, in an oft-cited comment,

> There have been expositors who, pressing the analogy of the Day of Atonement beyond the limits observed by our author, have argued that the expiatory work of Christ was not completed on the cross... But while it was necessary under the old covenant for the sacrificial blood first to be shed in the court and then to be brought into the holy of holies, no such division of our Lord's sacrifice into two phases is envisaged under the new covenant. When on the cross he offered up his life to God as a sacrifice for his people's sin, he accomplished in reality what Aaron and his successors performed in type by the twofold act of slaying the victim and presenting its blood in the holy of holies (1990: 213-14).

Loader similarly argues, 'Vielmehr muß man erkennen, daß der Vf die Versöhnungstagtypologie nicht gedankenlos übernommen, sondern bewußt irgendwelche Aussagen über eine entsprechende Opferhandlung im Himmel vermieden hat' ('Rather one must recognize that the author has not thoughtlessly adopted the Day of Atonement typology, but has deliberately avoided any statements about a corresponding sacrificial act in heaven'; 1981: 189; cf. Young 1981: 208-209; Lane 1991: 223, 249; Lindars 1991: 94; Ellingworth 1993: 474; Stökl ben Ezra 2003: 189; Cockerill 2012: 394). On this reading, Jesus' entrance into heaven is an act distinct from his death, but it is not a sacrificial act. Certainly, Jesus' entrance into the heavenly sanctuary is patterned on the high priest's entrance into the Holy of Holies on Yom Kippur. But View 1 posits an emphatic discontinuity: unlike the Levitical high priest who enters the most holy place in order to offer a sacrifice there, Jesus entered after having already offered himself on the cross (see esp. Young 1981: 206). For View 1, Christ's sacrifice begins and ends on the cross.

An issue that will recur throughout our discussion is the role of the slaughter of the animal within Levitical sacrifice and, correspondingly, the role of Christ's death in his eschatological self-offering. Virtually all parties agree that Hebrews correlates Christ's death with the slaughter of the sacrificial victim (though see Gäbel 2006: 278, 286). For instance, Christ offered himself 'without blemish' to God (9.14; cf. Lev. 14.10). And, just as the high priest obtained blood via slaughter, by which he then gained access to the inner sanctum (9.7), so also Christ's

'blood'—whatever else it may or may not connote—was shed on the cross, and became his means of access to the Holy of Holies in heaven (9.12). But the intersection of blood, slaughter, and sacrifice or offering in Hebrews is both a site of intense debate and a place where key stances are often assumed or asserted rather than argued. Some View 1 proponents such as Loader and Richardson explicitly argue for why they see Christ's sacrifice beginning and ending on the cross. However, others simply assert that Hebrews' 'offering' language refers exclusively to the cross (e.g., Lane 1991: 15; Isaacs 1992: 145; Ellingworth 1993: 102, 445, 448; Cockerill 2001: 186-89). Similarly, while some View 1 exponents see Hebrews as deliberately retooling the sacrificial script of Yom Kippur, others seem to simply take for granted that the slaughter of the victim, in both Levitical sacrifice and Hebrews, is the definitive sacrificial act (e.g., Fuhrmann 2007: 200). According to this intuition, any mention of 'blood' or correlation of Christ's suffering with sacrificial slaughter indicates that Christ's self-offering consists in his death. As we will see, versions of this intuition also feature in Views 2–4, and it plays a crucial role in why these scholars construe Jesus' self-offering in Hebrews the way they do.

One test of the consistency with which scholars argue View 1 is their treatment of the relationship in Heb. 9.12 between the aorist participle εὑράμενος ('obtaining' or 'having obtained') and the aorist indicative verb εἰσῆλθεν ('he entered'), which the participle follows and modifies. Loader and Richardson argue, in light of their exegesis of the broader context, that the participle denotes action antecedent to that of the main verb: Jesus entered heaven having *already* accomplished redemption in his death (Loader 1981: 186; Richardson 2012: 38 n. 103; cf. Owen 1991 [1680]: 281). On the other hand, some who argue that Jesus' self-offering begins and ends on the cross nevertheless treat the participle as expressing coincident or subsequent action: Jesus entered heaven, *thereby* accomplishing eternal redemption (e.g., Lane 1991: 230; Ellingworth 1993: 453). This second reading implies that Jesus had to enter the heavenly sanctuary, after his death and subsequent exaltation to heaven, in order to obtain redemption, which is difficult to square with these authors' more basic, pervasive contention that Jesus' self-offering begins and ends on the cross.

In view of the list below, it is safe to say that View 1 is the most popular contemporary position. For exponents of View 1, see Owen (1991 [1680]: 277, 280-81, 301); Westcott (1903: 199, 217, 263, 275-76); Moffatt (1924: 123-24); Spicq (1953: 257-58, 168-70); Stott (1962); Vanhoye (1965: 24-26; 1996: 333-34); Hay (1973: 145, 149, 151); Hughes (1973: 207-12); Loader (1981: 185-92, 199, 201); Young (1981: 206, 208-209); Braun (1984: 28-29, 71, 270); Rissi (1987: 72-78); Bénétreau (1989a; 1989b: 53; 1990: 89-90, 93); Bruce (1990: 31-33; 213-14); Lane (1991: 223, 234, 247, 249); Lindars (1991: 81, 84-86, 93-94); Weiss (1991: 464-68, 488-89); Isaacs (1992: 103-104, 108, 145, 202, 209); Ellingworth (1993: 70, 102, 448, 474); Kleinig (1999: 132); Cockerill (2001: 185-89, 197; 2012:

394-95, 416); Schunack (1994: 224-31; 2002: 18, 120-25); Stökl ben Ezra (2003: 181, 188-89); Fuhrmann (2007: 200-203, 220-26); Telscher (2007: 255-60); Joslin (2008: 230-32); D.L. Allen (2010: 486-89); Philip (2011: 56); Richardson (2012: 29-45, 47); Kuma (2012: 273-74, 282); Small (2014: 204, 224, 252-53); Compton (2015a: 150 n. 231; 2015b); Schreiner (2015: 238 n. 375, 244, 268, 285); Moret (2016: 299-300).

