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## ENGLISH ABSTRACTS

### THE QUMRAN CALENDAR: A HISTORICAL RECONSTRUCTION

Eshbal Ratzon

This article offers a historical reconstruction of the 364-day calendar associated with the Qumran community and reassesses its role in sectarian formation and controversy. While early scholarship—especially Shemaryahu Talmon—viewed the calendar as a central factor in the sectarian split, more recent studies, led by Sacha Stern, have argued that the calendar was purely theoretical and never implemented in practice, primarily due to its astronomical inaccuracy and the absence of clear external references to a calendar dispute. Challenging this view, the article surveys the calendrical corpus from Qumran, including astronomical texts, Jubilees, MMT, the Community Rule, and the Peshet Habakkuk, demonstrating the calendar's pervasive presence and its polemical significance within sectarian literature. The analysis shows that the 364-day calendar structured festival observance, priestly cycles, and long chronological schemata, and that no compelling evidence exists for the use of alternative calendars at Qumran.

The article proposes a historical reconstruction situating the adoption and transformation of the calendar within the political and religious developments of the second and early first centuries BCE. The 364-day calendar likely emerged in pre-sectarian intellectual circles and was adopted during the formative phase of the Qumran movement in the second century BCE, when calendrical disagreements contributed to sectarian differentiation and conflicts over Temple authority. In this reconstruction, the calendar functioned initially as a practical and identity-defining system. However, in the early first century BCE, during a period of rapprochement between the sect and the Hasmonean ruler Alexander Jannaeus, the social and political conditions that sustained strict calendrical separation may have shifted. Combined with the growing seasonal drift caused by the absence of intercalation, this development likely contributed to the gradual abandonment of the calendar in practice, even as it was preserved as an idealized and authoritative framework within the sect's literary tradition. By integrating literary, textual, and historical evidence, the study offers a nuanced model that reconciles the calendar's early practical significance with its later theoretical status.

## THE TERMS קלקלה 'QLQLH' AND קלון 'QLWN' AND THE MEANING OF MISHNAH HORAYOT 3:7

Emmanuel Mastey

This article examines the term קלקלה in Mishnah Horayot 3:7 and the term קלון in the parallel baraita preserved in the Talmud Yerushalmi and the Tosefta. Traditionally, these terms have been identified by commentators with the Hebrew words קלקלה and קלון, meaning 'sin' and 'disgrace,' respectively. Consequently, the Mishnah has been understood to imply that the man and woman in question are facing sexual exploitation. However, this interpretation, suggesting that the Mishnah describes the fate intended for the captives, is problematic both in terms of content and language. The precise wording of the Mishnah in reliable manuscripts indicates that it addresses the captives' location rather than their fate.

Therefore, the etymology of these two terms is revisited in this article from philological-linguistic and contextual-historical perspectives. It is proposed that these terms are concrete expressions describing confinement facilities and that both words have foreign origins. The first term is suggested to derive from the Greek word κάραρα (Latin: carcer, 'prison'), implying that the law's meaning is as follows: the man and woman held in a dungeon or detention cell are in mortal danger, thus mandating the man's ransom before the woman's. In Amoraic literature, though (and possibly as early as the Tannaitic period), the term קלון came to be associated with 'brothel,' and in the Yerushalmi, the law in question is indeed interpreted as involving sexual exploitation. However, even in this interpretation, קלון is not used as an abstract noun, as traditionally assumed, but rather as a concrete term referring to a specific type of facility where the captives are held.

## THE STATUS OF RABBI ISHMAEL AND RABBI AKIVA IN THEIR SCHOOLS

Menahem Kahana, of blessed memory

Scholars of Tannaitic midrash have long noticed that they can be grouped into two different schools. Based on the names of the sages in each group, scholars have attributed one school to Rabbi Akiva, the other to Rabbi Ishmael. Previous scholarship focused on the study of the anonymous material in Tannaitic midrash in order to identify the redactors of these works, but it has failed to do so decisively, despite the erudition of its practitioners. The anonymous material, however, is still critical for the identification of the Tannaitic school to which each work belongs when joined to other corroborating data.

In this article I show that Tannaitic midrash prefers to cite *derashot* by the founders of the schools and the students of their founders, and sometimes they also present their opinions as conclusive and correct. Rabbis Ishmael and Akiva are each dominant in works belonging to their eponymous schools. Rabbi Ishmael is mentioned most often in Ishmaelian works, while Rabbi Akiva, though frequently mentioned, is only third in the Akivan works, possibly because his seniority was accepted by all. While Ishmaelian works cite Rabbi Akiva often, Akivan works rarely cite Rabbi Ishmael.

