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ENGLISH ABSTRACTS

The Septuagint Translation of the Torah Was Based on Palestinian Sources

Emanuel Tov

The Septuagint translation of the Torah undeniably reflects Egyptian linguistic elements, showing that the translation was made there, but they do not point to the provenance of the Hebrew manuscripts from which they were translated. Moreover, the Aramaic elements in the LXX and the Palestinian exegesis reflected in the books of the LXX also do not point to the provenance of the manuscripts from which the books of the LXX were translated.

However, I find that there are extensive textual links between the LXX and Palestinian biblical and nonbiblical Hebrew texts: between the LXX, the Samaritan Pentateuch, and the pre-Samaritan texts from Qumran with regard to their joint harmonizing tendencies and their editing of the genealogies in Genesis 5 and 11. I provide examples of the common readings of these texts and assert that in each text the harmonizations constitute the textually most characteristic readings. In the LXX these harmonizations were added in the Hebrew texts from which the translations were made. The stratum that was common to the LXX, the Samaritan Pentateuch, and the pre-Samaritan texts from Qumran was evidently connected closely with Palestine, as they were found in Qumran and in the place of origin of the Samaritan Pentateuch. Likewise, the textual connections between the LXX and the Samaritan Pentateuch on the one hand and a long list of Hebrew post-biblical compositions that were composed on Palestinian soil like the book of Jubilees are remarkable. Furthermore, some Hebrew biblical scrolls that were found at Qumran were uniquely linked with the LXX. In conclusion, the sources of the LXX translations of the Torah were Palestinian texts that were taken to Egypt in order to be translated as narrated in the Epistle of Aristeas. I am not aware of any specific Egyptian features of these Hebrew texts.

Circular Patterns in Biblical Thought

Sholomo Bahar

Studies of Biblical narratives have demonstrated that many of them are structured according to circular patterns, meaning sense that the end of a plot refers to its beginning. This article shows motivated the authors of Biblical texts to write in this way.

In order to do so, the article first addresses the origin of the circular worldview in the ancient Near East and in the Hebrew Bible; second, it argues that the circular structure of the narrative is a literary expression of the perception of circularity in the natural world. It is a kind of mimesis of the cosmos as the writers conceived.

Regalia Deformed and Restored: Ezekiel's View of Israel's Future Leadership

Ariel Kopilovitz

This article investigates Ezekiel's view of Israel's future leadership. It analyzes two prophecies: the prophecy addressed to the wicked slain in Ezek 21:30–32 and the prophecy of the two sticks in Ezek 37:15–28. In addition to their discussion of Israel's future leadership, these prophecies relate to Israel's most prominent regalia: the turban, the crown, and the rulers' staff, and they describe what will happen to them in the future.

The article offers new readings of both prophecies, concluding that the prophecy addressed to the wicked slain describes both the deformation of Zedekiah's turban and crown and their restoration and reassignment to Israel's future leader. Likewise, the prophecy of the two sticks relates to the two ruling staffs of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. At the time of its proclamation, these two kingdoms no longer existed, and this caused Ezekiel to use the general term עץ (lit. wood, stick) and not מטה (staff, scepter) which is more common in such contexts. However, in his symbolic act, Ezekiel recreates Israel's ruling staffs which will be given to Israel's future leader.

These prophecies indicate that Ezekiel does not predict a radical change in Israel's future leadership. The house of David will continue to lead Israel after itsr restoration, and the future kings' restored regalia reflect their high status and full authority.

The Verb *Lekh* in the Bible: From a Verb of Motion to Urging of Action

Rama Manor, Avi Gvura and Pnina Tromer

This paper highlights a special use of the verb of motion *lekh* as used in dialogue in Biblical Hebrew: *lekh* to indicate urging to action. This is the result of a process of grammaticalization undergone by the imperative verb *lekh*, whereby it was transformed from a content word expressing motion to a function word used at the level of interpersonal interaction among participants in discourse. It is used to urge the addressee to take a certain course of action.

The verb *lekh* goes through three stages in the process of grammaticalization. In the first two, *lekh* still behaves like a verb of motion, which requires complements of place. In the third stage it becomes an interjection urging to action. At this stage *lekh* can appear in a variety of syntactic structures.

The main condition for the success of such a speech act is that the addresser must be in a position of authority vis-à-vis the addressee. Thanks to the broad variety of contexts provided by the Biblical corpus, we show that in all the examples a second condition for a successful speech act is also met: The addressee must carry out the act which the verb *lekh* urges him to perform.

