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ENGLISH ABSTRACTS

BETWEEN BIBLE AND MIDRASH: THE STORY OF ABRAM AND SARAI IN EGYPT (GENESIS 12:10–20) AND THE STORY OF MOSES' BIRTH (EXODUS 2:1–10)

Haim Hayun

In this article I suggest adding the story of the birth of Moses in Egypt (Exod 2:1–10) to the known biblical triangle of sister-wife stories and, more precisely, to the story of Abram and Sarai in Egypt and its echoes in the Book of Genesis (Gen 12:10–20, 20:1–18, 26:1–14). I show the inner-biblical similarities and suggest that the Sages too were aware of the connection among the stories.

The similarities are as follows: danger of death threatens the Hebrew males; Sarai and Moses are both taken to Pharaoh's house; a woman saves the endangered male; Pharaoh and Pharaoh's daughter are unaware of the family relations of the Hebrews and reward the relative who remains outside. However, the details of the story are completely reversed. In the Genesis story the woman is taken to the king's house, while in the story in Exodus the child is taken to the king's house. The erotic tension and the forbidden relations have no trace in the story of Moses and the daughter of Pharaoh, and the focus of the plot makes the similarity almost beyond recognition.

Why then did the author of the later story rely on the earlier one? In my opinion, the author seeks to link between Abram and Sarai, who were the first to descend to Egypt, and Moses who brought Israel up from the land of Egypt. As in many other places in the Hebrew Bible, the author makes use of allusion.

The second part of the article shows that the Sages were aware of the similarity. Thus, the connection between the two biblical stories continued into the world of Midrash.

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

Bnyahu Bronner

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.

PROPHETIC REBUKE AND NORTHERN REDACTION:
JUDGES 6:7–10 AS A TEST CASE FOR UNDERSTANDING THE
PROCESSES OF COMPOSITION AND REDACTION IN JUDGES AND
THE DEUTERONOMISTIC HISTORY

Hagit Shabtai

Judges 6:7–10, which tells of an anonymous prophet rebuking Israel for not obeying YHWH, carries with it questions about the composition and redaction of the Former Prophets as a whole, and of the Book of Judges in particular. The classification of this passage as a redactional insertion is widely agreed upon, but the identity of the redactor and of the school to which he belonged is still disputed.

For over half a century, biblical scholars have casually attributed interpolations in the Former Prophets, including Judg 6:7–10, to the Deuteronomistic School. The publication of a small fragment of Judges from Qumran in 1989 (4QJudg^a) diverted the discussion to the realm of textual criticism but did not affect the customary attribution of the passage to a (late) Deuteronomistic, or sometimes post-Deuteronomistic, hand.

In this paper I review the arguments for a Deuteronomistic or post-Deuteronomistic attribution of the passage and highlight their

weaknesses. I propose an alternative identification of Judg 6:7–10 as pre-Deuteronomistic. According to this suggestion, the passage belongs to a redactional stratum of a Northern composition that constitutes most of the Book of Judges as well as 1 Samuel 1–12 and influenced both Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic school.

INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE RETRIBUTION IN THE BOOK OF KINGS

Noach Hayut

The doctrine of divine recompense and retribution (or reward and punishment) is well known in the Hebrew Bible. Questioning the combination of individual retribution (whereby a person receives punishment in accord with his own actions) with collective retribution (whereby the fate of some is determined by the behavior of others) is reflected in a variety of texts throughout the Bible, including Abraham's challenge of God, 'Will you sweep away the innocent along with the guilty?' (Gen 18:23), and the cry of Moses and Aaron to God, 'When one man sins, will you be wrathful with the whole community?' (Num 16:22). The story of Achan, whose wrongdoing causes suffering to others, illustrates the complexity of the issue, since Josh 7:1a, 11 accuses the Israelites in general of violating the ban, while in the rest of Chapter 7, as well as in 22:20, the original violation is portrayed as having been as committed by Achan alone.

Throughout most of the Book of Kings, the kings of Israel and Judah are condemned for cultic sins: worship at the high places, the worship of the calves in the North, and apostasy – all without any reference to the people's behavior. It appears that the primary redactor of the book was not concerned with the question of the entire people being punished for the sins of their kings. Rather, he saw his main task as that of telling the story of the central events in the kings' lives. An exception to this principle is the recurring formula unique to his account of the kingdom of Judah, 'The high places, however, were not removed; the people continued to sacrifice and offer at the high places'.