View 2: Jesus' Earthly Self-Offering is Described as His Heavenly Entrance

A second group of scholars argue that Hebrews' references to Jesus entering heaven (6.19-20; 9.12, 24) metaphorically describe his self-offering, which takes place in his death on the cross. Like View 1, this position does not envision an act in heaven, temporally and spatially distinct from Jesus' death on the cross, as a constituent component of his self-offering. Instead, Jesus offers himself on the cross, and Hebrews' statements about Jesus' entrance into heaven describe the heavenly quality or effectiveness of Jesus' death. As Luck asserts, 'Eigentlich kann man von hier aus sagen, daß für den Hebräerbrief das Leiden Jesus schon sein Dienst im Heiligtum ist... Der leidende und angefochtene Jesus vollzieht damit den himmlischen Gottesdienst' ('Actually one can say from this that for Hebrews the suffering of Jesus is already his ministry in the sanctuary... The suffering and tempted Jesus thereby performs the heavenly worship'; 1963: 211).

The rationale for this position begins with the stance that Christ's death constitutes his self-offering. But View 2 observes that Hebrews connects Jesus' offering very closely with his entrance to heaven: just as the high priest entered the inner sanctum to offer blood there (9.7), Jesus entered the inner sanctum in heaven by means of his blood (9.11-12). While the high priests yearly entered the inner sanctum with another's blood, Jesus entered its heavenly counterpart only once, because he needed to offer himself only once (9.24-26). Thus, proponents of View 2 conclude, sometimes with the aid of a Middle Platonic background for Hebrews' cosmology, that these descriptions of Jesus' entrance to heaven do not refer to an event distinct from the cross. Instead, such statements use spatial, cosmological terms to describe the heavenly value or significance of the cross.

Harold Attridge argues a version of this view when he writes, 'In Hebrews, as in Platonically inspired Jews such as Philo, language of cosmic transcendence is ultimately a way of speaking about human interiority' (1989: 262). The earthly reality of Jesus' atoning death 'remains a "heavenly" one because of another quality of the sacrifice that was necessary to inaugurate the new and *interior* (8:10) covenant' (p. 27, emphasis original). Attridge argues further, 'In developing the notion of Christ as High Priest within the framework of the Yom Kippur ritual, the focus of his priestly activity is shifted to his sacrificial death'

(pp. 146-47). Yet he also takes 9.14 as indicating that Jesus' earthly offering took place 'in a spiritual realm' (p. 251). Consequently, 'Christ's sacrificial death is not an act distinct from his entry into God's presence' (p. 264). The perspective of Calvin, commenting on 8.4, is similar:

> We must always hold on to the truth that, when the apostle is describing the death of Christ, he is not doing so in reference to its external action but to its spiritual fruit. He suffered death in the common way of men, but he made divine atonement for the sins of the world as a Priest. Outwardly He shed His blood, but inwardly and spiritually He brought cleansing. In short, He died on earth, but the power and efficacy of His death came from heaven (1963 [1549]: 106).

Likewise Laub argues that the heavenly 'tent' in Hebrews is not a spatial designation, but refers instead to the Christ-event ('Christusgeschehen'; 1980: 189). Contra Erich Grässer, Laub refuses to assign to Jesus' ascension its own soteriological significance ('soteriologische Eigenbedeutung'; p. 170 n. 3). Instead, even the assertion of 9.24 that Christ entered 'heaven itself' is not restricted to his exaltation, but describes his self-offering on the cross (p. 200).

These discussions highlight the crucial difference between Views 1 and 2. In View 1 the concept of 'offering' is tied exclusively to the cross, while Jesus' entrance to heaven remains a distinct, subsequent event. In View 2, both 'offering' and 'entrance to heaven' are assigned to the cross, resulting in a metaphorical reading of passages that mention Jesus' entrance into heaven. Unlike View 1, for View 2 Jesus' 'entry' to the heavenly sanctuary does not refer to an event subsequent to the cross but instead metaphorically expounds the significance of the cross.

Further on View 2 see Calvin (1963 [1549]: 106); Luck (1963: 211); Laub (1980: 168-72, 185-220); Peterson (1982: 192); Thompson (1982: 107-108, 147-48; 2008: 186; though see further under View 3); Attridge (1989: 27, 146-47, 251, 262-64); Asumang (2008: 116-17); Laansma (2008a: 17; 2008b: 132; though the brevity of his discussions renders placement tentative); Hermann (2013: 305, 316, 319, 326).

View 3: Jesus' Self-Offering Consists in his Death and Subsequent Spiritual Entrance

Third, some see Jesus' self-offering as consisting in his death and his immediately subsequent spiritual—that is, disembodied—entrance into the heavenly sanctuary. Stegemann and Stegemann write, 'The death of Jesus which happened in Jerusalem is only one side of the coin. The other side shows the cultic performance of the exalted Christ, who offered himself in the true and heavenly tent as a blameless victim to God' (2005: 14). That Stegemann and Stegemann construe Jesus' entrance into heaven in terms of spiritual translation rather than bodily

resurrection seems implied in their statements that Jesus 'returned to heaven by offering his body...on earth' and that Jesus entered the heavenly sanctuary 'after and through his death' (p. 19). Ounsworth similarly argues that 'it is his death—as the point of his return to heaven following his incarnational journey—that becomes the point of entry into heaven' (2012: 171). Further, 'In the same way Christ the High Priest entered first into this world, but at the appointed time passed through into the heavenly world through his death, and that death, that passing through the veil, inaugurates the age to come' (p. 164).

