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CONTENTS

- Sarah Schwartz “The LORD has restrained you from bloodguilt and from saving with your own hand”: Abigail’s Arguments and their Meaning / 5
- Yochi Nissani Punishing Assyria and Babylon in the Book of Isaiah – Isaiah Son of Amotz and Second Isaiah / 31
- Hava Shalom-Guy “And He Brought Them Out with Silver and Gold” (Ps 105:37): The Circulation of a Motif in Late Biblical Books / 60
- Itzhak Amar The Location and Content of the Story of Nehemiah’s Socio-economic Reform (Neh 5:1-13) / 92
- Chanan Gafni Who Shall Mention God’s Name? A 19th Century Debate on Exodus 20:21 / 118
- Arye Zoref Dedication of the House for David or a Cure from Illness? Psalm 30 in Medieval Jewish Exegesis / 144

Book Reviews

- Israel Knohl Shmuel Ahituv, *Hosea, Introduction and Commentary*, Mikra Leyisrael, Am Oved, Tel-Aviv 2022, 313 pages / 177
- Shira J. Golani David Stern, *The Jewish Bible: A Material History* (trans. Yaniv Farkas), The Bialik Institute, Jerusalem 2022, 312 pages / 183
- Meira Polliack Gershon Brin, *Jewish Byzantine Exegetes of the Second Millennium. Studies in the Work of R. Tuvia Son of R. Eliezer, R. Menachem Son of R. Shelomo, R. Isaiah di Trani and R. Meyuhas Son of R. Eliyahu*, Carmel Publishing House, Jerusalem 2020, 304 pages / 192

Abstracts

“The LORD has restrained you from bloodguilt and from saving with your own hand”: Abigail’s Arguments and their Meaning

Sarah Schwartz

This paper is dedicated to a systematic analysis of the argumentative aspect of Abigail’s speech, which is the primary pivot of the speech. The argument is founded on two separate demands of David by Abigail: preventing the spilling of innocent blood, and avoiding self-redemption. These two demands relate to two different facets in David’s plan, exemplify different ideas, and attest to Abigail’s varied motivations. The discussion explores the legitimacy of David’s self-redemption, and its conclusions reveal a new facet in Abigail’s speech, which clarifies her dual function in the narrative.

[**Key words:** David, Abigail, Nabal, 1 Sam 25, The Book of Samuel]

Punishing Assyria and Babylon in the Book of Isaiah - Isaiah Son of Amotz and Second Isaiah

Yochi Nissani

This article explores the question of the punishment of the Assyrian and Babylonian Empires in the book of Isaiah: two empires whom the prophet perceives as God’s emissaries or executioners of His plan. This issue arises in two places in the book: in chapter 10:5-19, ascribed to Isaiah son of Amotz; and in chapter 47, recognized as Second Isaiah’s oracle. These two prophecies present a common idea: God, furious with His sinful people,

Abstracts

punishes them through a powerful nation who conquers and destroys the land. However, this enemy is, in turn, also punished. The enemy's punishment raises a moral problem and the question of divine justice, since it only carried out God's mission and yet it is being judged by him. This theological perplexity preoccupied the prophets and they presented justification for the action of God. An analysis of the two prophecies and an examination of their structure, reveals that despite the similarities and connections between them, a different reason for punishing the enemy stands out in each. Finally, a theological explanation is offered for this difference, related to the historical background of the prophecies.

