

It is my pleasure to distribute the ICI REPORT for March 2009 and to share with you our best wishes for 2009.

(a) PLEASE PASS THE INFORMATION

Feel free to distribute this report among all those you think might find it helpful. If you are a member of other professional organizations related to biblical studies, we urge you to send our newsletters to those responsible for communication within those groups as well.

(b) INTERNATIONAL TEACHING COLLABORATION - Great News!!

The establishment of a successful teaching collaboration was consistently highlighted as one of the most important goals in the survey that preceded the establishment of ICI and has guided it since. This centrality of teaching collaboration was emphasized time and again in all our meetings. I am very glad to announce that the databases that we agreed that were required to facilitate international collaboration in teaching are now up and running.

I am sure that you would join me in thanking all those who worked so hard to produce them at the SBL office and particularly, the technology group and Leigh Andersen, who has been much involved with every single aspect of ICI.

For general information about the program click [here](#)

Scholars who would like to participate should [enter their information here.](#)

Institutions that wish to participate should [enter their information here.](#)

I would like to stress that that this is a multi-way initiative. To be sure, not all of us can travel, but students in one part of the world may find very helpful to take an e-course or be mentored/co-supervised by a scholar in a different part of the world.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Individual and institutions who expressed in the past interest in participating in this collaboration by e-mail to me or to Leigh Andersen **MUST** fill the e-forms; and obviously, the same holds true for anyone who has not contacted us before but wishes to participate in the project. If you are not sure if you are listed, please click here to see who is already in the database. Please note that the immense majority of members of this body or their institutions (including those that have signalled their interest in the past) have not yet registered. This is normal, since the databases were only recently set up, but please take the time (only a few minutes) to register. Moreover, please encourage your colleagues and institutions to sign up.

(c) NEW ONLINE BOOKS, SERIES, AND REQUEST FOR SUBMISSIONS

Twelve new volumes have been added to the list of books freely available online from countries whose GDP per person is significantly lower than the average of the USA and EU. We remain committed to the goal of publishing about ten volumes by the end of each month. We would like to hear from you about any particular books you would like to see added to the list in the near future. For the books added this month see below.

There has been much good work in International Voices in Biblical Studies (IVBS) during this month. Soon it will have a presence in the web. It is further strengthening its regional boards and we anticipate that it will not take long till the first works will be published. If you

have or know of someone who has a manuscript that might be appropriate for publication in please contact Louis Jonker (lcj@sun.ac.za) or Monica Melanchthon (monixm@gmail.com)

If you have or know of someone who has a manuscript that might be appropriate for publication in Ancient Near East Monograph Series/Monografias Sobre el Antiguo Cercano Oriente (ANEM/MACO), please contact Roxana Flammmini (roxflamm@yahoo.com.ar) or Billie Jean Collins (billie.collins@sbl-site.org) or myself (ehud.ben.zvi@ualberta.ca).

(d) CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Please send Sharon Johnson (sharon.johnson@sbl-site.org) any information about national, regional or local scholarly conferences, so we may develop a central place in the web where anyone can learn what is going around in terms of research.

(e) MEMBERSHIP

Please encourage your colleagues and graduate students to join the Society and to contribute to shaping its future. Students from countries whose GDP per person is significantly lower than the average of the USA and EU (i.e., most of the world) have to pay only US \$ 10 and scholars from the same countries only US \$ 15 to become full members. Anyone who wish to become a member and for whom this amount represents undue hardship is encouraged to contact Leigh.

(f) LIST OF NEWLY ADDED BOOKS

(1) De Groot, Christiana and Marion Ann Taylor, eds. *Recovering Nineteenth-Century Women Interpreters of the Bible*. Symposium 38. Atlanta, Society of Biblical Literature, 2007.

