

Julia Rhyder

Centralizing the Cult

The Holiness Legislation in Leviticus 17-26

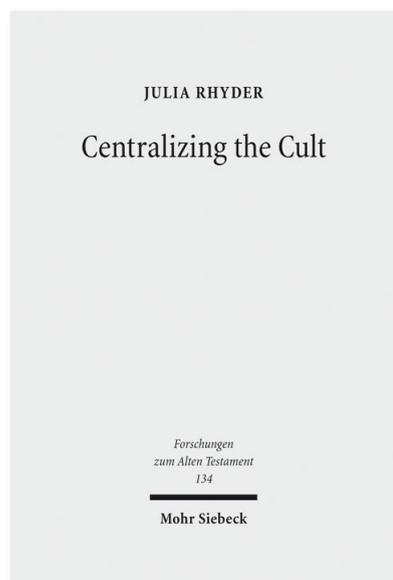
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In this work, Julia Rhyder provides new insights into the relationship between the Holiness legislation in Leviticus 17-26 and processes of cultic centralization in the Persian period. The author departs from the classical theory that Leviticus 17-26 merely presume, with minor modifications, a concept of centralization articulated in Deuteronomy. She shows how Leviticus 17-26 use ritual legislation to make a new, and distinctive case as to why the Israelites must defer to a central sanctuary, standardized ritual processes, and a hegemonic priesthood. This discourse of centralization reflects the historical challenges that faced priests in Jerusalem during the Persian era: in particular, the need to compensate for the loss of a royal sponsor, to pool communal resources in order to meet socio-economic pressures, and to find new means of negotiating with the sanctuary at Mount Gerizim and with a growing diaspora.

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