

BOOK REVIEW

“SHNATON” – VOLUME II

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שנתון למקרא ולחקר המזרח הקדום, כרך ב, בעריכת משה וינפלד, ירושלים, תשל"ז.
SHNATON: AN ANNUAL FOR BIBLICAL AND ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN STUDIES,
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The second volume of *SHNATON: An Annual for Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern Studies*, just as its predecessor¹, offers a large selection of original Hebrew articles dealing with numerous subjects, reflecting the many different disciplines encompassed by biblical scholarship in Israel today. Eighteen full-length articles go to make up the major section of the volume (226 pages), followed by five appended “departments”: annotated translations into Hebrew of Near Eastern texts, discussion of recent publications in Near Eastern studies which have importance for biblical scholarship, five review articles, a list of “books received,” and a report on the first annual convention of “the Bible and its Environment” (המקרא ועולמו) which met in Tel Aviv in March, 1977. Of these, all but “books received” are new features which enrich this second volume of *Shnaton* appreciably.

Two articles deal with specific biblical passages, investigating literary phenomena and their implications for the understanding of biblical religion. In the first, B. Uffenheimer contends that the epithet “El Elyon” (NEB: God Most High) in Gen. 14:19, a passage which betrays the patriarchs’ tolerance of the religion of their neighbors, refers to El, chief Canaanite deity at the beginning of the second millennium, as shared in common by Canaanite and Hittite traditions. However, the appositive “creator of heaven and earth” cannot belong to the same tradition, as El was not considered to be the creator of heaven and earth until the first millennium, by which time he was no longer considered “Elyon”, i.e., head of the pantheon,

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1. *Shnaton: An Annual for Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern Studies I*, ed. Jonas C. Greenfield and Moshe Weinfeld, 1975.

this role having been taken over by Baal, as corroborated by the Ugaritic epic. It follows that the Canaanite-Hittite tradition is here accompanied by Mesopotamian elements, as only in Mesopotamia was the role of Creator assigned to the deities in the second millennium. In the article by Z. Weisman, the two occasions on which Elijah's mantle is transferred to Elisha are compared, and conclusions are drawn concerning the missions of the two prophets and the continuity from one to the other.

Topics connected with the grammatical study of Biblical Hebrew are treated in two articles. M.Z. Kaddari investigates the adverbialization of the expression *Mi Yitten* in Biblical Hebrew, and J. Blau traces the use of the Hebrew *mâqôm* in relative clauses, first as a relative pronoun, then as an antecedent followed by a relative.

The study of biblical stylistic and literary devices, which has only recently begun to gain popularity, is the subject of three contributions. As part of a detailed study of biblical name-midrashim, Y. Zakowitch offers several examples of name-midrashim in which the word used to interpret the proper name *ad locum* is not itself aurally similar to the name (paronomasia) but is synonymous with the similar-sounding word. Thus the name Ephraim in Hos. 10:11 and Jer. 31:18 is connected to the noun עגלה (calf), a synonym of פרה which is similar in sound to the name Ephraim and is in fact elsewhere connected with it. No fewer than nineteen examples of this type are brought, of varying complexity. Six more name-midrashim are dealt with; all built upon the principle that the interpretive word – for instance, הרהב in Exodus 3 – is similar in sound not to the name being interpreted *ad locum* – Horeb, the mountain as named in Exodus 3 – but to its alternate name, in this case, Sinai. No expressive or aesthetic value is suggested for these types of midrashim; instead the writer suggests that the Biblical writers and readers – accustomed to “thinking in pairs”, were most probably capable of associating words, and names, with their equivalents almost automatically, and thus did not find such midrashim, in which the paronomasian element is absent from the text and must be inferred, at all unusual.

S. Kogut has contributed an article on the use of chiasm in which he calls attention to the notice paid to this device by medieval commentators and to its frequent, conscious use in Rabbinic literature. He goes on to demonstrate several examples in which the recognition of chiasm as an aesthetic embellishment enables the commentator to interpret correctly. In particular, several observations are made concerning the first verse of the Hebrew Bible and other instances of the use of the pair שמים/ארץ (earth/heaven).

The late R. Weiss discusses numerous occurrences of the word לֹא in the first of two parallel hemistichs, in which the negation is to be understood as applying to both halves of the parallelism. This principle, recognized since medieval times, was not always sufficiently understood by the ancient versions, so that in some cases the translation of the verse is the opposite of the meaning implied by the “double-duty” לֹא.

Two studies dealing with the ancient versions are contained in the volume. A. Rofé discusses the concluding verses of the book of Joshua as contained in the Septuagint, arguing for the existence of a Hebrew *Vorlage* significantly different from the MT. Rofé's source-critical analysis discerns three sections in the LXX version of the passage, indicating in each case the superiority of either MT or LXX, and positing an overall priestly interest for the redaction of the passage. In the area of Aramaic Targumim, A. Shinan demonstrates the influence of the view of Creation in Psalm 104 on the Aramaic translations of Genesis 1.

One article deals strictly with Biblical history and institutions. M. Heltzer investigates the implications of the recently published seal-inscription dealing with the status of the priestly city of Nob, and cites additional epigraphical evidence to show the uninterrupted existence in pre-exilic times of priestly dynasties known from Biblical and other sources from the post-exilic period.