Women have been thoughtful readers and interpreters of scripture throughout the ages, yet the standard history of biblical interpretation includes few women's voices. To introduce readers to this untapped source for the history of biblical interpretation, this volume analyzes forgotten works from the nineteenth century written by women—including Christina Rossetti, Florence Nightingale, and Harriet Beecher Stowe, among others—from various faith backgrounds, countries, and social classes engaging contemporary biblical scholarship. Due to their exclusion from the academy, women's interpretive writings addressed primarily a nonscholarly audience and were written in a variety of genres: novels and poetry, catechisms, manuals for Bible study, and commentaries on the books of the Bible. To recover these nineteenth-century women interpreters of the Bible, each essay in this volume locates a female author in her historical, ecclesiastical, and interpretive context, focusing on particular biblical passages to clarify an author's contributions as well as to explore how her reading of the text was shaped by her experience as a woman.

The contributors are Amanda Benckhuysen, Elizabeth Davis, Christiana de Groot, Rebecca G. S. Idestrom, Donna Kerfoot, Bernon P. Lee, Marion Taylor, Heather Weir, and Lissa M. Wray Beal.

(2) Harris, Robert A. *Discerning Parallelism: A Study in Northern French Medieval Jewish Biblical Exegesis*. Brown Judaic Studies 341. Providence, Brown Judaic Studies, 2005.

Parallelism is generally considered the "marker" dividing prose and poetry in ancient Semitic literature, including the Bible. Through their exposure to Judeo-Islamic scholarship certain Sephardic medieval thinkers came to understand this principle. Harris counters the general assumption that the northern French commentators (the so-called "School of Rashi") didn't

understand parallelism in biblical composition. The assumption is based on the French commentators' immersion in the midrashic literature of rabbinic Judaism, which did not recognize parallelism, instead understanding each and every word of the Hebrew Bible as containing an aspect of the divine message in its own right. Moreover, unlike the exegetes and grammarians of the Judeo-Islamic world, the northern French scholars did not compose treatises on poetics. The book closely examines the extant biblical commentaries of the northern French exegetes. All citations of rabbinic literature are presented both in the original Hebrew and the author's English translations. The book is addressed not only to those scholars interested in the history of biblical interpretation, but with its close literary readings of biblical and rabbinic texts also appeals to those interested in synchronic understanding of the Bible.

(3) Helmer, Christine, ed., with the assistance of Charlene T. Higbe. *The Multivalence of Biblical Texts and Theological Meanings*. Symposium 37. Atlanta, Society of Biblical Literature, 2006.

This important interdisciplinary collection asks how the same biblical texts, shared across Jewish and Christian traditions, can be interpreted for different theological reasons and to different theological ends. Each article takes a sustained look at the intimate relation between features of particular texts and the generation of theological meanings, tracking in each case how different meanings are made or found in the same texts and where meanings diverge in different theologies. The book applies the most current historical and literary strategies of biblical interpretation to study the multivalence constitutive of texts and theologies. The contributors are John Barton, David Carr, Stephen T. Davis, Christian A. Eberhart, Lincoln E. Galloway, Gary Gilbert, Christine Helmer, Kevin Mongrain, Bernd Oberdorfer, and C. R. Seitz.

(4) Hill, Robert C., trans. *Theodoret of Cyrus: Commentary on Daniel*. Writings from the Greco-Roman World 7. Atlanta, Society of Biblical Literature, 2006.

Early Christians were fed by their pastors a solidly scriptural diet from both the Old and the New Testaments. The commentary on Daniel by Theodoret, a member of the school of Antioch and fifth-century bishop of Cyrus, illustrates the typically Antiochene approach to biblical texts and shows the commentator posing key questions such as, What is prophecy? or What does a prophet do? While demonstrating the moderation for which his approach to the Bible became proverbial, Theodoret here instructs his readers to see in the dreams and visions of Daniel the pattern of prediction and fulfillment that guarantees for an Antiochene the authenticity of true prophecy. This commentary, with Greek text and English translation on facing pages, will be valuable to biblical and patristic scholars, theologians, and church historians.

(5) Hurtado, Larry W., ed. *The Freer Biblical Manuscript: Fresh Studies of an American Treasure Trove*. Text-Critical Studies 6. Atlanta, Society of Biblical Literature, 2006.