A New Page of 'Sefer Tagey' from the Cairo Genizah

Mordechai Weintraub

'Sefer Tagey' is a treatise from the second half of the first millennium CE which was apparently composed in Babylonia. The treatise was probably intended to guide scribes in writing the Torah scrolls. It lists approximately two thousand occurrences in the Torah where letters are to be written in a different way than their normal shape ('Otiyyot Meshunnot'; strange letters). In this article, I present a previously unpublished page of 'Sefer Tagey' from the Cairo Genizah, and discuss aspects of the nature of the treatise, such as the question of its time and place of origin, the meaning of the Otiyyot Meshunnot, and more.

ʾEzrāḥ: and Dĕrôr: Two Instances of Assyrian Linguistic Influence in the Holiness Code and Their Implications for Its Date

Yigal Bloch

This article discusses two Hebrew terms – *ʾezrāḥ* and *dĕrôr* – characteristic of the Holiness Code (Leviticus 17–26) and other biblical sources influenced by it. The article shows that the form and usage of these words in the Holiness Code were influenced by two parallel terms used in Akkadian under the Neo-Assyrian empire: *umzarḫu*/*unzarḫu* 'someone born in the household or in the land,' and *durāru* 'royal edict cancelling debts, as well as mandating release of debt-slaves and return of lands estranged for debt to their owners.' The Neo-Assyrian influence suggests that the Holiness Code was composed in the period when the Land of Israel was dominated by the Neo-Assyrian empire (ca. 734–631 BCE).

The Origin of the Day of Yahweh Tradition: A New Suggestion

Nili Samet

This paper suggests a new direction for understanding the origin of the prophetic tradition of the Day of Yahweh. The widespread Day of Yahweh tradition describes a destructive theophany involving cosmological catastrophes, a global war and a judgement of the nations. The paper presents numerous thematic, theological and phraseological links between the biblical Day of Yahweh and the Mesopotamian tradition of lamentations over cities and temples. The connections between the two traditions are demonstrated via a detailed typology, which enumerates multiple resemblances between the traditions. It includes the depiction of theophany, the destruction and its various agents, the cosmological anomalies involved in the catastrophe, and its impact in the natural and human realms. The comparative typology shows that the two traditions share very similar motifs and descriptions, both on the level of general profile and in terms of specific detail. Against this background, I suggest reinterpreting the Hebrew term *yôm Yhwh* itself in light of the Mesopotamian lament tradition. This term cannot be understood as a mere time marker, since in several prophecies *yôm Yhwh* is described as an active agent of destruction, which appears on earth, demolishes it, and annihilates its inhabitants. It is therefore suggested that the component *yôm* in the phrase *yôm Yhwh* is actually an ancient calque of the mythological agent of destruction known in the Mesopotamian lamentations as u_4 in Sumerian and *ūmu* in Akkadian (literally: 'day'; 'storm'). u_4-*ūmu* is a mythological entity that simultaneously embodies both the mighty storm that rages on earth when the god appears and the time when the destructive theophany occurs. I therefore suggest that the biblical tradition is dependent in one way or another upon the Mesopotamian one. The concluding section briefly discusses several implications of this suggestion, including (1) the problem of the time, place and nature of potential contact between the two traditions; (2) the issue of the theological meaning of the Day of Yahweh in light of the theology of Mesopotamian laments; (3) the identification of several novelties and modifications in the biblical tradition; and (4) a new appreciation of the relation between the Book of Lamentation and the Mesopotamian lament tradition in light of the discoveries presented in this paper.

The Bigthan and Teresh Account in *Shirat Bene Maʿarava* Revisited

Joseph Witztum and Chanan Ariel

This article examines the retelling of the Bigthan and Teresh account in the Aramaic poem 'Once there was a certain Jew' (*Shirat Bene Maʿarava* 30:40–45). Following a presentation of the text's content-related and linguistic difficulties, a fresh deciphering of the manuscript is offered, supported by a parallel in Midrash Panim Aḥerot B. Our reading is accompanied by a new interpretation of the text and a hypothesis about its transmission. The article concludes with a comparison of this section of the poem to other midrashic traditions.