Hofius' variation on this theme holds that after Jesus dies, he immediately proceeds to the heavenly sanctuary. There Jesus offers himself διὰ πνεύματος αἰωνίου ('through eternal spirit / the eternal Spirit', 9.14), and his body and soul are subsequently reunited at his resurrection (1970: 181 n. 359; following Jeremias 1949: 198-99). This take on View 3 is therefore compatible with affirming Jesus' bodily resurrection in Hebrews, seeing it as occurring after his spiritual entrance to heaven (cf. 13.20). By contrast, the more common version of View 3 sees Hebrews as opting for spiritual ascension instead of bodily resurrection (e.g., Backhaus 2009b: 207 n. 28).

The textual starting point for View 3 is the way that Hebrews, drawing especially on Ps. 110.1, seems to set Christ's sacrifice and subsequent session in an immediate sequence. Christ made purification for sins, then sat down at God's right hand (1.3); after offering a single sacrifice for sins, Christ sat down (10.12). This seems to leave no temporal gap between Christ's self-offering and his sitting down on God's throne in heaven. Further, as Moffitt observes (2011: 17-27), many scholars take Hebrews' relative silence on Jesus' resurrection to indicate that the author construes Jesus' exaltation as spiritual translation instead of bodily resurrection (though see 13.20; cf. 5.7, 6.2, 11.35b). View 3 therefore takes shape when these three elements are combined: (1) 'self-offering' passages refer to Christ's death; (2) there is no temporal gap between sacrifice and session; and (3) Christ ascended to heaven spiritually at the moment of his death, not bodily after his resurrection.

However, another essential element of View 3 is that, unlike in View 2, Jesus' exaltation has its own decisive soteriological significance as the culmination of his self-offering. For View 3, while Christ's offering begins on the cross, it does not end there. For instance, Grässer says that Christ's exaltation, which immediately follows his death, is the 'entscheidende Heilsereignis' ('decisive saving event'; 1993: 65). For Grässer, 'Karfreitag und Himmelfahrt bilden zusammen den Großen Versöhnungstag des Christentums' ('Good Friday and the ascension together constitute the Christian Day of Atonement'; 1990: 245; cf. Backhaus 2009a: 87-88). For View 3 Christ's spiritual ascent is a constitutive element in his self-offering, whereas a consistent View 2, like View 1, restricts the sacrificial script to the cross alone.

One key difference between Views 2 and 3 is what their proponents mean by Jesus' 'death'. If consistently argued, View 2 holds that Jesus' (metaphorical) entrance to heaven took place *while he was dying* on the cross, whereas View 3 argues that Jesus entered heaven, in spirit, *when he died* on the cross—that is, at the moment of his expiration. Nevertheless, Views 2 and 3 often overlap, and key elements of both are often combined in a way that eludes the consistency at which this taxonomy aims (see esp. Thompson 1982: 107-108, 147-48; 2008: 186). For example, View 3 does not rule out the idea that Jesus' suffering on the cross has a heavenly quality or significance. And proponents of View 2 often regard Christ's exaltation as spiritual translation rather than bodily resurrection and ascent.

Representatives of View 3 include Jeremias (1949: 198-99); Hofius (1970: 181 n. 359); Grässer (1990: 64-65, 245; 1993: 148); Barth (1992: 153-54); Rose (1994: 330); Knöppler (2001: 195-200); Eisele (2003: 388-89); Stegemann and Stegemann (2005: 14, 19); Backhaus (2009a: 70, 87-88, 317-18; 2009b: 205, 207 n. 28); Rowland and Morray-Jones (2009: 171-72); Ounsworth (2012: 164, 171).

View 4: Jesus' Self-Offering Consists in his Death and Subsequent Embodied Entrance

View 4, like View 3, sees Christ's self-offering as a process spanning earth and heaven: Christ's death corresponds to the slaughter of the victim, and his entry to the heavenly sanctuary corresponds to the Levitical priest's manipulation of blood in the earthly Holy of Holies. That is to say, Jesus' act of offering himself encompasses both his death and his entrance to heaven. Contra View 1, for View 4 Jesus' sacrifice does not begin and end on the cross but instead culminates with his self-presentation to God in heaven. Still, the line between certain versions of Views 1 and 4 is a thin one.

In contrast to View 3, View 4 holds that Christ was resurrected bodily, rather than ascending to heaven as a disembodied spirit. Though for many scholars in this category, Hebrews' affirmation of Christ's flesh-and-blood resurrection is more assumed than argued. A number of View 4 proponents accent the idea that Christ's self-offering is a unified sequence encompassing death on earth and entrance to heaven. According to Mackie, for instance:

> This serial conception of the 'once for all' sacrificial act of Christ follows the same course of events as the Yom Kippur ritual (Leviticus 16:11-19). (1) The death of the victim is followed by (2) the entry of the priest into the most holy place, (3) where the victim's blood is presented and manipulated. This basic pattern is adhered to throughout the epistle, as the author almost always mentions Christ's suffering/death and exaltation in the same breath, conjuring heaven and earth in one sweep (1:3; 2:9; 5:8-9; 7:27-28; 10:12-14, 20-21; 12:2, 24) (2007: 95-96).

In the present discussion, the use of the phrase 'sacrificial script' to describe this view likely originates with Nelson, who says that 'the cross was the first component in a larger sacrificial script' (2003: 254). He explains,

> His willing death was the first phase of a complex priestly action that continued in his ascension through the heavenly realms and entrance with blood into the heavenly sanctuary. It concluded with a decisive act of purification and being seated beside God's throne, where Christ can continually intercede for his followers. The cross was no mere prologue to, or presupposition for, Christ's priestly work in heaven, but an essential first element in his multi-stage act of sacrificial offering. Suffering, entrance, offering, and sacrifice are firmly bracketed together in 9:25-26 (p. 255).

According to Nelson and others of this persuasion, 'The point of Christ's passage through the heavens is not the journey itself but its goal, his entrance with blood as high priest into the heavenly sanctuary. This, too, is a liturgical act, a component of his sacrifice' (p. 256).

