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Abstracts

Saul's Death and the Subsequent Actions of the People of Yabesh Gilead: A Reconsideration of 1 Samuel 31; 1 Chronicles 10 and 2 Samuel 21

Shmaryahu Ezrahi

A great deal of attention has been paid to the stories regarding Saul's death (1 Sam 31 and 1 Chr 10). However, two points remain quite unclear: First, Saul is said to be buried under a tamarisk in 1 Sam 31, 13, but under a terebinth in 1 Chr 10, 12. Second, despite numerous and sometimes conflicting suggestions proposed for understanding the exceptional burning of Saul's body (1 Sam 31, 12) it is still embarrassing, and the more so as this detail is not mentioned at all in 1 Chr 10.

I suggest that since the Chronicler regards Saul as an "unfaithful" king who has failed to obey God's commands, he also "buries" him under a tree known for idolatrous worship. On the other hand, the aim of 1 Sam 31, 13 is entirely different: It hints at the massacre of the priests of Nob. Saul ordered their death when he "was seated... under the tamarisk tree..." (1 Sam 22, 6). The death of Saul and his sons and the burial under the tamarisk at Jabesh, subtly alludes to the slaughter at Nob. The Chronicler does not mention this event for two reasons: First, David was partly responsible for the cruel killing (1 Sam 22, 22) and second, the priests of Nob had indeed helped the king's enemy.

I have analyzed and rejected the most frequently offered explanations for the burning of Saul's body. In my opinion, the most plausible reason for the cremation is that it was done by non-Semitic people as an act of honor and

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gratitude for the king who had rescued them from Nahash, the Ammonite (1 Sam 11).

I have also dealt with 2 Sam 21, 12 and proved that this verse defames the residents of Jabesh and underrates their rescue of Saul's body from Beth-Shan. A probable reason for this surprising attitude is the refusal of Jabesh to accept David's reign.

Two Manuscripts of the Torah from the East: Are These Really Two Separate Traditions?

Ibrahim Bassal

This article deals with the question of whether Ms Sinai 4 (10th century) representative of Arab^{syr}₂ tradition, was influenced by Ms Sinai 2 the earlier (second half of the eighth century) representative of Arab^{syr}₁? And whether there is an impact of Arab^{syr}₁ translation tradition on Arab^{syr}₂ translation tradition?

The comparison between the two manuscripts showed that the copyist of Ms Sinai 4 was acquainted with Ms Sinai 2 and this is as the additional comments in Ms Sinai 4, particularly in Exodus, show us. But we cannot say this about the translator who is anonymous for us. Yet, Ms Sinai 4 reveals unique independent features, and this is reflected in several levels: with regard to linguistic correctness and adherence to the rules of Arabic grammar, Sinai 4 is more careful about the grammatical correctness of Arabic. Regarding translation technique – there are striking differences between the two manuscripts and this is reflected in the faithfulness of Ms Sinai 4 to the original text, in understanding the Syriac words and largely imitative of Syriac Vorlage; in translating the names of gemstones, toponyms, religious terminology, names of God. With regard to translating with cognate roots and homophonic translation, of alternative translations, Ms Sinai 2 includes many allusions to Qur²ānic vocabulary and Ḥadīth, and use archaic idioms from the ancient Arabic poetry more than Sinai 4. Sinai 4 has less use of Aramaic words than Sinai 2.

In light of all these comparisons, we can say that the copyist of Sinai 4 was acquainted with the tradition of Sinai 2 and consulted it, but this is not true of the translator, because Ms Sinai 4 is an independent translation and exhibits

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a distinct translation technique. The Arabic language of Ms Sinai 4 is clearer and represents the standard Arabic of the translator's period. It seems that these differences, as mentioned above, were reasons that led to the distribution of Ms Sinai 4 within the Eastern Syrian Church and even helped him replace the earlier Sinai 2. In fact, we have two different manuscripts and two different methods or two translation traditions that have many in common features and different ones as well.

The Wise Woman and Joab (2 Sam. 20:13-22) Rhetorical Models of Persuasive Speeches

Edna Hilewitz

The subject of the article is the “wise woman” who leads the episode of Sheba son of Bichri's rebellion to a happy ending (2 Sam. 20:13-22). Functioning not as a military or spiritual leader, but rather as a spokes woman for the city of Abel-Beth-Maachah, her approach entails a direct appeal to and discourse with the attacking army. How does this anonymous woman succeed in persuading the hot-tempered Joab son of Zerua, captain of David's army, to withdraw from the city? she uses intuition along with organized, structured knowledge to consciously effect a transformation of reality, from a situation of mortal danger to one of peace.

The diplomatic negotiations to prevent war are led by this woman whom the text refers to as “*hakhama*”. Is this title used as a noun (sage, in the feminine form) – i.e., an official public role, or as an adjective – in other words, “wise” in light of her success in the mission she takes upon herself? The answer to this question will become clear through an examination of the new literary genre to which this story belongs.

