

BEIT MIKRA

JOURNAL FOR THE STUDY
OF THE BIBLE AND ITS WORLD
Volume 66 (2021), No. 2

Founded by
The World Jewish Bible Center, Jerusalem



The Bialik Institute, Jerusalem

Editor

Dalit Rom-Shiloni

Editorial Board

Shmuel Ahituv, Gershon Brin, Moshe Garsiel, David Gilad, Itamar
Kislev, Lea Mazor, Noam Mizrahi, Nili Shupak, Shmuel Vargon

Editor of the Book Review Section

Nili Shupak

Co-ordinator

Geula Cohen

ISSN: 0005-979X

Subscriptions**The Bialik Institute**

P.O.B. 92, Jerusalem 91000, Israel

www.bialik-publishing.co.il

©

All rights reserved to
the Bialik Institute, Jerusalem

CONTENTS

- Yairah Amit The Joseph Story from a Polemical View / 269
- Maya Shemueli The Return to Zion in the Book of Haggai:
The Prophet's Silence / 301
- Cana Werman More on the Spiritual World of Second Temple
Judaism: Thoughts and Reactions to Jacob Licht's
Collected Studies / 334
- Eran Vizel On the Tripartite Division of the Bible in Jewish
Tradition – Part 1: From Rabbinic Literature to the
Acceptance of Maimonides' Approach / 387
- Sarah Schwartz The Principle of Gradation in R. Shmuel Laniado's
Commentary on Samuel's Call Narrative / 420

Book Review

- Michael Avioz M. Cogan, *Kings: A Commentary*, 2 Vols.
(Mikra Leyisrael), Am Oved, Tel Aviv 2020,
766 pages / 453
- Shlomo Bachar Shula Abramski, *Leaders' Speeches to Leaders.
Rhetoric and Leadership in the Hebrew Bible*,
Carmel, Jerusalem 2019, 565 pages / 465
- Refael Furman D. Cohen-Zemach, *In the Latter Days:
War and Peace in Isaiah's Vision and in the
Stories of the Creation*, Resling, Tel Aviv 2019,
259 pages / 475

English Abstracts / 5*

Abstracts

The Joseph Story from a Polemical View

Yairah Amit

This essay presents four different types of polemics that appear in the Joseph Story, and through them the issues that engendered the polemics. Exposing the polemics illustrates the social and ideological world of the story's editors through the ages. Therefore, in this essay I do not examine the poetics of the story, nor its division into sources.

[**Key words:** explicit polemic, implicit polemic, hidden polemic, seemingly hidden polemic, censorship, rhetorics, Joseph, Judah, Jehoiachin, intermarriage, exile]

The Return to Zion in the Book of Haggai: The Prophet's Silence

Maya Shemueli

Haggai prophesied during the Reconstruction period, heralded by the edict of Cyrus. His foremost concern was the rebuilding of the Temple, which, alongside the restoration of the house of David, is considered one of the signs of the nation's revival. Other signs are found in the prophecies of Second Isaiah, central among them being the return of the scattered Israelites to Zion, also mentioned by Haggai's contemporary, Zechariah (e.g. Zech. 8:11–13 and 20–23; 9:11–12); however, Haggai remains silent

Abstracts

on the motif of return. Silence is a mode of being in the world, identifiable through the vestiges its leaves. This essay focuses on the absence within the textual object from a thematic and rhetoric view and shows a link in Haggai's prophecies between the textual redundancy about God's temple and silence regarding the return to Zion. I suggest that the prophet's silence is intentional and serves as a meta-linguistic communication means in the face of Haggai's reality and show how the idea of return is a present-absentee in the background of his prophecies.