[**Key Words:** Isaiah son of Amoz, Second Isaiah, Assyria, Babylonia, God's messenger, Judgment, Hubris, Cruelty, Compassion]

“And He Brought Them Out with Silver and Gold” (Ps 105:37): The Circulation of a Motif in Late Biblical Books

Hava Shalom-Guy

The motif of the Israelites leaving Egypt with silver and gold objects, which appears in the book of Exodus (Exod 3: 21-22; 11: 2; 12: 35-36), takes a number of forms in the Bible. Gold and silver are a component of the stories of the patriarchs that foreshadow the Israelites' descent to and departure from “Egypt” (Gen 13:1-2; 15:13-14b; 31:17-18). They are also part of the “second exodus” as framed in the literature of the exilic and restoration period: a brief mention in Ps 105:37, a more developed treatment in Ezra-Nehemiah, and another brief mention in Isa 52:11-12. Comparison of the treatments of this familiar motif in each source reveals the message that these authors wished to convey to their readers and sheds light on the circumstances in which these works were written. Their reliance on Torah traditions attests to the formation of the Pentateuch and the Torah's central status in restoration-period Jewish society.

[**Key words:** A new exodus from Egypt, the restoration period, silver and gold vessels in the exodus from Egypt, motif, hypertext, hypotext, inner-biblical interpretation, Psalm 105, Ezra 1, Isaiah 52, Cyrus's proclamation, building the temple, the return of the temple vessels]

Abstracts

The Location and Content of the Story of Nehemiah's Socio-economic Reform (Neh 5:1-13)

Itzhak Amar

'Nehemiah's Memoir' is a literary unit in which Nehemiah depicts his experiences and actions in *Shushan* and later in *Yehud*. The first division of those memoirs (1:1–7:5) deals primarily with the reconstruction of the ruined wall of Jerusalem. In the middle of this division, however, without any apparent connection to the context, the author inserted the story of Nehemiah's socio-economic reform. In the present article, an attempt is made to explain the story's location while considering the sequence of stories about the reconstruction of the Jerusalem wall. In addition, an attempt was made to understand the form and content of the people's complaints that led to the reform and Nehemiah's response to them.

[**Key words:** Nehemiah's Memoir, Wall reconstruction, Cry out, Socio-economic Reform]

Who Shall Mention God's Name? A 19th Century Debate on Exodus 20:21

Chanan Gafni

The Jewish biblical scholarship in the Nineteenth century is often depicted as conservative and hesitant, and accordingly, as restricted to merely technical textual observations, rather than engaging editorial or historical themes. However, this description neither captures the full picture nor acknowledges the significance of new Jewish scholarship in this period. In many ways, doubting the accuracy of a Masoretic rendering was perceived as more dramatic than discussing theoretical questions surrounding the authorship of biblical compositions. Furthermore, treating the accuracy of the biblical text often involved delving into dramatic discussions on the development of the Jewish religion and its fundamental beliefs. The present article traces a heated debate over the original formulation of one word in

Abstracts

the book of Exodus (20: 21) which involved far-reaching conclusions, and which led to great tensions.

[**Key words:** Wissenschaft des Judentums, Nachman Krochmal, Masoretic Text, Centralization of Worship]

Dedication of the House for David or a Cure from Illness? Psalm 30 in Medieval Jewish Exegesis

Arye Zoref

The article deals with medieval Jewish exegesis on Ps. 30. Jewish commentators found it hard to interpret the superscription of the psalm, since the superscription mentions the dedication of a house (presumably, the Temple) and it also mentions David, while the Bible explicitly says that the Temple wasn't built in David's time. On top of that, the commentators struggled to find a connection between the superscription and the psalm itself. The commentators tried to solve this problem in several ways, but one can discern that the commentators writing in Judeo-Arabic were beginning to realize that the psalm can be interpreted on its own, without the superscription. Yefet b. 'Eli and Moses b. Jiqitila underscored the significance of the illness and cure motif in the psalm. Based on this approach, R. Abraham Ibn Ezra claimed that the psalm should first be interpreted on its own, as a psalm discussing a cure from illness, regardless of the superscription, and only later be linked to the superscription. Ibn Ezra's Commentary has influenced several commentators in Christian Europe. However, none of them seems to have embraced his approach as to the centrality of cure from illness motif in the interpretation of the psalm.

[**Key words:** David, Psalms, Superscriptions, Medieval Exegesis, Ibn Ezra, Judeo-Arabic]