The six biblical manuscripts that reside in the Freer Gallery of Art in Washington DC are historically significant artifacts for tracing the early history of the transmission of the writings that make up the New Testament and the Septuagint. The manuscripts, all purchased in Egypt at the beginning of the twentieth century by Charles Freer, date to the third through fifth centuries and include codices of the four Gospels, Deuteronomy and Joshua, the Psalms, and the Pauline Epistles, as well as a Coptic codex of the Psalms and a papyrus codex of the Minor Prophets, which, until the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls,

was the earliest Greek manuscript of the Minor Prophets known. The ten essays in this volume are a notable collection of fresh scholarship with long-term value for the study of what is a small but highly valuable treasure trove of biblical manuscripts. The contributors are Malcolm Choat, Kent D. Clarke, Kristin De Troyer, Timothy J. Finney, Dennis Haugh, Larry W. Hurtado, J. Bruce Prior, Jean-François Racine, James R. Royse, Ulrich Schmid, and Thomas A. Wayment.

(6) Maclean, Jennifer K. Berenson and Ellen Bradshaw Aitken, trans. Flavius Philostratus: *Heroikos*. Writings from the Greco-Roman World 1. Atlanta, Society of Biblical Literature, 2001.

Philostratus's *Heroikos*, available here in English for the first time, is a fictional dialogue set at the tomb of Protesilaos, the first hero to die in the Trojan War. Returning to life, Protesilaos reveals his insights about Homer, the Trojan War, its heroes, and their cults. The author of the *Life of Apollonius of Tyana* here molds heroic traditions to promote for his own day a renewed Greek cultural and religious outlook, providing fresh material for comparing the construction of cultural identity by various groups—including the early Christians—in the Roman Empire and Late Antiquity. In their introduction and notes, Maclean and Aitken, trained in the classics and early Christianity, discuss how issues of authority, revealed knowledge, religious practice, and gender were treated in this early-third-century C.E. text. With Greek text and English translation on facing pages, an extensive glossary and maps, this volume offers an insightful introduction to the *Heroikos* for both scholars and students.

(7) Runia, David T. and Gregory E. Sterling, eds. *The Studia Philonica Annual XIX*, 2007. Atlanta, Society of Biblical Literature, 2007.

The *Studia Philonica Annual* is a scholarly journal devoted to furthering the study of Hellenistic Judaism, and in particular the writings and thought of the Hellenistic-Jewish writer Philo of Alexandria (circa 15 B.C.E. to circa 50 C.E.).

Articles

Joan E. Taylor, *Philo of Alexandria on the Essenes: A Case Study on the Use of Classical Sources in Discussions of the Qumran-Essene Hypothesis*

Lucia Saudelli, *La hodos anō kai katō d'Héraclite (Fragment 22 B 60 DK/33 M) dans le De Aeternitate Mundi de Philon d'Alexandrie*

Andrew Dinan, *The Mystery of Play: Clement of Alexandria's Appropriation of Philo in the Paedagogus (1.5.21.3–22.1)*

Special Section: Philo and the Dead Sea Scrolls

John J. Collins, *Introduction*

Florentino García Martínez, *Divine Sonship at Qumran and in Philo*

Hindy Najman, *Philosophical Contemplation and Revelatory Inspiration in Ancient Judean Traditions*

Katell Berthelot, *Zeal for God and Divine Law in Philo and the Dead Sea Scrolls*

Loren T. Stuckenbruck, *To What Extent Did Philo's Treatment of Enoch and the Giants Presuppose a Knowledge of the Enochic and Other Sources Preserved in the Dead Sea Scrolls?*

(8) Starbuck, Scott R. A. *Court Oracles in the Psalms: The So-Called Royal Psalms in their Ancient Near Eastern Context*. Dissertation Series 172. Atlanta, Scholars Press for the Society of Biblical Literature, 1999.

Since the pioneering work of Hermann Gunkel, scholars have generally viewed the royal psalms of the Hebrew Bible to be analogous to royal hymns and prayers found throughout the ancient Near East. This important study demonstrates that the biblical royal psalms are in fact unique when compared to other royal epigraphic remains since they never include personal or regnal names. This deceptively simple but key observation demands a reassessment of the canonical purposes and tradition histories of the royal psalms, and in particular, their royal oracles. Starbuck argues that these royal oracles were recontextualized in order to democratize the essential elements of royal theology for all of Israel.

