

The Structure of the Yom Kippur Discourse Unit: Discourse Analysis of Leviticus 16:1-34

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ABSTRACT

This paper applies discourse analysis to interpret Leviticus 16. Using a descriptive approach (not prescriptive), this study examined various discourse parameters which the author used in the composition of the Atonement Law. These include organizational structure, lexical repetition, boundary markers, regular and marked structures, discourse markers, participant reference, verbal structure/form, word order, and summary statements. These discourse parameters perform various functions such as enhancing cohesion, coherence, theme/topicalization, continuity and discontinuity, emphasis, and establishing the setting. The Yom Kippur discourse pericope and its seven significant divisions are established based on this examination. The divisions are Introduction (vv. 1-2a); Command for sacrificial animals and dress code (2b-5); Preliminary atonement procedures (vv. 6-10); Atonement procedures over the priests and the people (vv. 11-25); post-requisite atonement procedures (vv. 26-28); Command for the Day's observance and cessation from work (vv. 29-34b), and the Conclusion (v. 34cd). It is also established that the fourth division (vss. 11-25) is prominent, for it is at the centre of the chiasmic structure. By analyzing the Yom Kippur structure using the discourse analysis method, the unity of the Yom Kippur discourse has been defended. This means that every portion of the Atonement Law should be given the same weight in the interpretation. No part of the text is inferior to the other, for it is part of the larger whole. Also, what some other scholars have termed peculiarities, unnecessary repetitions, and inconsistencies in the chapter have been objectively explained. They are the author's devices in achieving his communication purposes and not some evidence for suspicion of external interference of the original composition. Therefore, this study shows the suitability and applicability of the discourse analysis method in biblical studies in general.

Keywords: Discourse Analysis, Atonement, Lexicon Repetition, Weqatal, Yom Kippur, Azazel, Sin-Offering.

INTRODUCTION

Discourse analysis is one of the methods for interpreting written or oral texts. It is also referred to as discourse linguistics/analysis or text linguistics, and so these terminologies may be used interchangeably. As Garber Kompaore explains,

Discourse analysis involves analyzing both the organizational structure of the text, and the choice and distribution of lexical items...Discourse analysis looks at how the information is packaged, chunked, and divided up into parts, and what those parts consist of. It also examines the techniques for holding the text together. (2004, p. 5)

So, this study seeks to understand the functions of the structures of Leviticus 16 as they are, believing that this will lead to a more precise interpretation of the passage. Thus, various discourse parameters will be observed and explained. These include word order, linguistics structures, prominence markers, lexicon repetition, and regular and marked structures. These are

examined to discern how they enhance cohesion, coherence, continuity, discontinuity, and discourse theme and topic.

DISCOURSE ANALYSIS IN BIBLICAL STUDIES

Discourse analysis has not been widely applied in biblical studies. However, other disciplines have undertaken research using this approach. Garber Kompaore observes that “the scholars involved in the area of applied linguistics, specifically in translation and second language teaching, have been the most active in discourse analysis studies” (2004, pp. 1–2). However, although the discourse analysis approach is yet to be used extensively in biblical studies, some scholars have already successfully used it. Cotterel and Turner (1989, pp. 248-253), for instance, applied it in the reading and interpretation of the rape of Tamar narrative. They analyzed 2 Samuel 13 by examining three key discourse parameters: temporal setting, participants, and thematic continuity and discontinuity.

Bandstra (1992, pp. 109–123), on the other hand, applied discourse analysis to Genesis 22 in his discussion on Hebrew word order and emphasis. This led him to conclude that “emphasis is a function of non-V-(S)-O word order and can better be termed topicalization... Word order is thus seen to be one of the most significant syntactic factors which are responsible for maintaining continuity between clauses as well as indicating thematic breaks between paragraphs” (1992, pp. 109–123). On the other hand, Nuñez (2015) applied discourse analysis in analyzing the structure of Daniel 8.

But the application of discourse analysis to the law genre in biblical studies is even more limited. Much credit goes to Robert Longacre for his popularization of text-linguistics on Biblical Hebrew narratives and law.¹ His research on the weqatal form of Biblical Hebrew revealed that the weqatal “finds its most characteristic use in the mainline structures of predictive, procedural, and instructional discourse” (1994, p.52). He observes that, like predictive and instructional texts, procedural texts have a string of the weqatal verbs as its backbone structure (1994, p. 52). In his study of procedural discourse in Leviticus 4:1-12, he observes that a chain of weqatal forms characterize versus 1-7a, 12, which deal with essential elements of the cultic ritual and N + yiqtol clauses which detail verses 7b-11 minor procedures (1994, p. 53).