In the field of international relations, extensive attention is given to diplomatic language that mediates between hostile parties. The contribution of this article consists of its presentation of selected modern models of persuasive speeches, and their application to the words of the “wise woman”. On one hand, we will address the rhetorical aspect of the story and the model it presents for structuring optimal dialogue; on the other hand we will discuss the literary value, which offers a different alternative for solving problems, not through violence and murder but through dialogue and peace.

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Psalm 30 – The ‘Lost’ Psalm of King Hezekiha?

Nava Cohen

Psalm 30 opens with the speaker’s thanksgiving and concludes with a promise of eternal praise. In between, the speaker tells his story through the prism of four components: sorrow, prayer, salvation, and thanksgiving. What is unique to Psalm 30 is that each of these four elements appears twice in the psalm, which suggests the psalm’s division into two parts. The first part (vv. 1-6) is composed in the past tense and parallels the structure of Thanksgiving Psalms: expression of gratitude and descriptions of distress, prayer, and salvation. The second part (vv. 8-13) is formulated in the present tense and parallels the structure of Individual Complaint Psalms: expression of distress, prayer for salvation, and a promise of confession. Dividing these two sections is v. 7, which describes the speaker’s dependence on his strength instead of God’s and seems not to belong to either of the two sections.

Why is the psalm constructing this way, and what is the function of v. 7? This paper approaches the psalm through the prism of inner-biblical allusion and claims that the psalm alludes to two events in King Hezekiah’s life recorded in 2 Chronicles 32. This literary relationship sheds new light on the psalm, and the story in 2 Chronicles 32.

The Commentary of R. David Qimhi (Radak) to the Jehu Narrative (2 Kings 9-10)

Itzhak Streshinsky

This paper presents the exegesis of Rabbi David Qimhi (Radak) to the narrative of Jehu (2 Kings 9–10).

I deal with the sources of Radak’s interpretation of the Jehu narrative, his treatment of the different exegetical issues arising from the story: issues of linguistics, of history and biblical realia, and literature, as well as the difficulties arising from contradictions with other narratives in Kings and in Chronicles. Lastly, I deal with the impact of Radak’s exegesis on later commentators.

Radak’s commentary to the narrative of Jehu expresses his theory regarding the *Qere* and *Ketiv* phenomenon, according to which the *Qere* and *Ketiv* are

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different versions of the biblical text. Likewise, in his discussions on matters of history and biblical realia, one can see the first signs of historical research in the traditional Jewish exegesis.

A few of Radak's interpretations of the narrative's verses resemble the interpretation of Yefet ben 'Eli, which strengthens the possibility, already mentioned in academic research, that Radak was aware of Yefet's commentaries and was influenced by them.

Perusal of commentaries dealing with the Jehu narrative written after Radak's commentary show signs of the great influence his commentary had on later commentators. For example, one can recognize Radak's influences in Ralbag's, as well as Abarbanel's interpretations of the Jehu narrative. In the commentaries of the Jehu narrative written in the Enlightenment era, Radak is mentioned more frequently than any other commentator. Likewise, his influence on commentaries written in the 20th century – the commentaries of Artom and of Kiel, who mentions Radak more than twenty times, is obvious.

Similarly, in the modern foreign exegesis of the Jehu narrative, the references to linguistics explanations from Jewish commentaries come mainly from Radak.

All these, strengthen the notion of Radak as influential to our very times.

The Egyptian 'Job': The Image of the Suffering Protagonist in the Ancient Egyptian Wisdom Literature and its Contact with the Biblical Job

Nili Shupak

The problem of the righteous sufferer is a central motif in ancient Egyptian Speculative Wisdom Literature, dating in general to the beginning of the second millennium BCE. While most of the Egyptian works belonging to this genre deal with the sufferance of the nation or the society as a whole, *The Dispute Between Man and His Ba* emphasizes, like the biblical Book of Job, the travails of the individual. The discussion concentrates, therefore, on this unique composition which, to the best of my knowledge, has not yet received adequate attention in comparative research.

Following an introduction to the content of *The Dispute* and its literary form and style, is a comparison to Job and analysis of the similarities and

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differences between the two works. The common subjects and motifs, especially those that appear in Job in order to express antithetical ideas and thoughts, strengthen the assumption that the writer of the Book of Job was acquainted with the Egyptian tradition. His scholarship and unique knowledge of various fields of interest indicate that he probably studied in a scribal school where he became acquainted with the relevant ancient Egyptian works from more than one thousand years earlier.

The Molten Sea – Reconsideration

David Shapira

According to the biblical account (1 Kings 7:23–26), in the middle of the courtyard of the Temple stood a large water vessel of cast brass. Commentators and researchers have put forward various suggestions as to the form of the Molten Sea and its purpose in the Temple.

In this article, I argue that the description in 1 Kings offers definitive conclusions as to the biblical author's intent regarding the form of the "Sea" and its volume (in "bath" units), and can resolve the outstanding question in the literature as to the equivalent of a *bath* in modern units of volume measurement. I shall also point to evidence in support of the view of other researchers that the Molten Sea held a purely symbolic role, while the practical functions of water for sacrificial purposes were provided by the bases (1 Kings 7, 27).