The volume also contains several articles of interest to students of Near Eastern literature. In the editor's remarks at the "Bible and its Environment" Convention, reprinted in this volume, stress is laid on the importance of broadening the horizons of Biblical scholarship. Only through increased familiarity with the literature and cultural monuments of the Ancient Near East, argues M. Weinfeld, can the student of the Bible escape from the stagnation of the last century and progress toward achieving what the writer sees as the true goal of biblical scholarship, the understanding of the biblical world. Weinfeld urges Biblicists to follow the example of Orientalists and Classicists in combining the many disciplines related to the Bible rather than continuing to confine themselves to the corpus of the Hebrew canon. The large number of articles dealing with Near Eastern topics is a response to this call.

N. Šcupak and Y. Avishur illustrate the contribution to proper interpretation of the Biblical text made by familiarity with Egyptian and Assyrian literature. Šcupak's contribution deals with four educational terms from Egyptian wisdom literature and their semantic equivalents in the wisdom literature of the Bible, and concludes that the identical connotations assumed by the Hebrew term and by its Egyptian counterpart are further evidence, beyond the material affinities, of the relationship between biblical and Egyptian wisdom literatures. Y. Avishur discusses four biblical lexical cruxes in light of their Akkadian parallels. He argues in favor of the emendation in Deut. 32:43 **וכפר אדמעת עמו** ("and wipes away the tears of his people") on the basis of the phrase *dimtaša ikappar* in the myth of Nergal and Ereshkegal, demonstrating the similar biblical expression in Isaiah 25:8 and the acceptability of the translation *kpr* = wipe away. The Akkadian *ezēzu* is employed in the interpretation of the Hebrew **׳wz/׳zz** in Ps. 90:11; 76:8, Prv. 21:14 and Isa. 42:25. The Akkadian *berūtu* "hunger" is offered to explain **ברות** (**צמא** ||) in Ps. 69:22. Finally the difficult **מבליגיתי** in Jer. 8:18 is understood as a feminine noun with the possessive suffix, probably the name of a musical instrument or kind of song, as corroborated by the Sumerian-Akkadian *balaggu*.

Other articles are concerned strictly with Ancient Near Eastern material. Under

the heading of "literary devices" we may place A. Altman's study of the "apologetic" prologue to the treaties or Suppililiuma I, in which religious, juridical, and political aspects of the wording of the prologues are discussed. Though this motif renders the historical objectivity of the prologues doubtful, their purpose is not at all historical but rhetorical, serving to render illegitimate any future claim by the vassal that his subjugation by Hatti is contrary to the treaty.

In the category of Near Eastern history and institutions belong H. Reviv's article on the "kidinnūtu"-status, the special position enjoyed by the citizens of several Mesopotamian towns from the Cassite through the Persian periods, and the study of pictorial sources offering information on methods employed by the Assyrian empire to implement its policy of mass deportation by B. Oded. New light is shed on biblical as well as Assyrian history in N. Naaman's study of Sennacherib's account of his campaign in Judah, a reconstructed document here translated into Hebrew and analysed both from the point of view of its implications for the biblical account of the campaign and its relationship to the previously known official annals.

Just as the study of Near Eastern literature and institutions enhances the understanding of the biblical world, so does the study of the Hellenistic world furnish the milieu in which to appreciate post-biblical Judaism. Thus, in W. Weinfeld's consideration of the Dead Sea Manual of Discipline, a number of features of the Manual are compared with parallel elements in contemporary Hellenistic religious associations and with the organization of the early Christian community. Though in general terms the organizational pattern, in particular, the importance of the covenant, its founder and its terms, is shown to be held in common by the Qumran sect and pagan associations, specific elements, such as sacrificial and funerary regulations, are peculiar to the pagan associations, while others, especially the ritual of covenant enactment, are uniquely Jewish, based on ancient Israelite prototypes.

M. Weinfeld's other major contribution to the volume, in the department "translations", is a translation into Hebrew of the Babylonian Hymn to Šamaš. In addition to the brief introduction to the structure and content of the hymn, the translation is accompanied by notes directing the Hebrew reader to biblical parallels and Akkadian lexical references.

Besides the remarks mentioned above made by the editor at the "Bible and its Environment" Convention, two other contributions deal with subjects of general methodological importance for Biblical scholarship. The lecture given by E. Tov at the same convention deals with textual criticism of the Old Testament as influenced by the publication of the scrolls from the Judean Desert. A number of recent issues in Septuagint criticism are discussed, as are recent editions of the Hebrew Bible and recent translations on the OT into modern languages. The lengthy article by S. Talmon is a translation of a previously published treatise in which the writer urges, and illustrates, the recognition of the interrelationship of "pure" text-criticism and literary-stylistic analysis in Biblical studies. Talmon believes that the text-

ual transmission of the Bible and its composition – that is, the technical and the creative aspects of the creation of the canonical books – are not separate realms as scholarship has heretofore assumed, and that “editorial” formative elements exist on the author level just as on the level of the copyist.

An English section of 28 pages, including English title page, contents, and brief summaries of most of the articles, concludes this volume.