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Abstracts

Blood Guilt and Monetary Compensation in Biblical Laws and Mari Letters

Yigal Bloch and Nathan Wasserman

In this article, we discuss a question bearing on the fundamental principles of criminal law in the Hebrew Bible: are they self-standing postulates on which the biblical laws are based (as suggested by Moshe Greenberg), or late generalizations made from specific legal norms and statements which predate them? We address this question by considering Mesopotamian documents about a millennium older than the biblical legal corpora – two 18th-century BCE letters found in Mari on the Middle Euphrates, and a 19th-century BCE treaty between two towns in the Diyala basin. Despite the spatial and temporal distance between these sources and the biblical legal corpora, the social and cultural similarities between the Amorite populations of northern Mesopotamia and the Ancient Israel as reflected in the Hebrew Bible justify a comparison between the legal norms and practices in these two societies. Our discussion shows that at least one of the postulates of biblical law formulated by Greenberg – the absolute value of human life, which rules out monetary compensation in capital cases – finds expression in the legal practices of the Amorite tribes. Accordingly, we conclude that those legal practices, as well as the norm of blood revenge which is clearly connected to them, were inherited by Ancient Israel from its Northwest Semitic background, and their crystallization into a fundamental legal principle was a result of a later historical process.

[**Key words:** Amorites, Mari, the Laws of Hammurapi, biblical laws, kidnapping, murder, blood revenge, Moshe Greenberg, Eckart Otto]

Abstracts

The Exodus in the Book of Joshua

Gershon Galil

This article reexamines the attitude towards the Exodus in the Book of Joshua as well as the formation of the book. The author maintains that the Exodus appears in the Deuteronomistic and Pre-Deuteronomistic layers of the Book of Joshua – but is totally absent from the Priestly / Post-Deuteronomistic layer of the book. In the author's opinion, this absence indicates the decline of the importance of the Exodus in the Persian Period. The Priestly editor of Joshua, does not deny the Exodus, since it is mentioned in this book many times, but shifts his main focus and interest from the Exodus to the conquest of the Land, and other issues related to the conquest, such as the borders, the status of Transjordan, territorial rights of the Priests and the Levites, activities of Eleazar and Pinchas, and more.

[**Key words:** Joshua, Moses, Exodus, Deuteronomistic composition, The Priestly editor of Joshua]

Saul and the Necromancer (1 Samuel 28), A Different Interpretation

Yairah Amit

This article will examine the events that took place at the En-Dor necromancer's, the night before Saul's battle against the Philistines. It focuses on two issues. The first, at what stage did the necromancer identify Saul, and how did she realize that her client was the king of Israel, who banned ghosts and familiar spirits in the land. The second, how would readers, who do not believe in the existence of ghosts, and for whom this was simply a kind of deception, interpret this event. The article relates to diverse solutions offered throughout the ages, and finally suggests one more solution based on séance rituals, which exist even today.

[**Key words:** Necromancer, Ghosts, consulting, Identity, Deception, Trance, Predicting, Séance, Medium]

Abstracts

“And the Glory of the Lord Shines on You” – From the Glory of the Lord to the Glory of His City: Structure and Significance in Isaiah 60

Miriam Sklarz

Isaiah chapter 60 was crowned as one of the most beautiful visions of redemption in terms of content and language and the ‘diamond in the crown’ in the entire book of Isaiah. This prophecy is directed to Zion and portrays the return of her sons and the restoration of her walls with the help of the Gentiles. As for the structure of this prophecy, the research literature, for the most part, sees Isaiah Chapter 60 as a single literary unit divided into sections according to their content. Blankinsop, referring to the division of this prophecy into stanzas claims that it “is not of great importance”. Some further division into sections has been suggested based on parallels in contents and language between parts of the prophecy. However these parallels are not consistent throughout all parts of the structure, and their significance for understanding the prophecy’s main burden is unclear. In this article we propose a new symmetrical and chiasmic structure for the prophecy in Isaiah 60 and show how the recurring expressions and synonyms used in the song lend it a consistent and systematic structure from which its meaning emerges.

[**Key words:** Isaiah 60, Jerusalem, symmetry, chiasm, repetition, structure and meaning]

The Double Ending of the Book of Ruth: Its Meaning and Poetic Functions

Amos Frisch

The article is devoted to a literary study of the two passages that close the Book of Ruth – 4:13–17 and 18–22. The starting point is the duplication of the two sections. Moreover, the peak at the end of the second section, the birth of David (v. 22), repeats what was already stated at the end of the first ending (v. 17). This duplication is shown to be the key for a solution. The second ending, which begins by going back in time, guides us to a double reading

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in two directions—both back and forth, and it also implies the existence of a tribal perspective alongside the family perspective, and a male point of view beside a feminine point of view.