Little has been done applying text-linguistics to the law genre, especially procedural discourse. This study, therefore, applies the discourse analysis method to the reading of Leviticus 16, intending to arrive at an objective analysis of its structure.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE LEVITICUS 16 DISCOURSE UNIT

The structure of the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) procedures is variously given. While there is little contention concerning its pericope, its subdivisions are disputed.² On the one hand

¹ Some of the discourse analysis works of Robert Longacre include: *The Verb Ranking and constituent structure of discourse* (Journal of the Linguistics Association of the South West 5:177-202, 1982b); Joseph; *A story of divine providence: A Text theoretical and Text linguistics analysis of Genesis 37 and 39-48* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbraun, 1989a); *The study of preverbal nouns in Biblical Hebrew narrative: Some overriding concerns* (Journal of Translation and Textlinguistics 5:208-24, 1992b);

² For instance, Wenham (1988, p.228) divides it into the introduction (vv.1-2), priesthood animals and dress code (vv.3-5), an outline of ceremonies (vv.6-10), a detailed description of the ceremonies (vv.11-28), and the people's duty (vv.29-34). On the other hand, Hartley (1992, p. 224-225) divides the discourse into three major divisions: Introduction (vv. 1-2a), Speech (vv.2b-34a), and compliance report (v.34b). Kleinig's (2003, p. 336-337) division is closely related to Hartley's: introduction (vv.1-2a), Speech (vv. 2b-28), legislation of the Day (vv. 29-34a), compliance report (34b). Milgrom (1991, 1059-1061) divides it into nine subunits: Introduction (v. 1, materials required (vv. 2-5), preliminaries (vv. 6-10), purging of the sanctuary (vv. 11-19), purging the people (vv. 20-22), altar sacrifices (vv. 23-25), purification of assistants (vv. 26-28),

are those who argue for the heterogeneity of the chapter. They base their argument on unusual linguistic and syntactical peculiarities in the branch, such as "repetitions, unique usage of words, overlappings in the ritual order, gaps in details, parenthetical statements, and theological tensions" (Hartley, 1992, p. 4). Jenson (1992, p. 197) suggests that "some of the difficulties in the text (Lev. 16) may have arisen because of its historical evolution." This sentiment is echoed by John Hartley, who attributes the uniqueness of verses 29-34 to later editorial work, and sees chiasm in the chapter as a justification for composite authorship (Hartley, 1992, pp. 224–234). On the other hand, are those scholars who defend the literary unity of the chapter. Wilfried Warning observes that the verb בוא (come) holds Leviticus 16:2-28 together.

This paper contends that an objective discourse analysis of Yom Kippur procedures stands a chance of revealing the author's intended structure of this discourse which will ultimately lead to a clearer interpretation of the intended message.

The Yom Kippur Discourse Pericope

Pericope is used in this context to refer to a set of verses that form a coherent unit. Establishing a text's pericope is a prerequisite for its analysis. Various Biblical Hebrew (BH) discourse parameters are examined with a view of objectively discerning Yom Kippur procedures pericope.

Co-text

Co-text is the literary context of a text. Leviticus 16 falls under the law corpus, from Exodus 25:1 to Numbers 10:10 (Hartley, 1992, p. xxx). This large corpus of law was given when the Israelites camped near Mount Sinai. They were given between the time they arrived and departed there (Kleinig, 2003, p. 18). While the book of Exodus ends with instructions for and subsequent completion of the tabernacle, the text of Leviticus focuses on how the Lord who now dwells among His people ought to be worshipped—by offering sacrifices. Levitical laws outline what it meant for Israelites to serve the Lord.

Some scholars like Gordon (1988, pp. 3-6) see a great affinity between the Atonement Law and the purity laws (11—15). However, Leviticus 16 should be treated independently. First is because of its expanded narrative Introduction (vv. 1-2a). The second reason is that while the purity laws deal with ritual purity, the Atonement Law of Leviticus 16 deals with procedures for cleansing the sanctuary from all forms of pollution resulting from these impurities. The third reason is the emphasis that the author lays on the Atonement Law through the chiasmic structure and other discourse parameters, as shown below.

Structure

Establishing the structure of a passage is a prerequisite for objective analysis and interpretation of that passage. While there is contention concerning its details, several scholars see chiasm in the structure of the Atonement Law. A. M. Rodriguez advises against identifying chiasmic structures solely "based on the general content rather than on linguistic and structural similarities. That approach tends to reveal the creativity of the researcher rather than the literary skills of the biblical writer" (Rodriguez, 2018, p. 283). He, however, establishes chiasm in the structure of Leviticus 16, with verses 16-20a being at the centre of the chiasm (Rodriguez, 2018,

Israel's self-purgation (vv. 29-34), and execution (v. 34b). Levine (1989, pp. 100-110) divided the discourse into six divisions: Introduction (vv. 1-2), preparation for purification (vv. 3-10), purification of the sanctuary (vv. 11-19), dispatch of the scape-goat (vv. 20-23), rites after the dispatch of the scape-goat (vv. 23-28), designation of the annual Day of atonement (vv. 29-34).

p. 283). On the other hand, Warning (1999, pp. 86-88) bases his chiasmic structure on the seven-fold repetition of the noun בגד (garment).

