

ABSTRACT

ON HEREM ADAM (PROSCRIPTION OF PERSONS)  
AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE: THE TEMPLE AS A PLACE  
OF FREEDOM AND JUSTICE

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A pair of laws appearing in the last chapter of Leviticus (27:28–29) deals with proscribed property in general and proscribed persons in particular. ‘But of all that anyone owns, be it man or beast or land of his holding, nothing that he has proscribed for the LORD may be sold or redeemed; every proscribed thing is totally consecrated to the LORD. No human being who has been proscribed can be ransomed; he shall be put to death’. The rationale for these laws is unclear. The article offers a new suggestion: verse 28 deals with Temple slaves and verse 29 with fugitive murderers. It goes on to note the wider significance of this interpretation in relation to Ancient Near Eastern temples.