The verse that concludes the first ending, 4:17, poses four more problems, including another duplication that exists within it. The proposed solution is to understand **שֵׁם** not as the common noun “name” but as a proper noun, “Shem”, by which the infant was first known. Here “Shem” looks back – the perpetuation of the deceased; but it also hints towards the future and the name motif in the history of David in 2 Samuel. The infant’s other name, Obed, which looks mainly ahead, completes the picture.

We also found the bidirectional perspective on the linguistic plane, through a new example of “Janus Parallelism”: **מְשִׁיב נֶפֶשׁ** – “a restorer of life” (v. 15). By its very nature, this literary device faces backwards and forwards; in this case its content also embodies the meanings of past and future.

The entire book of Ruth is a reminiscence of the past and of the ancestors, but at the same time it also gazes towards the future and David; not only is his name the last word in the text, he is also alluded to several times in the book.

[**Key words:** Ruth, Biblical narrative, duplication, ending, literary study of the Bible, close reading, backwards and forwards, David, feminine point of view, structure, women in the Bible, past and future, Janus Parallelism, name, Shem]

Unique Grammatical Distinctions (Phonological, Morphological and Syntactical) In Ḥayyuj’s Grammatical Works

Ali Wattad and Daniel Sivan

Rabbi Judah Ben David, commonly known as Ḥayyuj, lived and worked in Spain around the 10th century. He is considered to be one of the greatest Hebrew grammarians of all generations by virtue of his writings concerning the grammar of biblical Hebrew. In these works, he introduced a regular subset of Hebrew forms theory. He established a scientific and systematic understanding of Hebrew grammar. In his discussions of morphology, he also presented supportive discussions from other spheres of grammar (morphology, phonology, syntax etc.). Our study reveals that he sometimes had his own unique distinctions that we did not find in other grammatical works. These

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distinctions were not always accepted by other grammarians. In this article, we present these distinctions according to the following areas: Phonology, e.g. hodo'ti > yoda'ti; Morphology, e.g. the new roots LŠ' and NŠ' and the roots LHṬ and LWṬ are the same; and Syntax, such as: treating the particle 'et as a noun.

[**Key words:** Ḥayyuj, systematic grammar, grammatical unique distinctions, latent quiescents, exchanges of verbal conjugations]

Rashi's Independent Commentaries on Genesis 1-11

Josef Ziv

The purpose of this essay is to examine and characterize the independent commentaries of Rashi (Rabbi Shlomo Yitzchaki), the ones not based on any previous work such as rabbinic midrashim, the targum of Onkelos, or the grammarians. In order to enable an efficient overview, I chose to focus on Chapters 1-11 of the Book of Genesis. After setting aside the non-independent commentaries, we are left with approximately 11% of Rashi's complete commentary. Rashi's independent commentary on these chapters includes content-related, literal, and grammatical commentary as well as translations into his native French, and is typified by a clear desire to elucidate the *peshat* – the literal or direct meaning of the biblical text.

Examination of Rashi's independent commentaries led to a renewed understanding of his famous dictum in Genesis 3:8 "I have come only [to teach] the simple meaning of the Scripture". In this statement, Rashi relates primarily to his independent commentaries in which he adopts an exclusively *peshat*-based approach. Although there are other *peshat* commentaries that are based on the targum, the grammarians, and interpretations of Chazal, commentaries based on these sources are not always solely *peshat*. In the second half of the same methodological statement "and such Aggadah that clarifies the words of the verses, each word in its proper way", Rashi relates to those commentaries of Chazal that he regards as removed from the *peshat* and that are needed in order to complete the overall picture of the subject under discussion. If so, the word "I" in the first statement refers primarily to Rashi's independent commentaries.

[**Key words:** Rashi's Torah commentary, Pshat-Literal meaning of the Bible, Rashi's sources]

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Nesiga in Words Ending with a *pataḥ furtivum*

Mordechai Mishor

In order to avoid two consecutive stressed syllables, the accent of a *milləra*‘ word may be shifted from the ultima to the penultima (and under certain conditions to the antepenultima) open syllable before a word stressed in its first syllable. This change is called *nesiga* (‘receding’). A *nesiga* is not to be expected in a word containing a *pataḥ furtivum*, because such a word is considered by the Masoretes as a *millə‘el* word itself, i.e. a word stressed in the penultima. Nevertheless, there are a few occurrences of *nesiga* in words containing a *pataḥ furtivum*: בּוֹקֵעַ מַיִם (Isa 63, 12), כָּל-בְּצֵעַ בְּצֵעַ (Prov 1,19), מְנַע בָּרַ (ibid.11, 26), שְׁלַח מַיִם (Job 5,10). This anomaly can be explained on the light of the diachronic development of the Tiberian tradition: before the *pataḥ furtivum* was adopted, the accentual system, included the *nesiga*, had been already fixed, and it was the intrusion of the *pataḥ furtivum* that created an extra non-stressed syllable between the two stressed syllables of the compound.

[**Key words:** *nesiga*, *pataḥ furtivum*]