This study establishes a seven-part chiasmic structure in the Atonement Law of Leviticus 16, with the division of verses 11-25 being at the centre of the chiasm, as shown below:

- A Introduction (vv. 1-2a)
- B Command for sacrificial animals and dress code (2b-5)
- C Preliminary atonement procedures (vv. 6-10)
- D Atonement procedures over the priests and the people (vv. 11-25)
- C' post-requisite atonement procedures (vv. 26-28)
- B' Command for the Day's observance and cessation from work (vv. 29-34c)
- A' Conclusion (v. 34d)

At the centre of this chiasmic structure is the atonement on behalf of the priesthood and the people. This is the heart of the Day's activities. Atonement is made upon the Holiest Place (vv. 11-16a), the Holy Place (vv. 16b-17d) and the Altar (vv. 18a-20a) because of the sins of the people of Israelites. The procedures immediately before and after this central layer (CC') deal with crucial procedures before and after the main atonement procedures. Assignment of roles to the two goats was a prerequisite for the performance of atonement rites. At the same time, remains of sin-offerings and cleansing of participants were necessary to complete the process. Layers BB' are parallel to each other in that while the former commands concerning the sacrificial animals' requirements from the priesthood and the people as well as Aaron's dress code, the latter commands the people not only in regard to their behavior on a crucial Day but also concerning the future observance of the Day. The first and the last layers (AA') are parallel to each other in that while the former introduces the Atonement Law, the latter concludes with a report on Aaron's compliance with the Atonement Law. The duo portions are also wayyiqtol clauses, thus forming an inclusio of the entire Yom Kippur discourse unit.

The chiasmic structure above gives Yom Kippur discourse prominence and emphasizes its solemnity. It is coupled with the fact that it is relatively located at the centre of the book of Leviticus and the centre of the Pentateuch in general.

Cohesion

A unit of text has some features which cohere with it. Yom Kippur discourse unit is cohered by several factors, including theme and discourse type (genre). First is the theme of atonement which runs through the discourse unit. This is indicated by the sixteen-fold lexical repetition of כפר (*to make atonement*) in its various forms [vv. 6, 10, 11, 16, 17 (2x), 18, 20, 24, 27, 30, 32, 33 (3x), 34]. This repetition gives this unit its characteristic theme: atonement. Another related term repeated throughout this discourse unit is תְּזַאֵר (sin-offering). This is repeated 14 times in its various forms (vv. 3, 5, 6, 9, 11 (2x), 15, 16, 21, 25, 27 (2x), 30, 34). Atonement was performed by means of the sin-offerings blood.

Secondly, the cohesion of this discourse unit is enhanced by its unique genre. DeRouchie (2017, pp. 51-56) outlines five types of laws in the Pentateuch based on their variation in content: criminal, civil, family, cultic/ ceremonial, and compassion. While atonement law can be categorized under the cultic genre, it can be further narrowly classified. In his approach to biblical Hebrew prose from a discourse-modular perspective, Longacre (1994, p. 52) categorizes the sacrificial prescriptions of Leviticus as procedural discourses. In his investigation, he finds out that weqatal forms are "backbone structures in predictive, procedural, and instructional discourses" (1994, p. 51).

Leviticus 16:1-34 deals with procedures the high priest should follow to perform the atonement. Verses 1-2a introduce the atonement law. While verses 2b-5 deal with sacrificial animals required and the high priest's dress code, verses 6-11 give the procedures for assigning roles to the two goats. On the other hand, verses 11-25 provide procedures concerning the ritual proper. The high priest had to slaughter the animals and appropriately sprinkle their blood upon the Holy Place, the Tent of Meeting, and the Altar. This section also details the performance of the whole-burnt offering. Verses 26-28 give procedures on how to deal with sin-offerings remain and the cleansing of the participants is given. The second last section (vv. 29-34c) stipulates people's role and institution of the Day of Atonement, while clause 34cd reports Aaron's compliance with the law. Therefore, Leviticus 16 fits into the category of procedural discourse genre.

Boundary Markers

Yom Kippur procedures are delineated from their context by several boundary markers. These include inclusio devices, speaker-recipient identification, divine speech formulae, and setting. To begin with, the author of Yom Kippur procedures used inclusio device to delineate this discourse unit. As indicated by the blue shading below, the wayyiqtol verbal structure at the beginning (vv. 1ac, 2a) and the end (v. 34cd) enclose the discourse as a unit and thus form an inclusio. The last wayyiqtol (v. 34cd) clause reports that Aaron did as the Lord had commanded Moses.

Verse/clause	Translation
1a	The Lord spoke to Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron
1b	when they approached the presence of the Lord
1c	and so died (וַיָּמָוּתוּ)
2a	The Lord said to Moses
2b	Speak to Aaron, your brother
34cd	And he did (וַיַּעַשׂ) as the Lord had commanded Moses.

In addition, this discourse unit is marked off by the speaker-recipient identification formula (their nominal forms are highlighted in yellow above). These are identified in the introduction and referred back to after the discourse unit. The first and the fourth clauses (vss. 1a, 2a) of the discourse identify 'the Lord' as the speaker and 'Moses' as the direct recipient of the procedures. Moses was then to pass the same procedures to Aaron, the high priest who was to execute them (v. 2b). The last two clauses of the discourse unit (vv. 34cd) has the three characters (the Lord, Moses, Aaron). The pronoun in the last clause refers to Aaron. Like the prologue, this compliance report (v. 34cd) serves a rhetorical purpose. That Aaron did as the Lord had commanded Moses helped strongly instruct and persuade future generations to observe this wondrous Day.