Those holding View 3 could agree with all of this except for the underlying assumption that Christ enters heaven bodily, following his resurrection. Moffitt (2011: 21-22) considers Nelson an exponent of a 'spiritual ascension' approach, which would place him in View 3. However, Nelson argues that Christ's exaltation in Hebrews 'corresponds to the historicized ascension of the Gospel tradition', which seems to presuppose his bodily resurrection (2003: 255). Nelson argues that Hebrews 'unites Christ's resurrection and exaltation/ascension into a single concept' (2003: 255), which does not necessarily imply reconfiguring the former as the latter. Yet Nelson also argues that Christ's offering of his blood, because carried out through 'eternal spirit', is 'the polar opposite of anything physical or temporal' (2003: 256). Given the difficulty of ascertaining precisely how Nelson pieces together resurrection and exaltation, I tentatively place him in View 4, with the caveat that he straddles the line with View 3.

Along with proponents of View 5, supporters of View 4 tend to focus on the way Hebrews seems to deliberately map different moments of the Yom Kippur sacrificial sequence (chiefly slaughter and inner-sanctum blood manipulation) onto distinct moments in Christ's saving mission (death on the cross and entrance into the heavenly tabernacle). Further, along with View 5, View 4 tends to regard Hebrews' depiction of the heavenly sanctuary as the description of a real albeit transcendent place, which Christ entered bodily, and where he remains until his return. So Mackie argues against a range of 'metaphorical' construals of the heavenly sanctuary in Hebrews, 'As the place where Jesus' sacrifice is completed, the Heavenly Sanctuary must be as "real" for both author and audience as the cross where Jesus' self-offering began' (2007: 159; cf. Mason 2012: 912-16). Further, again as with View 5, View 4 proponents tend to see early Jewish apocalyptic treatments of the heavenly tabernacle as the most relevant contextual point of reference for Hebrews' discussion of the same.

While View 4 posits a relatively close correspondence between the Day of Atonement sequence and Jesus' crucifixion and entrance to heaven, scholars differ over how far that correspondence extends. Some argue that Jesus actually brings blood into the heavenly Holy of Holies and offers it there (e.g., Pursiful 1993: 70). Others suggest that Hebrews' silence concerning a blood rite in the heavenly sanctuary is deliberate: the point is that Jesus' entry by means of his blood is the culmination of his offering (e.g., Cody 1960: 181; Nelson 2003: 256; Mackie 2007: 159, 167, 181-82). On either reading, Jesus' entrance into the heavenly Holy of Holies is the consummation of the sacrificial sequence that began on the cross.

We have already discussed View 4's differences from Views 1–3, which are straightforward; its differences from View 5 are more subtle. Its chief difference from both, which we will discuss more fully below, is that View 4 argues that, as both high priest and victim, Christ 'offers himself' on the cross, whereas for View 5, strictly speaking Christ 'offers himself' only in heaven. There are fine distinctions at play, and the difference here should not be overstated. Yet an exegetical divide obtains: proponents of View 4 refer at least some of Hebrews' 'self-offering' texts explicitly to Christ's death, such that Christ offers himself, as priest and victim, on the cross. So Nelson on 10.10: 'His death was an offering of his body' (2003: 255; cf. Koester 2001: 440; Mackie 2007: 169). Similarly, Moore identifies the cross as the sacrificial 'altar' of 13.10 (2015: 218-19). And Cody calls the cross a 'priestly sacrifice' (1960: 174).

On the other hand, proponents of View 5 hold that Christ was only appointed high priest at his resurrection, and therefore only qualified to offer himself *after* dying and rising again. Yet representatives of View 4 tend to see Christ as already appointed high priest during his earthly career (Cody 1960: 107, 177), or officially becoming priest in his self-offering on the cross (Mackie 2007: 213-14), or acting as priest on earth, but only confirmed in office at his exaltation (Cortez 2008: 317-22). To be sure, View 4 sees Christ's entrance to heaven as the presentation and completion of his offering. And View 5 can, in principle, treat 'offering' as an inclusive, unitary category that includes Jesus' death as victim, resurrection to high priesthood, and subsequent self-presentation in the heavenly tabernacle—which is his 'self-offering' in the strict sense. Nevertheless, the crucial difference between View 4 and View 5 is that the former sees Christ as offering himself *as high priest* on the cross, whereas the latter argues that Hebrews locates Christ's high priestly act of self-offering exclusively in the heavenly sanctuary.

For works that align with View 4 see Delitzsch (1887: 14, 27-29, 81-82, 88-89); Cody (1960: 168-202, esp. 174-75); Michel (1996: 281, 292-93, 312); Scholer (1991: 159-76, esp. 176); Chester (1991: 61, 65-66); Pursiful (1993: 66-72); Guthrie (1994: 106, 122-23, 127; 1998: 29, 49, 191, 195, 309-16; 2007: 970, 973); DeSilva (2000: 305, 313; 2006: 298, 305-12); Koester (2001: 109, 117, 411, 414-15; though see Moffitt 2011: 12-14 for tensions regarding

resurrection); Nelson (2003: 254-56; he straddles the line with View 3); L.T. Johnson (2006: 20, 52, 71-72, 139, 222, 233); Mackie (2007: 95-98, 158-59, 169-70, 175-82, though p. 181 is ambiguous on resurrection; 2011: 78); Cortez (2008: 324-413, esp., e.g., 359-62; note that Cortez sees covenant inauguration, not Yom Kippur, as Hebrews' central framework); Cervera i Vallis (2009: 479, 485, 492-93, 497); Moore (2015: 177, 185-86, 198-99, 218-19).