(9) Strudwick, Nigel C. *Texts from the Pyramid Age. Writings from the Ancient World 16.* Atlanta, Society of Biblical Literature, 2005.

Ancient Egypt is well known for its towering monuments and magnificent statuary, but other aspects of its civilization are less well known, especially its written texts. Now *Texts from the Pyramid Age* provides ready access to new translations of a representative selection of texts ranging from the historically significant to the repetitive formulae of the tomb inscriptions from Old Kingdom Egypt (ca. 2700–2170 B.C.). These royal and private inscriptions, coming from both the secular and religious milieus and from all kinds of physical contexts, not only shed light on the administration, foreign expeditions, and funerary beliefs of the period but also bring to life the Egyptians themselves, revealing how they saw the world and how they wanted the world to see them. Strudwick's helpful introduction to the history and literature of this seminal period provides important background for reading and understanding these historical texts. Like other volumes in the SBL's *Writings from the Ancient World* series, this work will soon become a standard with students and scholars alike.

(10) Udoh, Fabian E. *To Caesar What Is Caesar's: Tribute, Taxes, and Imperial Administration in Early Roman Palestine (63 B.C.E.–70 C.E.).* *Brown Judaic Studies 343.* Providence, Brown Judaic Studies, 2006.

This book is the first detailed and comprehensive study of taxation in Jewish Palestine in the Early Roman period, from the conquest of the Jewish state by Pompey in 63 B.C.E. to the fall of Jerusalem in 70 C.E. Rather than constructing theoretical models of the economic conditions of Palestine, this study is based on a historical analysis of the extant sources. Judea's systems of taxation depended on the politics of its relationship with Rome and its magistrates. This work clarifies the problem of taxation and the role that economic factors might have played both in the rise of early Christianity and in the Revolt of 66 C.E. By situating Judea within its wider context within the Roman empire, this study also contributes more generally to our understanding of Roman provincial administration.

(11) Watson, Duane F., ed. *The Intertexture of Apocalyptic Discourse in the New Testament.* *Symposium Series 14.* Atlanta, Society of Biblical Literature, 2002.

The essays in this volume identify apocalyptic discourse in the New Testament and examine its intertexture, that is, what the apocalyptic discourse represents, refers to, and uses of phenomena outside itself. Intertexture includes references in the Hebrew Bible, intertestamental texts, and Greco-Roman literature, as well as related social and cultural phenomena. Contributors identify the biblical writer's selection and use of the intertextural references in argumentative strategies in apocalyptic discourse. They identify topics and argumentation that might be distinctive to apocalyptic discourse, refining the definition of the apocalyptic genre and determining more precisely the social and cultural placement of early Christianity. This volume arises out of a special session of the *Rhetoric and the New*

Testament Section of the Society of Biblical Literature 1999 Annual Meeting. The contributors to the volume are L. Gregory Bloomquist, David A. deSilva, James D. Hester, Edith M. Humphrey, B. J. Oropeza, Vernon K. Robbins, Russell B. Sisson, Wesley Hiram Wachob, and Duane F. Watson.

(12) Watts, James W., ed. *Persia and Torah: The Theory of Imperial Authorization of the Pentateuch*. Symposium Series 17. Atlanta, Society of Biblical Literature, 2001.

Persia and Torah provides the first thorough evaluation in English of the theory that the Persian Empire authorized and influenced the formation of the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Jewish and Christian bibles. The contributors to this volume address the role of written texts in ancient politics, religion, and law; the political and social contexts behind the literary formation of the Torah; the social forces that motivated the acceptance of the first Bible; and the experiences of Judeans in the Persian period in comparison with other Persian subjects, especially Egyptians and Greeks. Along with the translated work of Peter Frei, the leading proponent of this theory about imperial influence on local law in the Persian period, the volume presents evaluations of the theory and its application to the Bible by six experts on the period and its literature: Joseph Blenkinsopp, Lisbeth S. Fried, Lester L. Grabbe, Gary N. Knoppers, Donald B. Redford, and Jean Louis Ska.

Best wishes,

Ehud

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