In addition, the divine speech formulae bracket off the Yom Kippur discourse unit. This bracketing characterizes the whole book of Leviticus. Clauses 1-2a introduce the atonement law. There is no compelling reason why the whole of the first verse should be treated as an independent discourse, as Warning (1998, pp. 42-46) opines. After this introduction, the following divine speech comes in chapter 17. The divine speech formula in verse 17 begins another discourse unit. Therefore, these two divine speeches mark the Yom Kippur procedures as running from 16:1-34.

Furthermore, the Yom Kippur procedures begin with information about the setting. Clauses 1abc give the circumstances under which the procedures were given: 'after the death of the two

sons of Aaron, when they approached the presence of the Lord and so died.’ The circumstantial clauses warn Aaron against improperly entering the Holy Place. As Kleinig rightly states;

The death of Nadab and Abihu for approaching the Lord in the wrong way with unauthorized fire in 10:1-3 results in the legislation on how Aaron is to enter the Holy Place with fire from the altar to perform a rite of atonement for the defiled sanctuary...the rite that was instituted in chapter 16 was meant to cleanse both the sanctuary and the people from impurity.(2003, p. 335)

So the Yom Kippur procedures were meant to cleanse and purify the Holy Place, the Tent of Meeting, and the Altar from all the impurity and sins committed by Israel as a nation.

Prominence

The Yom Kippur discourse unit contains some additional features that make it stand out and thus making it an independent discourse unit. First is the requirement for the high priest to bathe his whole body in two instances before and after officiating atonement (vss. 4f, 24a). Samaritan Pentateuch and LXX added an adjective for ‘all’ before ‘his body’ in verse 4f to emphasize that it was not the usual hand and feet washing but the whole body that needed washing. The high priest only needed to wash his hands and feet (Exod. 30:19). The one who sent the live goat away to the wilderness and burnt the sin-offering remains (vv. 26-28) were also supposed to wash their garments and bathe before re-entering the camp.

Secondly is the hapax legomenon אָזָזִים (Azazel). This word occurs only four times in the Hebrew Scriptures, all in this chapter (vv. 8, 10 (2x), 26). There are four major possible explanations for this hapax legomenon.³ First, this noun describes the goat itself. The proponents argue that the word is a compound one made up of אָזָזִים, "goat," and אָזָזִים, "go away," i.e., "the goat which departs." This rendering is supported by the LXX, Vulgate, Aquila, and Ibn Ezra. On this basis, we have some Bible translations like NIV and NASB rendering the word "scapegoat." However, this rendition offers some grammatical challenges. The phrase אָזָזִים לְאָזָזִים will then mean "so that it (goat) is sent away to the scape-goat." Secondly, אָזָזִים is used abstractly in the sense of entire removal. This is supported by the existence of the Arab word *azala*, which means to *banish* or *remove*. While this is a tempting option, especially considering what the goat accomplished, it fails to account for the parallel “for the Lord” in verse 8. Thirdly, Azazel designates the place to which the goat departs. But this poses some grammatical challenges considering that the phrase is parallel with "for the Lord," as stated above. Also, there would be no need for the locational phrase אֶל־הַבְּרָדָה (towards the wilderness) in this verse 10. Fourthly, the word refers to a desert demon or the devil himself.

Furthermore, the desert or wilderness is frequently described by both the OT and NT as “the abode of evil spirits” (Helm, 1994, p. 218). However, this proposal poses some theological tensions: the goat being sacrificed to the demon. Therefore, this study just transliterates the word.

Thirdly is the change from the third person to the second person. There is a shift from exclusively third person addressee in the first 28 verses to both second person and third person addressees in verses 29-34. The Lord shifted from addressing Aaron through Moses to directly addressing the whole nation of Israel.

Yom Kippur Discourse Sub-Sections

³ See Hartley, Leviticus, 237–238; Pelt and Kaiser “ אָזָזִים ” in New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis, edited by Willem VanGemeren, (Grand Rapids, Mich: Zondervan Pub. House, 1997)

While in the preceding section, the focus was on the entire pericope, this section focuses on various sub-sections making up the Yom Kippur procedures.⁴

Cohesion and thematic development

Cohesion in the Yom Kippur discourse has been enhanced through various means. The first is through verbal forms. While the main oral form of the discourse is weqatal (about 54 times), the wayyiqtol form distinguishes its Introduction and the conclusion (see **green** shading below). These are *he spoke* (וידבר), *and they died* (וימתו), *and he said* (ויאמר) for the introduction section and *and he did* (ויעש) for the conclusion part.

