

from YHWH's own self seems to have developed in response to a growing need for that compartmentalization. On the most concrete side of that continuum, we find *kābôd* with a basic sense of "body" or some weighty constituent part of it, and it often appears in early poetic usage in parallel to references to human corporeality and to the loci of the self:²⁴

Genesis 49:6

Into their council may my soul [*napšîl*] never enter;
with their assembly may my *kābôd* never unite

Isaiah 17:4:

the *kābôd* of Jacob will shrink,
and the fatness of his flesh [*mišman bəšārô*] will dwindle

Psalms 16:9

my heart [*libbî*] rejoices,
and my *kābôd* shouts with joy.
Indeed, my flesh [*bəšārî*] dwells securely.

The *kābôd* in this usage seems not only to have referred to corporeality, but also to have functioned as one of the loci of the self in the conceptualization of the human person. For this reason, scholars have frequently emphasized the association of the term with the notion of "presence."²⁵ Baruch Levine (2011, 216, n. 2), for instance, suggests "in more cases than not, we should eliminate the elements of greater abstraction, so understandably evoked by divine association, and emphasize rather the element of real presence."

Shawn Aster (2012, 264) similarly argues that the term refers to two related concepts in the Pentateuch: (1) "the perceptible Presence of YHWH," or (2) "signs and wonders which demonstrate His importance." He continues: "The phrase *kebod YHWH* refers simply to the 'person' or 'self' of YHWH, and is used in passages where YHWH appears and is perceived by humans." An example from P is Moses' encounter with YHWH in Exod 33. There Moses asks to see "your *kābôd*" (v. 18). YHWH responds that their *ṭôb*, "goodness" or "beauty," will pass by Moses, but as it does, YHWH states, "I will cover you with my hand until I have passed by." This seems to identify the *kābôd* with YHWH's *ṭôb*, and both with YHWH's own self. This identification occurs again in Exod 34:6, when YHWH carries out the actions described above. The text explains that "YHWH

²⁴ These examples are drawn from Sommer 2009, 60. Sommer additionally refers to Ps 7:6; Isa 10:3–4; 10:16; 22:18.

²⁵ David Aaron (2001, 53) prefers to avoid the term *presence* because of how theological loaded it is, but similarly concludes the term here "appears to be indicative of the physical being of the deity."