Nonetheless, a number of passages in the book indicate that certain scribes decided to insert the participation of the people as sinners in descriptions of a king's sin. Some of these additions are awkwardly phrased or even inept, and many are missing from the ancient textual witnesses.

This article shows how these additions were integrated into the original text and attempts to date them. The most important reference to collective retribution in the Book of Kings is the summary review of the history of the northern kingdom of Israel (2 Kings 17:7–23), which, in contrast to most of Kings, portrays the collective sins of Israel. A meticulous analysis of these verses shows that they contain an earlier stratum, which preceded the destruction of Judah. This finding indicates that the earliest editions of the Book of Kings already referred to the participation of the people in the cultic sin, whether independently (2 Kings 17:7–18) or incited by the kings (cf. the recurring refrain, ‘the sins he committed and caused Israel to commit’). Under the influence of these passages, along with the impact of later scribes whose presence is detectable in Jeremiah 37–44, other sections were added, which also accuse the people of collaboration in the sin, whether due to the evil influence of the kings or of their own free will. The dating of these interpolations ranges from the edition of Kings produced in the aftermath of the destruction to the last sections appended during the Persian period – well after the first editions of the Book of Kings had been disseminated.

FROM FAILURE TO FERTILITY:
STRUCTURE AND SIGNIFICANCE IN HOSEA 14:2–10

Miriam Sklarz

The Book of Hosea ends, as Zeev Weisman puts it, with ‘a song of repentance with a liturgical tone’, which describes Israel and YHWH’s return to each other (14:2–10). Scholars concur that the prophecy’s content falls into two halves. Vss. 2–4 deal with Israel’s return to YHWH while vss. 5–9 describe YHWH’s wrath that has turned away from Israel. V. 10 has been understood as a conclusion, either of the prophecy or of the book. Further division into subsections has been suggested based on parallels in contents and language between parts of the text. However, these parallels are not consistent throughout the structure of the passage, and their significance for understanding the main burden of the prophecy is unclear. In this study we show how the recurring expressions and synonyms used in this text lend it a consistent and systematic structure from which its meaning emerges.

‘FOR COUNSEL SHALL NOT PERISH FROM THE WISE’?
JEREMIAH’S CRITICISM OF WISDOM AND THE SAGES IN THE
NEW COVENANT PROPHECY (JEREMIAH 31:30–33 [31–34])

Rachel Frish

The prophecy in Jer 31:30–33 (31–34) predicts a new covenant between the people of Israel and YHWH, one designed in such a way as to prevent its violation, thereby averting any future destruction. But what exactly is new in this covenant? This issue is approached from a fresh angle in this article, which examines the affinities between this prophecy and those that preceded it in Jeremiah’s career, with a particular focus on the connection between the Book of Jeremiah and the Wisdom tradition.

The analysis suggests that the new covenant prophecy employs motifs found in those of Jeremiah’s doom prophecies that bear affinities to the Wisdom tradition, and that it calls for the rectification of the situations that they describe. These earlier prophecies of doom present the inhabitants of Judah and their leaders as possessing wisdom, but claim that this wisdom has had severe consequences: ignorance of God, evil conduct, and greed. By contrast, the new covenant prophecy expropriates both teaching and learning from the exclusive domain of the Sages. In the future, Jeremiah claims, the people as a whole will come to know YHWH, since he will instill his Torah directly in their hearts, thus eliminating the need for human learning. An examination of the connections between the prophecies reveals a gradual progression that reaches its peak in the prophecy of the new covenant.

The final section examines the relationship between the new covenant prophecy and concepts expressed in Deuteronomy, and suggests a conflict between the Jeremian and the Deuteronomic conceptions of the role of human wisdom in achieving knowledge of YHWH.

THE LAYOUT OF THE SONG OF MOSES (*Ha’AZINU*)
IN MEDIEVAL ITALIAN BIBLICAL MANUSCRIPTS

Orlit Kolodni

This article describes the traditions reflected in medieval Italian biblical manuscripts with regard to the layout of the *Ha’azinu* poem (The Song of

Moses; Deut 32:1–43). It traces the relationship of these traditions to other early traditions of transmission, mainly in Ashkenaz.