Clause	Hebrew Text and Translation
1a	וידבר יהוה אל- משה The Lord spoke to Moses
1b	אחרי מות שני בני אהרן after the death of the two sons of Aaron
1c	בקרבתם לפני יהוה when they approached the presence of the Lord
1d	וימתו: and died
2a	ויאמר יהוה אל- משה The Lord said to Moses
34c	ויעש and he did
34d	כאשר צוה יהוה את-משה: as the Lord had commanded Moses

The imperative דבר (speak, see **blue** below) marks the beginning of the second section.⁵ This division is made up of four paragraphs: warning against inappropriately appearing before the Lord (vs. 2b-f), priesthood sacrificial animals (vs. 3), Aaron's dress code (vs. 4), and people's sacrificial animals (vs. 5). After the warning, the rest of the content is organized based on a holiness hierarchy. The instructions concerning the high priest precede that of the people. The preposition phrase (בְּזָאת) does not only govern the second paragraph but the third and the fourth as well. This phrase "comes first to stress that Aaron cannot enter the Holy of Holies unprepared" (Hartley, 1992, p. 222). Preposing in the first five clauses (see **grey** shading below) of the third paragraph (verse 4) highlights that Aaron was to be dressed in simple linen garments on this particular day. He was not to put on his usual royal-like garments.

⁴ The divisions earlier established are Introduction (vv. 1-2a); Command for sacrificial animals and dress code (2b-5); Preliminary atonement procedures (vv. 6-10); Atonement procedures over the priests and the people (vv. 11-25); Post-requisite atonement procedures (vv. 26-28); Command for the Day's observance and cessation from work (vv. 29-34c), and Conclusion (v. 34cd).

⁵ The imperative not only marks the beginning of this immediate unit (vss. 2b-5) but governs the whole discourse.

There are three key verbs of movement which govern this division (see **green** shading below): **ואל-יבא** (let him not enter/come, vs. 2c), **יבא** (come, vs. 3), and **יקח** (take, vs. 5). The three verbs instruct on the manner of approaching the Lord's presence, which is the main theme characterizing this division.

Clause	Clause Type	Hebrew Text and Translation
2b	Initiatory/imperative	דַּבֵּר אֶל-אַהֲרֹן אַחִיךָ Speak to Aaron, your brother
2c	warning	ואל-יבא בְּכַל-עַתָּה אֶל-הַקֹּדֶשׁ מִבַּיִת לַפְּרֹכֶת אֶל-פְּנֵי הַכַּפֹּרֶת Let him not to enter anyhow into the Holiest Place, within the veil, into the presence of the Mercy-Seat
2d	Relative-expansive	אֲשֶׁר עַל-הָאָרֶן which is over the Ark
2e	result	וְלֹא יָמוּת lest he dies
2f	causal	כִּי בָעָנָן אֶרְאֶה עַל-הַכַּפֹּרֶת for through the cloud, I appear upon the Mercy-Seat
3	Zot-Prescriptive	בְּזֹאת יָבֵא אַהֲרֹן אֶל-הַקֹּדֶשׁ בְּפָרָה בֶּן-בָּקָר לְחֻטָּאת וְאַיִל לְעֹלָה With this is Aaron to enter the Holy Place: with a young bull for sin-offering and a ram for a whole burnt offering.
4a	Expansive	כְּתֹנֶת-בִּדָּה קָדֹשׁ יִלְבָּשׁ A holy linen tunic is he to put on
4b	Addition	וּמְכַנְסֵי-בִדָּה יִהְיוּ עַל-בְּשָׂרוֹ and linen undergarments are to be on his body
4c	Addition	וּבִאֲבִגַּת בִּדָּה יִחְגֹּר and with a girdle of linen is he to be gird
4d	Addition	וּבְמִצְנֶפֶת בִּדָּה יִצְנָף and with a turban of linen is he to be wrapped.
4e	verbless	בְּגָדֵי-קָדֹשׁ הֵם Holy garments (are) they
4f	inference	וְרָחַץ בַּמַּיִם אֶת-בְּשָׂרוֹ and so he is to bathe his body with the water

4g	final	וּלְבָשֶׁם then put them on
5	directive	וּמֵאֵת עֵדוּת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל יִקַּח שְׁנֵי־שְׂעִירֵי עֲזִים לְחַטָּאת וְאֵיל אֶחָד לְעֹלָה: From the community of the sons of Israel, he takes two male goats for sin-offering, and one ram for a whole-burnt offering

Discourse markers have also enhanced cohesion in the Yom Kippur discourse. For instance, the adverb וְכֵן (likewise, vs. 16b) links the second subdivision of the main atonement section to its immediate preceding one (vss. 11-16a). While the second subdivision dealt with the atonement of a different sacred space (Tent of Meeting), both undergo the same atonement procedures. So וְכֵן discourse marker enhances affinity between sections running from 11-16a and 16b-17d.

Furthermore, the cohesion of the Yom Kippur procedures is enhanced through participant reference. This is especially the case with the sixth division (vss. 29-34b), where there is a shift from exclusively third person addressee in the preceding portion of the Text (vss. 1-28) to both second person and third person addressees. The second person pronoun/pronominal suffix/affix (see yellow shading) has been repeated at least 13 times in this division. This distinguishes the division as an independent unit. The third person references in verses 32-33 do not alter the fact that the addressee is the larger population of Israel of whom the high priest is part.