View 5: Jesus Offers Himself in Heaven, after his Resurrection

For View 5, strictly speaking Jesus offers himself in the heavenly sanctuary after his resurrection, not on the cross. What distinguishes View 5 from View 4, as well as from Views 1–3, is the idea that the cross is not the time and place of Jesus' priestly self-offering. As noted above, a key factor in this conclusion is the conviction that Hebrews presents Jesus as appointed to high priesthood at his resurrection or exaltation. So Gäbel: 'Christi Hohepriestertum begann in seiner Errettung aus dem Tod (Erhöhung)' ('Christ's high priesthood began in his deliverance from death (exaltation)'; 2006: 172, also 236-54; cf. Kurianal 2000: 219-33; Moffitt 2011: 194-208; Ribbens 2016: 107). And, per Hebrews' assertion that high priests are appointed in order to offer sacrifice (8.3), if Jesus is only appointed priest at his resurrection, he only offers himself after his resurrection. Where then does Jesus offer himself? View 5 answers: in the heavenly sanctuary (Heb. 8.1-5; 9.11-14, 23-26).

Exponents of this view often point to the way Heb. 8.4 seems to presuppose that Jesus did not, and indeed could not, serve as a priest while on earth: 'Now if he were on earth, he would not be a priest at all, since there are priests who offer gifts according to the law' (ESV). For instance, Moffitt comments, '8:4 seems to say that Jesus was *not* a priest on earth. In fact, 8:4 clearly locates Jesus' priestly ministry in heaven, after his life and death on earth' (2011: 198, emphasis original; cf. Ribbens 2016: 107). And in view of Heb. 8.1-6 Gäbel concludes, 'Damit ist nochmals erwiesen, das sein priesterlich-kultisches Wirken Christi auf Erden im Hebr nicht im Blick ist. Das einmalige Opfer Christi ist daher nach Hebr nicht in seinem irdischen Sterben und Tod zu sehen. Das ist zumal bei der Opferaussage 8,3 zu beachten' ('This proves once again that a priestly, cultic work of Christ on earth is not in view in Hebrews. Therefore, according to Hebrews the unique sacrifice of Christ is not to be seen in his earthly suffering and death. This is seen especially in the statement about sacrifice in 8:3'; 2006: 249).

View 5 proponents argue that Hebrews' detailed deployment of Yom Kippur typology confirms that Christ offers himself not on earth, but in the Holy of Holies in heaven. For instance, Gäbel points out that, in contrast to any other biblical or Second Temple Jewish source, Hebrews describes the Levitical high priest's inner sanctum blood manipulation as an act of 'offering' (προσφέρει, 9.7; see Gäbel 2006: 277). And in passages such as 9.11-14 and 9.23-26, Hebrews

assigns to Christ's entrance to the heavenly tabernacle the same goal: he enters in order to make his offering there. Support for this reading is found, for instance, in the syntax of 9.24-25, where the contrast between Christ's offering and that of the earthly high priests presupposes that Christ enters the heavenly sanctuary in order to offer himself there: ἵνα ... προσφέρῃ ἑαυτόν ('in order to offer himself) in 9.25 depends on the main verb εἰσῆλθεν ('he entered') in 9.24 (Gäbel 2006: 298-99). View 5 is thus characterized by a consistent application of the idea that Christ only becomes priest at his resurrection, and therefore only offers himself in heaven (cf. more broadly Gäbel 2006: 279-310; Moffitt 2011: 220-85; Ribbens 2016: 82-148).

Nevertheless, for most View 5 proponents, Jesus' death is still a sacrificial act. So Ribbens:

> The heavenly location of Jesus' offering does not, however, mean that Jesus' death on earth is not sacrificial. Rather, as discussed below, just as the Day of Atonement sacrifice involved a process that included slaughter and blood application, so also Hebrews describes Christ's sacrifice as a process that includes his death as a victim on earth, entrance into the heavenly sanctuary via his ascension, and presentation of the offering in the heavenly Holy of Holies. Thus, while Christ's sacrifice begins on earth, he does not act as priest until he is in the heavenly realm, where his priestly act of sacrifice includes the presentation of himself as an offering (2016: 107-108; cf. Moffitt 2011: 285, 294).

On View 5 it is possible to see some of Hebrews' references to 'offering' or 'sacrifice', such as those in 9.26 (θυσίας) and 9.28 (προσενεχθείς), as summary references to Christ's entire saving act, incorporating at least his death, resurrection, and ascension (cf. Ribbens 2016: 134). This distinction corresponds to the semantic range of the verb προσφέρω. Like hiphil קרב which it regularly translates in the LXX, προσφέρω can refer both to the act of offering as a whole as well as to the specific moment when a priest presents sacrificial material in God's presence. On this version of View 5, Hebrews' use of προσφέρω and related terms has a similar range: often these terms refer specifically to Christ's priestly self-presentation to God in the Holy of Holies in heaven; sometimes they refer to his entire saving work construed as a cultic unity. On this account, Christ's priestly self-offering happens only in the heavenly tabernacle. But since Christ is both priest and victim, both offerer and that which is offered, Hebrews sometimes uses 'sacrifice' or 'offering' to denote the whole sequence, which begins with Christ's death as the sacrificial victim, after which he rises again, is appointed high priest, and then presents his offering in heaven.

Before listing proponents of View 5 I should offer two brief notes on the work of Gäbel, who has offered the most thorough case to date for locating Christ's

offering in the heavenly tabernacle. First, in his exegesis of 10.5-10 and 10.14, Gäbel treats Christ's death as a non-cultic act of self-giving ('Selbsthingabe') that fulfills God's will and sets aside the Mosaic cult (2006: 185-202). For Gäbel, in this emphatically non-sacrificial sense, Jesus' death is indeed an 'offering'. But this constitutes a conceptual category entirely distinct from the author's overarching sacrificial framework. For Gäbel, Christ's high-priestly self-offering takes place exclusively within the heavenly sanctuary.