The most significant finding is that in slightly fewer than half of the Italian manuscripts, *Ha'azinu* was written in 70 lines, as found in Massekhet Soferim and as is commonly practiced today (46.2%); in another 32% it was written in two columns and with fewer or more than 70 lines. Thus, in medieval Italy, the combined group (a+b) comprises 78.2% of the manuscripts as compared to 43.8% in Ashkenaz. The most prominent feature in Ashkenaz is the writing of *Ha'azinu* in ways that diverge from the halachic norm, 47.8% – almost half of the manuscripts, compared to only 10.9% in Italy (a gap of 36.9%). Another difference is that while in a small number of Italian manuscripts, fewer than 7%, *Ha'azinu* was written in 67 rows as in the Aleppo Codex, in Ashkenaz only a tiny fraction of manuscripts, 0.9%, display this practice.

THE ADVERB עַיִן IN BIBLICAL HEBREW: SYNTAX, SEMANTICS AND CHRONOLOGY

Emmanuel Mastey

This study is aimed at providing the syntactic description of one particle, namely the adverb עַיִן, which functions in four senses: still, again, anymore, and a fourth sense that is designated in this study as ‘the prophetic עַיִן’. The boundaries of the word’s use are characterized chronologically, first setting out the basic rules emerging from its appearance in the corpus of Classical Biblical Hebrew. These are strictly adhered to throughout the entire corpus, amounting to hundreds of occurrences. This framework is then used to test the usage of the word in later periods. When we approach texts that are indisputably late, deviations from the rules begin to emerge, each requiring a specific explanation, but all reflecting a substantial departure from the syntactic characteristics of Classical Biblical Hebrew. Some of these changes appear to have taken root in post-biblical Hebrew, while others remained temporary deviations. Thus, the adverb עַיִן opens up a window to the ways in which classical syntax was applied in later periods, demonstrating a gradual disintegration of the ancient linguistic framework that by all indications moves on a chronological axis.

QWSYHB / B'LYTN / QWSNTN / NTNMRN / NTNY /
QWSWHB / NTNB'L:

ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF PERSONAL NAMES FROM IDUMEA
FOR OUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE LINGUISTIC REALITY IN
PERSIAN PALESTINE

Ohad Cohen

Until about three decades ago, the historical evidence from the southern administrative unit in the land of Israel, 'Idumea', was relatively limited. The discovery of about 2,000 ostraca from this administrative unit in the late twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first century has significantly altered our historical understanding of daily life in this area during the Persian period (538–332 BCE). The first-hand evidence of these ostraca has taught us for example about the movement of goods, the status of employees, and issues of land ownership. Moreover, as these administrative texts document both private and social life as they are reflected in verbal usage, they allow us to glimpse the complex linguistic strata in this geographical expanse and historical period. For example, these texts contain a variety of proper names belonging to people who lived in Idumea during the Persian period, indicating a multinational and multilingual situation that stands in a sharp contrast to the administrative language employed throughout the ostraca in which these names are mentioned, namely official Aramaic. The paper conducts a linguistic inquiry into the different languages that are threaded together by these proper names as evidence of the melting pot of spoken tongues in this area. We further integrate these findings with historical evidence from the Bible, allowing us to re-interpret Nehemiah's famous words (Neh 13:24) in a theoretical and historical framework with implications for our understanding of the forces that shaped Late Biblical Hebrew.

THE KARAITES ON COMMANDMENTS THAT ARISE FROM
HUMAN INITIATIVE IN LIGHT OF THEIR DISCUSSION OF THE
SCIATIC TENDON (GENESIS 32:33)

Yoram Erder

According to the story in Gen 32, as a result of the injury sustained by Jacob during his encounter with the divine messenger, Genesis 32 concludes: ‘Therefore to this day the Israelites do not eat the sciatic tendon attached to the socket of the hip’ (32:33). The Talmudic sages considered this practice to be one of the divinely ordained prohibitions, even though it is not presented as such in Genesis nor is it mentioned among the positive and negative commandments communicated to Moses. They were divided on the question of whether it was observed prior to the giving of the Torah (Mishnah Hulin 7:6). In the view of Josephus (*Antiquities* 1: 20, 2 [334]), the prohibition was initiated by Jacob himself, whereas in the Qumran scroll 4Q158.1, the biblical account is rewritten to attribute the prohibition to God’s own command, given at the time of the event.