Clause	Clause Type	Hebrew Text and Translation
29a	General-imperative	וְהִיְתָה לָכֶם לְחֻקֵּת עוֹלָם And it is to be to you everlasting statute
29b	Specification	בַּחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי בְּעֶשְׂרֵי לַחֹדֶשׁ תַּעֲנֹוּ אֶת־נַפְשֹׁתֵיכֶם On the seventh month, on the tenth of the month, you are to afflict your souls
29c	explanation ⁶	וְכָל־מְלָאכָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ הָאֶזְרָח וְהַגֵּר הַגֵּר בְּתוֹכְכֶם You are not to do any work: neither the native nor the sojourner sojourning in your midst.
30a	Causal	כִּי־בַיּוֹם הַזֶּה יִכַּפֵּר עֲלֵיכֶם for on this Day he shall make atonement over you
30b	Purpose	לְטַהֵר אֶתְכֶם to cleanse you
30c	Reiterative	מִכָּל חַטָּאתֵיכֶם לִפְנֵי יְהוָה תִּטְהָרוּ from all your sins before the Lord, you shall be cleansed
31a	Imperative	שִׁבֹת שְׁבֹתוֹן הִיא לָכֶם

⁶ This clause explains how the Israelites are to afflicting their souls as commanded in the previous clause. According to Mishnah tradition, this self-denial involved "five abstentions: from food and drink, bathing, use of oil or unguent on the body, wearing leather shoes, and sexual intercourse" (Levine, *JPS Torah Commentary*, 108).

		A Sabbath of Sabbaths shall it be for you
31b	consequential	וְעִנִּיתֶם אֹתָם נַפְשֵׁיכֶם and so you are to afflict your souls
31c	verbless	חֻקַּת עוֹלָם It is to be an everlasting statute
32a	imperative	וְכָפַר הַכֹּהֵן The priest is to make atonement
32b	relative	אֲשֶׁר־יִמָּשַׁח אֹתוֹ who is anointed
32c	relative	וְאֲשֶׁר יִמְלֵא אֶת־יָדָיו and who consecrated
32d	nominative	לְכַהֵן תַּחַת אָבִיו as a priest in place of his father
32e	explanation	וְלָבַשׂ אֶת־בְּגָדֵי הַקֹּדֶשׁ: He is to put on linen garments, the holy garments
33a	summarizing	וְכָפַר אֶת־מִקְדָּשׁ הַקֹּדֶשׁ וְאֶת־אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד He is to make atonement over the Holy of Holies and the Tent of Meeting
33b	addition	וְאֶת־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ יְכַפֵּר and the Altar he is to expiate as well
33c	implication	עַל הַכֹּהֲנִים וְעַל־כָּל־עַם הַקָּהָל יְכַפֵּר: Also, over the priests and overall the people of the assembly, he is to make atonement
34a	imperative	וְהָיְתָה־זֹאת לָכֶם לְחֻקַּת עוֹלָם And this is to be an everlasting statute for you
34b	explanation	לְכַפֵּר עַל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מִכָּל־חַטָּאתָם אֶחָת בַּשָּׁנָה to make expiation upon (the) sons of Israel in regard to all their sins once in a year

Lexical Repetition

Lexicon repetition serves additional discourse functions. First is the emphasis. In the sixth division above (see vss. 29-34b), clauses 29a, 31c, and 34a are repeated (see **turquoise** shading above). The repetition stresses that every generation of the Israelites is to observe the Day of Atonement. This could have been necessary, bearing in mind the Atonement Law's circumstances, as discussed above.

Secondly, lexical repetition is used to develop a theme/topic. The third discourse division (vss. 6-10) thematically deals with preliminary procedures. The theme of goat rites

dominates this division, as indicated by the fourfold nominal.⁷ Repetition of השעיר (Goat, vss. 7a, 8, 9a, and 10a-see gold shading below). This is both in singular and plural forms. While the author could have used pronouns in subsequent reference, he chose to repeat the noun in its nominal state. The lexical repetition emphasizes the significance of this preliminary procedure of the role assigned to the two goats. The immediate preceding procedure (vss. 11-16a) would involve one of them: the sin-offering goat. Therefore, this phenomenon contrasts with Garber Kompaore's observation that "most thematic referent will have the highest frequency of pronominal references" (2006, p. 131). This case has the highest nominal references.

The theme of the rites with the two goats is also enhanced by the three-fold lexical repetition of the hapax legomenon עזאזל (Azazel, see yellow shading above-vv. 8,10 (2x)). Three instances occur in this division of all its four occurrences in the chapter (and indeed the whole Hebrew Bible). It later occurs in reference to the person who sent the live goat away to the wilderness (see verse 26a).