The status of the founders in each work is also bolstered by a tendency of the works in each school to present them as winners of the debates recorded in each work. This is especially salient in the Ishmaelian Sifre Numbers, where Rabbi Ishmael is always the victor in his debates with Rabbi Akiva, and Rabbi Akiva is often defeated in debates in general. This concurs with the many anonymous opinions in Sifre Numbers which are elsewhere associated with Rabbi Ishmael. Conversely, in the Akivan Sifra, Rabbi Akiva is the victor in debates—both with Rabbi Ishmael and with other rabbis. A similar though less decisive picture is found in other Akivan works. Rabbi Akiva's reading of verses is always rejected in Ishmaelian Sifre Numbers, whereas his opinions are always accepted in Akivan Sifre Zuta Numbers.

Tannaitic midrash then did not “objectively” transmit disputes between rabbis, but shaped them to fit the preferences of the school. Scholars of Tannaitic literature should note this active editorial role, and its implications for the historic authenticity of dicta attributed to named rabbis in Tannaitic midrash.

## REVISITING MIDRASH AND HALAKHA IN THE SIFRA

Yonatan Sagiv, of blessed memory

The Halakhic Midrashim are replete with hundreds of quotations from the Mishnah and Tosefta, which scholars have long identified as pivotal in decoding the hermeneutical methodologies and interpretive strategies of the sages. It has been posited that these quotations embody the editors' deliberate effort to forge a seamless connection between biblical law and rabbinic halakha, asserting the latter's roots in scriptural authority. Through a meticulous and comprehensive examination—incorporating previously uncharted dimensions—this article offers a reinterpretation of key interpretive practices, presenting an innovative analytical framework.

This study focuses on the integration of Mishnaic and Toseftan materials within the Sifra, a halakhic midrash from the school of R. Akiva. The Sifra incorporates approximately four hundred quotations, introduced through two predominant mechanisms: either following a succinct exegetical remark on the verse, herein referred to as “basic commentary,” or prefaced by the formulaic phrase ‘מכאן אמרו’ (“from here they said”). The latter method embeds the quotations within a more complex midrashic structure. This article zeroes in on the former method, offering a deep analysis of the role and nuance of these basic commentaries.

The inquiry reveals that these basic commentaries often function independently from the halakhic citations that succeed them. They frequently preserve distinctive lexicon, diverge in their conceptual underpinnings, and, at times, articulate halakhic positions at odds with those of the Mishna and Tosefta. While these commentaries conspicuously omit ambiguous or intermediate legal cases, the halakhic quotations fill this gap, exemplifying a hallmark of rabbinic law. Furthermore, instances emerge where originally non-legalistic commentaries, once coupled with halakhic texts, were recontextualized and repurposed to serve legal ends, imbuing them with renewed significance.

This study uncovers an intricate editorial process, one that sought not only to reconcile biblical law with rabbinic halakha, but also to harmonize a pre-existing layer of independent exegesis with the evolving halakhic discourse. This editorial transformation reflects a profound internal evolution within the rabbinic world, illuminating shifts in the sages' exegetical priorities and their broader expectations of the biblical text as a source of legal and interpretive authority.

## R. JONAH IBN JANĀḤ AS PHILOLOGIST AND TEXT-CRITIC

Elnatan Chen

The distinction between how R. Jonah Ibn Janāḥ approaches the Bible and how he approaches the writings of R. Judah Ḥayyūj is noteworthy. Linguistic anomalies found in the Bible are treated by Ibn Janāḥ as an organic part of the transmitted text, and as such are analyzed through a variety of linguistic tools. In contrast, Ibn Janāḥ solves textual phenomena that require clarification in the writing of Ḥayyūj by employing sophisticated philological-literary means that take into account various types of errors in the transmission of the text. Occasionally, Ibn Janāḥ even reconstructs how he believes the error crept into the text. In this article, I develop the character of Ibn Janāḥ as an outstanding philologist and text-critic who, outside his main occupation with grammar, pays vigilant attention to philological and codicological subtleties in the writings of his predecessors in an intense and elaborate way, almost unknown in the Jewish world that preceded him.