The Karaite sages too accepted the prohibition to eat the sciatic tendon, but all the above questions were debated. Most of their interpretations were devoted to the question of whether this was indeed a commandment that arose from human initiative, and if so, whether on the part of Jacob or that of his sons. Similarly, the narrative nature of the account in Genesis raised the question whether an actual commandment can be derived from it at all.

Most Karaites accepted the principle that commandments may arise from human initiative. The instructions given by Jonadab the son of Rechab to his sons (Jeremiah 35) were considered as a model of such commandments. In addition, the oath of Joseph's brothers (Genesis 50), the fasts mentioned in the Book of Zechariah (Zechariah 8:19), and the holiday of Purim were considered as commandments that arose from human initiative.

‘BOTH HER AND HER YOUNG’:
THE MEDIEVAL RABBINITE–KARAITE DISPUTE IN
LIGHT OF NEW PASSAGES FROM THE GENIZA

Yehuda Zvi Stampfer

This paper deals with five areas of dispute among Jewish scholars that took place during the Middle Ages surrounding two verses in Leviticus, Lev 22:27–28. In order to understand the nature of the polemic, this paper follows its roots from Late Antiquity to the eleventh century (the end of the Geonic period). The paper also examines the question of whether we can show a direct connection or influence between medieval exegesis and the sources of Late Antiquity. Most of the medieval sources in this paper are presented here for the first time. Some have never been published before and others have been published only in their original Judaeo-Arabic language.

THE BOOK OF JUDGES FROM A EUROPEAN ARCHIVE

Sara Japhet

‘The Hidden Treasures from Europe’ are pages from Hebrew manuscripts found in the bindings of books and files of documents in European libraries and archives. Thousands of pages have been discovered so far in several European locations in Italy, Germany, Austria, and elsewhere, and they are gradually being studied and published by scholars of Jewish Studies in different centers in Europe and in Israel. Included among these fragments are some works in the field of biblical exegesis. In comparison with other fields of Jewish literature, the scope of the fragments of biblical commentaries is relatively small. Even so, they shed important light on various aspects of medieval biblical exegesis.

The present article deals with one of these works, a commentary on Judg 13:5–15:2 which was discovered in the binding of a book in the library of the monastery in Melk, Austria. The fragment was published by Simcha Emanuel in *Hidden Treasures from Europe*, Volume 1, Jerusalem 2015, 67–79, with a detailed introduction. The purpose of the present article is to examine the nature of this work and its relationship to some commentators of the French school of exegesis, to define its literary genre, and clarify its place in the history of medieval biblical exegesis.

LIMITATIONS OF A PROPHET:
R. ISAAC ABARBANEL ON THE HUMAN ELEMENT
IN THE PROPHECIES OF JEREMIAH – BETWEEN MEDIEVALISM
AND HUMANIST EXEGESIS

Eric Lawee

With respect to biblical scholarship, ‘humanism’ well sums up the innovative focus among Renaissance scholars on the human as opposed to the divine side of biblical texts. In Jewish tradition, no writer exemplifies this novel focus – and the audacious results it could yield – more than Isaac Abarbanel, who composed most of his vast literary corpus in Renaissance Italy after Spanish Jewry’s 1492 expulsion. This article studies a startling manifestation of Abarbanel’s exegetical humanism that appears in his commentary on the book of Jeremiah, written in Venice in 1504: the claim that many of Jeremiah’s oral and written expressions suffered from a diversity of imperfections. This account includes the remarkable historicizing explanation that prophetic expression is traceable to aspects of the prophet’s biography and historical setting. The article traces elements of continuity in Abarbanel’s presentation with medieval (especially Maimonidean) teachings on the human side of prophecy as they stand at the nexus of Greco-Arabic philosophic poetics, psychology, and prophetology. At the same time, it identifies dimensions of that presentation consonant with ideas and habits of mind attested by Renaissance humanists. In short, this case study shows how Abarbanel’s approach to Jeremiah reflects an unusual confluence of intellectual traditions born of his status as a transitional figure from medieval to early modern times. More broadly, it opens a window on shifts in scriptural commentary that lead some modern scholars to regard Renaissance humanism as the beginning of developments that lie at the heart of modern biblical scholarship.