Second, Gäbel maintains a degree of ambiguity about the manner of Christ's postmortem existence. He recognizes that Hebrews refers to Christ's resurrection in 13.20, but argues that 'the presentation of resurrection in Heb. 13:20, with respect to the description of the way of Jesus, does not lead us beyond Hebrews' statements concerning his exaltation' ('Die Auferstehungsvorstellung in Hebr 13,20 führt im Blick auf die Schilderung des Weges Christi nicht über die Erhöhungsaussagen des Hebr hinaus'; 2006: 310-11). By this criterion, Gäbel could potentially be grouped with View 3. Yet, because he takes Hebrews to consistently locate Jesus' priestly self-offering in the heavenly sanctuary, which he clearly distinguishes from Jesus' death, his view shares more fundamental thematic affinities with other proponents of View 5. Among these proponents, all imply or affirm Jesus' bodily resurrection in Hebrews, but only Moffitt (esp. 2011) offers extensive, thoroughgoing support for it.

For View 5 see Barrett (1956: 365, 384, 386, 388-89, 393); Davies (1968: 386-87); Brooks (1970); Walter (1997: 158-59); Eskola (2001: 204, 208, 254, 267; 2015: 227, 390-92; though see pp. 226 and 394 for statements that fit better in View 4); Haber (2005: 112, 117); Willi-Plein (2005: 27, 33-35; though no discussion of resurrection); Gäbel (2006: 159-61, 200-201, 236-254, 279-310, 472-483); Mason (2008: 35, 38-39, 194-95; 2012: 912-16); Moffitt (2011: 215-96; 2012; 2016c; 2016d); Barnard (2012: 6, 92, 116, 134); Vis (2012: 256-308); Calaway (2013: 28, 76, 145, 156); Kibbe (2014: 30-35, 45; 2016: 162-67).

Is Hebrews' Sacrificial Theology Coherent?

The taxonomy above is concerned only with what I have called a 'formal' question: when and where did Jesus offer himself? This taxonomy describes only the way scholars have schematized the sequence of events in Jesus' self-offering. Each of the five answers in the taxonomy presupposes that the way Hebrews correlates Jesus' death, entrance to heaven, and self-offering is fundamentally consistent. However, a number of scholars argue that Hebrews' correlation of these three factors is fundamentally inconsistent. Their reasons for doing so are worth exploring.

For instance, Schenck writes, 'Ultimately, the difficulty of interpreting Hebrews at this point derives from the fact that the author has used the heavenly tabernacle in several different metaphorical ways that do not necessarily

cohere with one another' (2007: 8). And, 'The ambiguity in the author's thought as to whether the offering is the same as his death (9:27-8) or occurs in heaven (9:25) is a by-product of what is ultimately metaphorical language' (p. 188). For Schenck, Hebrews' conceptions of Jesus' death as an atoning sacrifice and his priestly offering in heaven are discrete metaphors that run on parallel tracks:

> The reason these images break down is because they are primarily metaphorical in nature rather than literal... The heavenly Holy of Holies is not a structure in heaven, but heaven itself metaphorically conceived (9:24). Christ's entrance into this Most Holy Place is thus the same event as his exaltation to God's right hand. When Hebrews uses traditional Christian imagery, Christ's sacrifice is offered on the cross. When the author is arguing from his high priestly metaphor, it is offered in heaven (2003: 81).

For Schenck, Hebrews' treatments of Jesus' death and entrance to heaven are both 'metaphorical' and are not meant to be integrated into a seamless narrative sequence. From one angle, Schenck's perspective is a variation on View 2. Yet, unlike paradigmatic View 2 proponents, Schenck takes this 'metaphorical' construal of Jesus' entrance to heaven to indicate that Hebrews' entire high priestly paradigm for Jesus is a metaphor. Specifically, Schenck sees fundamental tension between this high priestly metaphor and the metaphor of Christ's death as sacrifice, which Schenck sees Hebrews inheriting from earlier Christian tradition. For his most recent discussion, in dialogue with Moffitt in particular, see Schenck (2016).

The position of Löhr is similar. In an insightful essay on Jesus' death in Hebrews, he argues, 'Die am Opfergottesdienst orientierte Christus-Fabel wird nicht als Erzählung soweit ausgeführt, daß ihre narrative Problematik, ja Unmöglichkeit zu Tage treten könnte. Es wird auch kein himmlischer Kult, etwa in Form einer Vision, ausführlich beschrieben' ('The Christ-myth oriented toward sacrificial worship is not explained as a narrative to the extent that its narrative difficulty, indeed impossibility, could come to light. There is no heavenly cult described in detail, for instance in the form of a vision'; 2005: 471). Consequently, 'Wo das Selbstopfer Jesu im Weltbild des Hebr lokalisiert werden kann, bleibt in den Kapiteln 7 bis 10 undeutlich. Die Blutsprengung findet ohne Zweifel im himmlischen Heiligtum statt (vgl. 9,23). In Hebr 13,12 ist die Opfersprache aber deutlich rückgebunden an den Kreuzestod Jesu auf Golgatha'. ('Where the self-offering of Jesus can be located in the worldview of Hebrews remains unclear in chapters 7 to 10. The blood sprinkling doubtless occurs in the heavenly sanctuary (cf. 9.23). But in Heb. 13.12 the language of sacrifice is tied to Jesus' death on the cross at Golgotha'; pp. 471-72). For Löhr, even though Hebrews nowhere explicitly designates Jesus' death an offering, the author does indeed portray the crucifixion as an effective sacrifice (pp. 459, 471). Nevertheless Löhr argues that it is impossible both to discern a consistent narrative sequence in its portrayal of

Christ's priestly work and thus to pinpoint when and where Jesus' self-offering took place.

Eberhart sees nearly all of the relevant 'offering' texts in Hebrews as references to the death of Jesus, and concludes, 'Mit der *Gewichtsverlagerung auf den Tod Jesu als Selbstopfer* kommt es zu einer *entscheidenden Neubestimmung der Opfermetapher*' ('With the *shift of emphasis to the death of Jesus as self-offering* there is a *decisive redefinition of the sacrificial metaphor*'; 2013: 141, emphasis original). For Eberhart, even though Levitical sacrifice itself does not treat the death of the animal as the locus of atonement, Hebrews treats Jesus' death as the decisive atoning event, and so transcends and transforms the 'source domain' of its sacrificial metaphors (p. 142). This seems to represent a change from Eberhart's earlier essay on sacrificial metaphors in Hebrews, in which he argued that 'it is not strictly speaking Christ's *death* which effects this purification', and 'Christ's death is not the actual salvific event but the precondition for the availability of his blood' (2005: 58-59, emphasis original). Thus, while Eberhart and Moffitt, for instance, argue for similar understandings of Levitical sacrifice, they (now) draw precisely opposite conclusions regarding the significance Hebrews assigns to Jesus' death.