[**Key words:** textual silence, Return to Zion, Haggai's prophecies, the Temple, the glory of God, the desire of all nations, remnant]

More on the Spiritual World of Second Temple Judaism: Thoughts and Reactions to Jacob Licht's Collected Studies

Cana Werman

My paper surveys some of the articles in Licht's recently published collection that treat the Qumran Scrolls and Second Temple pseudepigrapha. It summarizes the important questions and insights introduced in these articles while pointing to current understandings that are the result of both the publication of the complete Qumran library and the critical approach adopted by scholars in the last generation and a half. By bringing Licht's work to the readers' attention, the article aims to restore this worthy body of research to public awareness and to identify the shared threads between its groundbreaking aspects and present-day scholarly achievements.

[**Key words:** Jacob Licht, The Qumran community, Wisdom literature of the Second Temple Period, The Rull Scroll, Sectarian Halakha, Gentile impurity, Apocalyptic literature, Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, The Book of Judith, Pharisees, Shlomzion]

Abstracts

On the Tripartite Division of the Bible in Jewish Tradition

Part 1: From Rabbinic Literature to the Acceptance of Maimonides' Approach

Eran Vigel

Scholars have mostly studied the tripartite division of the Hebrew Bible into the Pentateuch (*Torah*), the Prophets (*Nevi'im*), and Hagiographa (*Ketuvim*) – as well as the division into four sections employed in the authoritative ancient Christian manuscripts of the Greek Old Testament – to explore the process of literary canonization accompanying the crystallization of the Biblical codex during the Second Temple period. By contrast, rabbinic scholars and commentators dealt mostly with the reasons for the book's division, or for the inclusion of a certain book in a given section. At the basis of this inquiry lies the assumption that the tripartite division of the Bible was carried out according to some distinct principle or principles.

As is made clear in the two opening sections of the article, interest in the division of the Bible into sections only began in the Middle Ages, with Maimonides's *Guide of the Perplexed*. Following Maimonides – and even during his lifetime – the idea took shape that this division reflected three distinct levels of prophetic revelation: those of Moses, the prophets, and the holy spirit (*ruah ha-qodesh*). Although this view was recognized as part of Maimonides' legacy, rabbis considered it to reflect the traditional religious position, and anchored it in well-known sayings of the Sages (*Hazal*). Section three and the second part of the article (see the next volume of *Beit Mikra*) outlines the development of the rabbinic scholars' interpretation of the division of the Bible, and the manner in which this scholarship expanded during the second half of the Middle Ages. In an extended, foundational period spanning some 300 years – beginning with R. David Kimhi at the turn of the 12th and 13th centuries, and lasting until Abarbanel and Joseph ibn-Yahya in the 15th and 16th centuries – dozens of dicta were written on the subject, and a number of detailed and systematic works devoted exclusively to the matter were penned by leading rabbinical scholars. The reasoning employed by these scholars, their assumptions and conclusions, inform us of their influence on each other, and attest to the

Abstracts

gradual creation of what might be called, in general, the traditional view of the tripartite division of the Bible into *Torah*, *Nevi'im*, and *Ketuvim*.

[**Key words:** Hebrew Bible, Pentateuch, Prophets and Writings, Jewish exegesis, prophecy]

The Principle of Gradation in R. Shmuel Laniado's Commentary on Samuel's Call Narrative

Sarah Schwartz

This paper offers an analysis of Rabbi Shmuel Laniado's commentary on Samuel's call narrative. The discussion focuses on Laniado's insights regarding the literary design of the story, first and foremost the principle of graduality as a central rhetorical principle which elucidates the plot, character design, and the message of the story. In light of the discussion, the unique character and methodology of Laniado's commentary on this story is clarified. The innovation of his commentary, compared to both his predecessors and later commentators, sheds new light on Samuel's call narrative. Considering Laniado's position as a sixteenth and early seventeenth-century commentator in Aleppo, this discussion also contributes to illuminating Jewish post-classical commentary in the Muslim world.

[**Key words:** Rabbi Shmuel Laniado, Kli Yakar, Samuel's Call Narrative, 1Sam 3, post-classical commentary, 16th Century Jewry in Islamic Countries, Samuel]