## GLEANNING FROM THE FIELD OF KABBALAH IN TARBIZ

Moshe Idel

Since the late Malakhi Beit Arie's suggestion in 1998 that there were two kabbalist authors named Menachem ben Benjamin operating in Italy in the same period, no corroborating evidence has emerged. The present author considers this possible "coincidence" as implausible, especially since the two personalities were also interested in halakha. The discrepancy between the copyist of kabbalistic materials in an early manuscript copied in Rome, where the presence of material related to *Sefer Yetzirah* is conspicuous, and Menachem Recanati's kabbalistic sources is explained by the controversy around Abraham Abulafia's messianic claims and writings that exploded in this period. Moreover, the absence of evidence in the codex copied in Rome concerning the commentary on *Sefer Yetzirah* attributed to R. Isaac the Blind corroborates the assumption of Avishai ben-Asher in his study printed in Tarbiz and debated in this journal that such a commentary was unknown by 1286.

GROUNDWATER MIKVES: AN EXAMPLE OF THE INFLUENCE  
OF LEGAL IDEAS FROM THE SEPHARDIC WORLD ON POLISH RABBINIC  
CULTURE AT THE END OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

Edward Fram

In the second half of the sixteenth century, Rabbi Mordecai Jaffe took up the position of rabbi of Lublin. He found that the local ritual bath (mikve), like many others in eastern Europe and the German lands, was based on groundwater. Because the water level was subject to the ebbs and flows of the underground water sources, it was sometimes too deep for women to immerse in, so the community, like others, built a platform for women to stand on while immersing. This shocked Jaffe because it contradicted the ruling of Rabbi Abraham ben David of Posquières (twelfth century), which Rabbi Joseph Caro incorporated into his then-recently published *Shulḥan 'Arukh*. Jaffe's consternation was mitigated by the fact that three leading Polish rabbis who had either served as rabbis of the community or visited there had allowed the custom of standing on the boards, and therefore Jaffe felt duty bound to justify the custom. Yet Jaffe was not alone in questioning the use of boards in mikves in eastern Europe or justifying local practice. While German Jewry had a long-standing view that the boards were permitted, few sixteenth-century rabbis were inclined to reject the view of Rabbi Abraham. Instead, they tended to affirm the validity of Rabbi Abraham's view but claimed that it did not apply to the types of boards used in their time and place. It is suggested that sixteenth-century rabbis, like their predecessors in the fifteenth-century German lands, were reticent about dismissing the views of medieval authorities and, therefore, preferred to reinterpret the situation in new ways instead of declaring the view of the early rabbi invalid.

‘THE SOULLESS BODY OF THE TORAH’: THE SABBATEAN QUEST FOR THE  
‘TRUE RELIGION’ IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY IN CONTEXT

Tom Parnass

This article focuses on the centrality of the soul in Sabbatean theological discourses, as expressed in the writings of Abraham Miguel Cardoso (1627–1706), Nehemiyah Hayoun (1650–1730), and R. Jonathan Eybschutz (1690–1764). While these three important figures were previously discussed in scholarship, their thought was not examined comparatively as expressing basically the same intellectual orientation. As a hitherto neglected subject in scholarship, a focus on Sabbatean perceptions of the soul will allow me to situate later developments in Sabbatean thought in its Jewish and Christian European contexts, issues that have recently received scholarly attention. I will argue that the Sabbatean theology and ideology of the ‘Secret of Divinity,’ according to which the God of Israel was forgotten by his people and must be rediscovered, was interpreted in these writings as a search for the soul of Divinity—and indeed the soul of the Jewish religion—identified with the true faith that had been forgotten, leaving behind a lifeless ‘body.’ As such, Sabbatean theology expresses a deep consciousness of crisis in relation to the traditional anchors of religious certainty. I will

examine the Sabbatean theology of the soul in relation to its textual sources and argue that it was shaped by complex relations of affinity and opposition to the writings of the Safedian kabbalists, R. Moshe Cordovero and R. Isaac Luria, in which one can find an extensive preoccupation with the soul and the necessity of discovering the soul of the Torah. I will show that in addition to the significant contribution of the Cordoverean and Lurianic corpora in shaping the theological language of these Sabbatean writers, the Sabbateans also brought a fundamental change: while the Safedian kabbalists were troubled by the question of how to present the hidden soul through the overt and physical performance of the commandments, and presented a harmonious ideal, the Sabbateans expressed a thoroughly divided, conflicted view: they identified the soul with the secret of faith, the forgotten and inward 'true religion,' a forgetfulness through which the keeping of the commandments, identified with the body of the Torah, lost its meaning. In this way, the Sabbateans created a rift between the inner 'religion of the heart' and the outer 'religion of the law.' I examine the Sabbatean 'religion of the heart,' which divides between inside and outside, in relation to contemporary intellectual-spiritual enterprises in Christian Europe, which were also motivated by the deep crisis of authority and religious certainty that emerged in the traditional religious establishments.