The theme of the preliminary presentation of sacrificial animals is also enhanced through the two-fold lexical repetition of the weqatal והקריב (bring forward, vss. 6a, 9a-see blue shading below). קרב has a wide semantic range. It can mean offer (Nu. 18:15; Ezek. 43:22), set apart (Exod. 28:1), bring near/forward (Exod. 40:12), or appeal (Deut. 1:5). In this context, it means 'to bring near/forward.' This is in the sense of bringing closer for presentation before being offered as a sacrifice. So while in verse 11, the weqatal means "to offer," it is herein used to indicate *presently*. Therefore, the preliminary procedural rites in this section differ from those preceding and proceeding.

Clause	Clause Type	Hebrew Text and Translation
6a	Flash-forward	והקריב אהרן את־פֶּר החטאת אשר־לוֹ Then Aaron is to bring forward his bull for the sin-offering
6b	sequential	וְכַפֵּר בְּעֵדוֹ וּבְעֵד בֵּיתוֹ and make expiation on behalf of himself and behalf of his household
7a	Foreground	וְלָקַח אֶת־שְׁנֵי הַשְּׂעִירִים Then he is to take the two male goats
7b	Sequential	וְהֶעֱמִיד אֹתָם לִפְנֵי יְהוָה פֶּתַח אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד and present them before the Lord at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting
8	sequential	וְנָתַן אֹהֶל־עַל־שְׁנֵי הַשְּׂעִירִים גּוּרְלוֹת גּוּרְלֵי אֹהֶל לַיהוָה וְגוּרְלֵי אֹהֶל לְעִזָּאֵזֶל Aaron is to cast lots over the two male goats: one lot for the Lord and one lot for the Azazel
9a	Flash-forward	וְהֶקְרִיב אֹהֶל־אֶת־הַשְּׂעִיר And Aaron is to bring forward the goat

⁷ As noun. This excludes the instances of pronoun or pronominal references.

9b	Relative-expansive	אֲשֶׁר עָלָה עָלָיו הַגּוֹרֵל לַיהוָה which the lot for the Lord came out upon it
9c	Sequential	וְעָשִׂהוּ חֲטָאתַת and offer it as the sin-offering
10a	adversative	וְהַשְׁעִיר אֲשֶׁר עָלָה עָלָיו הַגּוֹרֵל לְעֵזָאֵזֵל But the goat upon which the lot for the Azazel came out upon
10b	Flash-forward	יַעֲמִדְתִּי לִפְנֵי יְהוָה he is to present it alive before the Lord
10c	purpose	לְכַפֵּר עָלָיו to make expiation upon it
10d	purpose	לְשַׁלַּח אֹתוֹ לְעֵזָאֵזֵל הַמִּדְבָּרָה so that it is sent away to the Azazel, towards the wilderness.

Lexical repetition also begins a new section. For instance, weqatal וּשְׁחַט (slaughter, vss. 11b,15a) breaks the section dealing with the atonement of the Holy Place into two main paragraphs: vss. 11a-14c and vss. 15a-16a. While the first paragraph deals with priesthood sin-offering, the second one deals with the peoples.' In addition, lexical repetition enhances cohesion. The Holy Place has been nominally referred to thrice: מִבֵּית לַפְּרֹכֶת (vss. 12b, 15c), הַקֹּדֶשׁ (vs. 16a). These are shorter versions of the earlier reference- מִבֵּית לַפְּרֹכֶת (vs. 2c). While the subsequent references (especially vss. 15c, 16a) could have been in pronoun form, they are nominal in this case. This repetition coheres to the clauses dealing with the atonement of the Holy Place. While the section could have been divided by the factor of the two sacrificial animals (bull and goat), cohesion is enhanced by the aforementioned lexical repetition.

Furthermore, lexical repetition enhances thematic development. For instance, the theme of live-goat procedures (vss. 20b-22b) is indicated by the little five-fold repetition in reference to the living goat (see green shading below). After duo reference to הַשְּׁעִיר הַחַי (the living goat, vss. 20b, 21a), the goat is subsequently referred to simply as הַשְּׁעִיר (the goat, vss. 21c, 22ab). The subsequent references elided the adjective חַי (living), for the reference was now obvious to Aaron. Also, while the living goat could have subsequently been referenced using pronouns, this is not the case. The author uses full nouns to refer to the live goat. This emphasizes the theme for this unit (living goat procedures). The living-goat procedures were the climax of the Day of Atonement.