Samaritan Biblical Exegesis in Arabic: Abū l-Faraj Ibn al-Kaṭār's Commentary on Thirteen Verses from the "Song of Haazinu" as Proof for the Existence of the Hereafter

Ali Wated

The Samaritan sage Abū l-Faraj Ibn al-Kaṭār (thirteenth and beginning of fourteenth century) composed a treatise entitled *Sharḥ Im Baqūti* (=*Im Beḥuqqotay),* in which is discussed, among other matters, the question of the "existence of the afterworld/the Day of Judgment". As proof of its existence he adduces both rational arguments and textual evidence from the Pentateuch. He presents four proofs of the latter kind, the last of which consists of the text of thirteen verses from the "Song of Haazinu" (Deut. 32:31-43), which he quotes in Arabic translation and then explains.

Abū l-Faraj was not the first Samaritan sage to comment on these verses in Arabic or to have adduced them as proof of the existence of the afterworld. He was preceded by the eleventh-century Samaritan scholar Abū l-Ḥasan l-Ṣuri, who wrote a commentary on the whole Song of Haazinu in Arabic, as part of his book *al-Ṭabbāḥ* (published with a Hebrew translation: A.S. Halkin, *Lešonenu* 32:1-2, 208-246). The same scholar also devoted a booklet (so far unpublished) entitled *Kitāb al-maʿād* (= *The Book of the Hereafter*), in which he presents the thirteen verses of the Song of Haazinu as his third proof.

Abū l-Faraj appears to have been acquainted with this earlier commentary and used it; however, it is not merely a copy. In this article I present the text of the Arabic commentary with a Hebrew translation and compare it to the earlier commentary. The publication of this text can contribute to our understanding of Samaritan biblical exegesis in Arabic, most of which is still available only in manuscript form.

Nahmanides' Torah Commentary Addenda following the Barcelona Disputation

Miriam Sklarz

In their comprehensive study, Yosef Ofer and Jonathan Jacobs (2013) presented some 300 addenda to Nahmanides' Torah commentary made by him after he had settled in the Land of Israel in his old age. While Nahmanides rarely stated his reasons for making these additions, by careful examination of their contents, Ofer and Jacobs have sought and found diverse motivations for them. The present article offers an additional, historical-biographical motive. About ten of these addenda are well illuminated by the events that involved Nahmanides during his last years in Spain. The Barcelona Disputation (1263), in which he represented the Jewish community, and the resulting train of events leading to his departure from Spain for the Land of Israel (1266-7) undoubtedly made an impression on Nahmanides, which emerges from his words. Moreover, echoes of his theological and personal struggles offered encouragement to his readers in the 13th century and for generations to come.

Shmuel David Luzzatto (Shadal) on the Matter of Blood Feud

Chanan Gafni

Samuel David Luzzatto (Shadal, 1800–1865) was, no doubt, one of the most prominent of the scholars who set the tone and the course of the nineteenth-century *Wissenschaft des Judenthums* movement. At the same time, his character and thought remain shrouded in mystery and full of contradictions, especially: How did Luzzatto attempt to combine his critical academic attitude with his conservative Jewish ideology? Which one of these tendencies did he favor in case of conflict? I present a long and detailed correspondence, which Luzzatto conducted with his fellow scholar from Galicia, Hirsh Mendel Pineles, just one year before Luzzatto's death, about the biblical law of blood feud. This correspondence may help to shed light on these puzzling questions.

"Joshua Wrote […] Eight Verses of the Torah": The Question of the Authorship of the Final Eight Verses of the Torah in Jewish Tradition Throughout the Ages

Eran Viezel

According to the well-known talmudic passage enumerating the authors of the books of the Hebrew Bible, Joshua wrote "eight verses in the Torah" (BT Bav. Bat. 14a). In the accompanying discussion, these eight verses are identified as the final verses of the Torah, and a debate ensues regarding whether they were written by Moses or Joshua. This controversy left a deep impression on Jewish literature over the ages, and hundreds of scholars and commentators engaged with it, offering answers to the question of the authorship of the eight final verses of the Torah, and these can be assigned to four major periods. Until the middle of the thirteenth century, the verses were usually ascribed to Joshua. Beginning in the thirteenth century, the dogmatic view that Moses wrote the final verses, word-by-word as dictated by God, became entrenched. From the early modern period attempts were made to resolve the controversy harmonistically. Finally, from the Enlightenment onwards, along with the dogmatic and harmonistic approaches, we also find the view that not only did Moses not write the final verses of the Torah, he did not write the entire Torah at all. These changes regarding the authorship of the Torah's final verses resulted from a number of polemical debates and reflect fascinating intellectual developments.