For Eberhart, Hebrews' inconsistency is first of all conceptual. Hebrews' innovative portrayal of Jesus as both priest and victim 'bleibt...teilweise in sich widersprüchlich' ('remains...partly contradictory'; 2013: 143). In Hebrews, the sacrificial cult and the emphasis on Jesus' death 'geradezu inkompatibel sind' ('are downright incompatible'; p. 148). When in 9.17-18 the argument shifts from the legal back to the cultic realm, 'Hier werden Vorstellungshorizonte miteinander verbunden, die eigentlich inkongruent sind' ('Here conceptual horizons are joined together that are actually incongruent'; p. 150). And, similarly to Löhr and Schenck, Eberhart also sees narrative inconsistency. Against interpretations of Jesus' saving work which construe the cross and exaltation as discrete stages in Christ's saving act, Eberhart argues that we should analyze Hebrews' cultic topography 'nicht mit Erwartungen zu präziser räumlich-realistischer Stimmigkeit oder durchgängiger Kohärenz' ('not with expectations of precise, spatially realistic consistency or thorough coherence'; p. 152).

These scholars all argue that because of its inconsistencies—whether intentional or unintentional—Hebrews' portrayal of Jesus' death, offering, and entrance into heaven does not yield a unified temporal and spatial scheme. On this reading Hebrews offers no narratable sequence of events. It should not escape notice that, as in Views 1–4, each of these scholars sees Hebrews as at least sometimes identifying Jesus' death with his offering (see also Wedderburn 2005: 402). Unlike Views 1–4, for these scholars this identification introduces an indissoluble inconsistency with what Hebrews says Jesus does in heaven.

For variations on the view that Hebrews' narration of Christ's self-offering is in some crucial sense inconsistent see Schenck (2003: 35, 81; 2007: 8, 188;

2016); Löhr (2005: 455-76, esp. 471-72); Wedderburn (2005); Karrer (2008: 176); Eberhart (2013: 131-56, esp. 138 n. 32, 143, 148, 150, 152).

Is Jesus' Death Atoning?

This article so far has discussed only the formal question of how Hebrews correlates Jesus' death, entrance to heaven, and self-offering. However, one's answer to this formal question inevitably raises a number of material questions. One of the most prominent in the conversation so far has been the question, is Jesus' death atoning? Some proponents of View 5 answer 'no'. For instance, Brooks argues, 'In the light of the book of Leviticus, it is inconceivable how the author could think that death atoned' (1970: 210). Similarly Eskola: 'It is naturally important to note that atonement was obtained only in the Holy of Holies, and not at the moment when the sacrifice was slaughtered' (2001: 267). This is why Eskola denies that 'the atonement is attached to the moment of Christ's death' (p. 267 n. 55).

In this context Moffitt's monograph merits careful attention. Moffitt argues forcefully that Christ's resurrection, rather than being passed over or reworked into spiritual translation, plays a crucial role in Hebrews' argument. Christ's resurrected humanity, Moffitt argues (2011: 45-144), is necessary for his exaltation above the angels and his rule as second Adam over the world to come (Heb. 1.3-4, 6, 13-14; 2.5-9). After exploring ascension accounts in early Judaism and conceptions of resurrection in Hebrews (pp. 145-88), Moffitt turns to Christ's resurrection, arguing that at Christ's resurrection his humanity is perfected and he obtains indestructible life (7.16), both of which are prerequisites to his being appointed high priest (pp. 194-208). Finally, through engaging with key texts in Hebrews 8–10 and recent scholarship on Levitical sacrifice, Moffitt argues that Jesus presents his offering—alternately designated his 'blood', 'body' and 'self'—to God in the heavenly Holy of Holies (pp. 215-85). In principle, proponents of View 5 can agree with all of this.

Nevertheless, not all who share Moffitt's view of Christ's self-offering in heaven will agree with the conclusions Moffitt draws regarding Christ's death. For instance, because Christ offers himself in heaven, Jesus' death is not 'the agent that effects redemption' (p. 290). In a passage such as Heb. 9.15-18, the author 'is not conflating Jesus' death and the atonement' (p. 293). And again, 'he does not conflate that event [Jesus' death] with the atoning moment. Rather, he locates Jesus' death at the front end of a process that culminates in the atoning moment' (p. 292).

One might suppose that Moffitt intends these statements to be taken with an implicit qualification, such as, 'Jesus' death is not the atoning moment within the predominant framework of Levitical sacrifice'. This would leave open the possibility that, while Jesus' death is not where and when atonement is achieved

within the Levitical sacrificial framework, Hebrews might use other conceptual resources to construe Christ's death as a soteriological achievement in its own right. And it seems that Moffitt's more recent writings might affirm such a conclusion. For instance: 'Nevertheless, Hebrews 2:9 and 2:14-15 especially identify Jesus' death as a key element within the larger narrative of the Christ event for how he accomplished the redemption of God's people from slavery' (2016a: 116); though what makes Christ's death 'key' is undeveloped. And Moffitt suggests that Hebrews draws connections between the Passover and Christ's death when it figures the latter as that which liberates from Satan (2016a: 116 n. 9).