Clause	Clause Type	Hebrew Text and Translation
20b	Foreground	וְהִקְרִיב אֶת-הַשְּׁעִיר הַחַי he then to bring forward the live goat
	sequential	וְסָמָה אֶהָרֶן אֶת-שְׁתֵּי (יָדָיו) [יָדָיו] עַל רֹאשׁ הַשְּׁעִיר הַחַי Aaron is to lean his two hands upon the head of the living goat
21b	sequential	וְהִתְנַדָּה עָלָיו אֶת-כָּל-עֹנֹת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאֶת-כָּל-פְּשָׁעֵיהֶם לְכָל-חֲטָאתָם

		and confess upon it all the iniquities of the sons of Israel and all their transgressions-all their sins.
21c	simultaneous	וְנָתַן אֹתָם עַל-רֹאשׁ הַשְּׂעִיר He is to place them upon the head of the goat
21d	sequential	וְשָׁלַח בְּיַד-אִישׁ עֵתִי הַמִּדְבָּרָה then send it away towards the wilderness by a hand of a man ready
22a	simultaneous	וְנָשָׂא הַשְּׂעִיר עֲלָיו אֶת-כָּל-עֲוֹנוֹתָם אֶל-אֶרֶץ גְּזֵרָה And so the goat is to carry upon itself all their iniquities into the desolate land
22b	reiterative	וְשָׁלַח אֹתוֹ הַשְּׂעִיר בַּמִּדְבָּר He is to send the goat away into the desert

Summary/Concluding Statements

The author creatively used summary/concluding statements to mark the end of each subsection in the main atonement procedures section (vss. 11-25). After the procedures dealing with the atonement of the Holy Place, the author concluded with, 'thus he will make atonement upon the Holy Place because of the uncleanness of the sons of Israel and because of their transgressions-for all of their sins' (vs.16a). The clause marks the end of the subsection and shows the meaning/implication of the rites performed. Similarly, the procedures on the atonement of the Tent of Meeting (vss.16b-17d) are concluded by 'he is to make atonement over himself and over his household and the whole assembly of Israel' (vs.17d). As well, after atonement procedures on the Altar (vss. 18a-19c), the section concludes with the clause "thus he will cleanse it and consecrate it because of the uncleanness of the sons of Israel" (vss. 19bc). Furthermore, the whole-burnt offering section concludes with the clause "he is to make atonement on behalf of himself and the people" (vs. 24e).

Word Order

The author of the Yom Kippur manipulated Biblical Hebrew to achieve various discourse functions. This includes reversing word order to show minor procedures. As discussed above, the Atonement Law under examination is a procedural discourse. It has also been established that the verbal form of the main procedures in how-to-do texts is weqatal. The fifth division (vss. 26-28) of the Yom Kippur contains preposed clauses. The division deals with minor procedures: cleansing the participants and disposal of the sin-offerings remains. These procedures are marked to show that they are minor compared to the preceding major procedures. It is, therefore, agreeable that for the procedural discourse, main procedures are given in weqatal form while minor procedures are given in N+yiqtol form, as postulated by Longacre (1994, p. 53).

Apart from indicating minor procedures, topicalization is another essential discourse function of preposing in this sub-section. There are three topics in this unit: the sender of the goat to Azazel (v. 26a), sin-offerings remain (v. 27a), and the burner of the sin-offering remains (v. 28a). All these topics are initials in the clauses they are found in. This manner of showing topics

compares with narratives where apart from showing circumstances, fronted constituents show topics.⁸

CONCLUSION

This paper has highlighted the applicability and suitability of discourse analysis in biblical text analysis. This study examined various discourse parameters which the author used in the composition of the Atonement Law. These include genre, organizational structure, lexical repetition, boundary markers, discourse markers, participant reference, verbal structure/form, word order, and summary statements. These discourse parameters perform various functions: enhancing cohesion, theme/topicalization, bracketing, continuity and discontinuity, emphasis, and establishing the setting.

Based on this examination, the Yom Kippur discourse pericope was established starting from verse 1 in Leviticus 16 to verse 34. It comprises seven significant divisions, with verses 11-25 at the centre of its chiasmic structure. The divisions are Introduction (vv. 1-2a); Command for sacrificial animals and dress code (2b-5); Preliminary atonement procedures (vv. 6-10); Atonement procedures over the priests and the people (vv. 11-25); post-requisite atonement procedures (vv. 26-28); Command for the Day's observance and cessation from work (vv. 29-34c), and conclusion (v. 34cd). The fourth division (vss. 11-25) is prominent for it is at the centre of the chiasmic structure. It deals with the main procedures for the Day: the atonement of the Holy Place, the Tent of Meeting, and the Altar. Also, it contains the procedures for the living goat and those for the whole-burnt offering.

By analyzing the Yom Kippur structure using the discourse analysis method, the unity of the Yom Kippur discourse has been defended. This means that every portion of the Atonement Law should be given the same weight in the interpretation. No part of the text is inferior to the other, for it is part of the larger whole. Also, the chapter's unusual linguistic and syntactic peculiarities include repetitions, unique usage of words, overlappings in the ritual order, gaps in details, parenthetical statements, and theological tensions, which some scholars have treated with suspicion, are not necessarily so. They are the author's devices in the composition of the Atonement Law.

Therefore, this study shows the suitability and applicability of the discourse analysis method in biblical studies. It is faithful to the text and reveals authorial intentions, which is key for an objective interpretation of any text, but more so the inspired and authoritative biblical texts.

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⁸ See discussion by Geoffrey Khan and Christo H.J. Van Der Merwe, "Towards A Comprehensive Model For Interpreting Word Order In Classical Biblical Hebrew," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 65, no. 2 (September 1, 2020): 378-383.

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