

other available objects of potential worship. This mitigated the risk of other divine images replacing the ark. YHWH's abandonment of the ark was also a more favorable outcome than the deity's willful self-exile to the sacred precinct of whatever empire absconded with it. It allowed for the assertion that YHWH could remain with their people. The authoritative knowledge these rationalizations helped codify served their immediate functions, but also created new conceptual relationships that would have to be renegotiated as the corpus of Israel and Judah's authoritative texts began to take shape.²²

The fronting of the ark's contents as the focal point of divine authority also played a role in this later rhetoric. Shrine models primarily functioned to house miniature divine images, with the former providing the appropriately set apart environment, and the latter constituting the primary facilitator of divine agency. Whatever the original contents of the ark, the tablets of the law become the centerpiece elsewhere in D/Dtr. The intersection of text and ark, and the eclipsing of the latter by the former, may be interpreted to suggest the replacement of one by the other—a passing of the torch as the primary medium of presencing the divine. The complexities of this transition will be addressed in much more detail in the next two chapters, but for now I turn my attention to that locus of divine presence and agency that seems so entangled with the ark itself, the divine “glory,” or *kābôd*.

KĀBÔD

The word *kābôd* is thought to refer fundamentally to heaviness, and by metaphorical extension to wealth, reputation, and honor (Gen 31:1; 45:13; 1 Kgs 3:13).²³ While this conceptual matrix governs the term's usage across the various literary strata of the Hebrew Bible, there are a variety of domains that can be foregrounded, depending on the context (see Burton 2017). In this section, I examine different conceptualizations of the *kābôd* YHWH, as well as its rhetorical utility related to the divine presence, and particularly in later literary strata like P and Ezekiel, where its deployment is concentrated.

I suggest the representation of the *kābôd* can be productively plotted along a continuum of abstraction, though as with the ark, a dimension related to partibility

²² For a fascinating discussion of how the ubiquity of abducted divine images may have undermined Neo-Assyria's traditional conceptualization of the relationship of cult statues to their deities, see Richardson 2012.

²³ See de Vries 2016, 51: “Both כְּבוֹד and יָקָר are expressed in splendor, greatness, might, brightness, etc. Texts that establish a relationship between the כְּבוֹד and the physical stature of a person are congruent with the meaning ‘be weighty’ of the root כָּבַד. כְּבוֹד can also be connected with ornaments or clothing. Where that is so, there is a relationship both with someone's riches and with his external appearance.”