However, in his 2011 monograph, Moffitt's exposition of Christ's death in Hebrews does not draw this conclusion that, with the aid of other conceptual frameworks, Hebrews presents Jesus' death itself as in some sense atoning (pp. 285-95). Instead, Jesus' death 'serves as *the* paradigm of righteous suffering' and 'stands as the event *sine qua non* for initiating the new covenant and in Jesus' *preparation* for his high-priestly ministry and atoning offering' (p. 285, emphasis original). At precisely the point in the argument where Moffitt could have delineated the objectively soteriological dimensions of Jesus' death, he posits none. The relevant section does not treat Heb. 2.14-15, and it omits any discussion of the soteriology implied in Christ's tasting death 'for everyone' (ὑπὲρ παντός) in 2.9, as does Moffitt's treatment of 2.9 elsewhere (pp. 120-29).

Finally, regarding Moffitt's discussion of 9.15-18, from which the comments in the previous paragraph are drawn, it is important to note that Moffitt perceives a cultic connotation in the 'redemption' (ἀπολύτρωσις) discussed in 9.15, so he assimilates this passage to Hebrews' overarching Levitical paradigm. As such, Jesus' death 'triggers or puts into motion the sequence of events that culminates in Jesus' offering and elevation to [the] throne at God's right hand' (p. 293). On Moffitt's reading, Jesus' death occurred 'for' (εἰς) redemption not in that his death itself is the '*means* of redemption' (p. 290, emphasis original), but in that Jesus' death sets off the sequence that *results* in redemption when Jesus offers himself in the heavenly sanctuary. For Moffitt, while Jesus' death triggers the sequence of events that culminates in the new covenant's inauguration, it can only be said to 'inaugurate' the covenant by a kind of metonymy. As the first domino to fall, Jesus' death ultimately results in the new covenant's inauguration, but it does not itself effect redemption for sins against the first covenant. Arguments such as these help explain why many have drawn the conclusion that Moffitt's monograph excludes any kind of atoning role for Jesus' death per se, such as Moore (2013: 675), Kibbe (2014: 30-35, 45-46), Compton (2015b: 134), and Moret (2016: 291).

In common with Eskola and Brooks, in his monograph Moffitt seems to presuppose that what Hebrews has to say about 'atonement' is coextensive with its Levitical typology. On this reading, the death of the animal is not a particular locus of atonement within Levitical sacrifice, and Hebrews nowhere deploys

other conceptual frameworks within which Christ's death itself is portrayed as a decisive soteriological achievement. This issue is one among many that factor into whether a proponent of View 5 affirms that Jesus' death is atoning in any objective soteriological sense.

Conclusion

This taxonomy is certainly not the only way to slice up scholarship on atonement in Hebrews, but I hope its virtues are apparent. Rather than simply pitting 'sequence' approaches against those that treat Christ's heavenly offering as a 'metaphor for the cross', we should attend to the ways in which scholars have grappled with the formal question of how Hebrews configures Christ's death, entrance to heaven, and self-offering. And, while the issues are certainly related, this formal question is distinct from the related, material issue of what soteriological significance Hebrews ascribes to the cross. Though my taxonomy has necessarily highlighted differences between views, even views at opposite ends of the spectrum can hold much in common. As Ribbens has recently pointed out (2015), some readings that align with my View 1 might be called 'conservative sequence approaches' in that they see Christ's entrance to heaven as a priestly act corresponding to the earthly high priest's entrance to the inner sanctum, even though they do not describe it as an offering.

Further, by highlighting the interpretive decisions that distinguish each view from the others, I hope this taxonomy might encourage scholars to argue more explicitly for stances that are often taken for granted. This is my first of three concluding suggestions for future discussion of Christ's self-offering in Hebrews. Questions that merit further attention include: What evidence in Hebrews supports the conclusion that Jesus' offering begins and ends on the cross? What warrants the stance that, whether in Levitical sacrifice, Hebrews, or both, the moment of slaughter is the primary or even exclusive locus of atonement? Do Hebrews' references to Jesus' entrance to the heavenly sanctuary constitute a metaphor? If so, how does this metaphor square with Hebrews' apparently straightforward affirmations that Jesus is presently located in the heavenly tabernacle (6.20; 8.1-2; 9.24; cf. 10.12-13)? Does Hebrews treat Jesus' exaltation to heaven as instantaneous spiritual translation at the moment of death, or bodily ascent following his resurrection? Is middle ground on such a question possible? Does Hebrews answer the question of when Jesus was appointed high priest? If so, when was he? Does Hebrews ascribe objective soteriological significance to Jesus' death? If so, with what conceptual resources, and how, if at all, do they relate to its central Levitical framework? And if Hebrews ascribes no particular atoning significance to Jesus' death per se, how might we explain such a conspicuous departure from the early Christian kerygma?

Second, this taxonomy recommends greater terminological precision in how we speak of Christ's sacrifice or offering in Hebrews. For instance, scholars often say 'the sacrifice' when what they apparently mean is 'the moment of slaughter'. Such an equation should be argued rather than assumed. Further, to say that Christ offers himself in heaven is not to say that his death is not sacrificial. Moffitt, for example, clearly affirms that Christ's death initiates the sacrificial sequence. The differences lie elsewhere. Further, distinguishing Christ's role as victim from his role as priest leaves room for the possibility, affirmed by some View 5 proponents, that Hebrews occasionally uses 'offering' of 'sacrifice' to refer to Christ's multi-stage saving act as a unified whole, while Christ's high-priestly act of 'offering himself' takes place exclusively in the heavenly sanctuary. In principle, we should entertain the possibility of distinguishing 'offering' as a broad, inclusive designation from 'self-offering' as the moment of self-presentation in heaven.

Finally, I would submit that Gäbel's 2006 monograph deserves to play a larger role in this debate than it has so far. Certainly the book's five-hundred-page heft is daunting. Yet for those with linguistic ability and time, the book will more than repay the labor it demands. Whatever one makes of Gäbel's conclusions, his is by far the most comprehensive account of Hebrews' sacrificial theology in modern scholarship to date. An enterprising *deutschsprachig Neutestamentler* who translated it into English would do a great service to all of us who pore over the enigmatic, endlessly fascinating pamphlet we call the Epistle to the Hebrews.

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