
The Society for Old Testament Study

BULLETIN

2004

79th WINTER MEETING
5th–7th January 2004
Manor House, University of Birmingham
Professor Hugh Williamson presiding

Professor Hugh Williamson (Oxford)

Presidential Address: Do We Still Need Commentaries?

We frequently hear complaints that there are too many commentary series, so are those of us who are engaged in writing them wasting our time? In somewhat light-hearted vein, the paper first accepted that many series are linked to lay, church or student demands, that they may serve a useful purpose in that realm, but that ‘we’ as scholars do not need them. However, even with the more obviously heavy-weight commentaries (such as the ICC or BKAT series), there is much which is not most effectively presented in commentary format: individual word studies, for instance, are more usefully presented in articles or dictionary entries, while it is a matter of simple observation that theories about composition and redaction criticism have more impact if presented in a monograph or article; in a commentary the arguments tend to be broken up and so lost from sight. By contrast, the argument was advanced that commentary on the Hebrew text itself remains essential. This reflection was prompted by the announcement of a new project, *The Oxford Bible*, to be edited by R. Hendel. It will present an eclectic Hebrew text, which might at first sight be thought to eliminate the need for textual commentary. However, a number of objections were advanced to the publication of such a seemingly authoritative eclectic text in dialogue with the stated positions of both Hendel himself in *The Text of Genesis 1-11* (1998) and of A. Gelston (*JSS* 1990). The production of an eclectic Hebrew text in the form advocated will be of use only to scholars, for whom the greater need is to provide the

evidence on which they may judge for themselves which reading should be preferred; for lay people, translations are already effectively based on an eclectic text. The project also manifests muddled thinking in a number of areas, such as the handling of vocalization and spelling, and in the case of a few books, such as Jeremiah, it would be completely impractical. Furthermore, the suggestion that the textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible should be the same as for classical texts overlooks the obvious differences in the circumstances of the text's transmission and the fact that in classical studies the discipline includes a considerable element of so-called higher criticism, which is not entertained in this project. It was concluded that for scholarly use we still need commentaries in preference to an *Oxford Bible*.

Dr Keith Grüneberg (Pangbourne)

Genesis 12:3: New Linguistic Insight into an Old Problem

The paper argued that there is a 'middle' domain instantiated in many languages: forms grammatically distinct from the simple active are used to express a variety of non-passive and non-reflexive senses. The Hebrew niph'al is frequently a middle form, as well as often expressing passive force. However, it is very rarely reflexive: most niph'al's conventionally thus analysed are not semantically reflexive, but are rather middle forms. On the few occasions when the niph'al is apparently reflexive this is probably a development from the passive sense, rather than indicative of a basic reflexive meaning. Hence in Genesis 12:3 the niph'al נִבְרַךְ is not a reflexive 'bless themselves'. Nor is it a middle meaning 'find blessing' or similar, since such a middle sense is not otherwise instantiated in Hebrew. The passive sense 'be blessed' is thus grammatically required. Following Genesis 1–11, which shows God's concern for all humankind, it is not surprising that the call of Abraham should ultimately benefit all the earth's families.

Dr Ann Jeffers (London)

Laughing at Abraham: Parody in the Testament of Abraham

This paper was concerned with the enduring interest that post-biblical literature showed in the figure of Abraham. The common factor is that Abraham is without exception an object of much respect, even a role model for Jewish, as well as Greco-Roman and Christian writers: a man not only of unfailing virtues, he is presented as an ideal statesman, a great learned sage, theologian, astrologer and mathematician of unsurpassed reputation. So the presence of an unusual characterization of Abraham in the Testament of Abraham (Recension A), and in particular the presence of parodic elements, calls for further investigation. The paper explored some of the theoretical concepts regarding parody as yielded by the Russian formalists, and more specifically by Mikhail Bakhtin, and reflected on their usefulness with regards to this ancient text. Two main questions were examined: 'How is the Testa-

ment of Abraham (Recension A) a parody?’ and ‘What is the function of parody?’ Seven characteristics of parody were examined: exaggeration, a character’s capacity for self deception, trickster motifs, incongruity, crude naturalism/behaviour, oxymoronic character features, and inappropriate action or speech. On the function of parody, it was tentatively suggested that it is a subversive type of literature. This might have implications for the setting of Recension A, which might be placed within early Christianity’s polemic against laughter, and more specifically against Tertullian and Chrysostom, thus affirming laughter as a creator of meaning.

Dr Paul Joyce (Oxford)

A New Heaven or a New Earth? Towards an Understanding of Ezekiel’s New Temple

The vision of Ezekiel 40–48 is closely related to the visions of chs. 1 and 8–11 and demands interpretation in relation to them. The ‘chariot’ vision of ch. 1, the departure of the glory in ch. 11 and indeed the theme of 11:16 all need to be borne in mind when in ch. 43 the glory of the Lord returns and fills the Temple. This return stands within the context of Ezekiel’s overarching theology of the freedom of God, a finely-balanced dialectic between his presence with his people wherever they are and his honouring of the particular place of the special revelation of his holiness. The neglected view that chs. 40–42 represent a report of an ascent to the heavenly Temple should be taken seriously. Whether chs. 40–42 are indeed an account of an ascent or simply of a vision of the heavenly Temple, it is no exaggeration to speak of a continuity of Merkabah-like mystical tradition going back all the way to the visionary prophet Ezekiel himself. In 573 BCE (40:1), at the half-way point of the exile as he perceives it, Ezekiel anticipates that 25 years later an end to exile will be accomplished. The Temple of chs. 40–48 is both a heavenly one and an earthly one. God’s return in 43:1–5 relates to the actual sanctuary in Jerusalem. This has to be rebuilt and so that same chapter appropriately speaks of the rebuilding (43:10–11), according to the heavenly model seen in chs. 40–42. Even after the return of the Lord to dwell in his sanctuary, the emphasis on special location is qualified. These chapters freely use the phrase ‘Holy of Holies’, קדש קדשים (with no article), as in 43:12, as though to diffuse the holiness that pertains not so much to the precise place as to the God who dwells. That same God-centredness renders the Ark of the Covenant and other paraphernalia redundant.

Dr Alison Salvesen (Oxford)

The Role of Aquila, Symmachus and Theodotion in Philological Commentaries on the Bible

The Palestinian Jewish Greek revisions of the Septuagint known as Aquila, Symmachus and Theodotion (the ‘Three’) have survived only

in fragmentary readings. However, they are important because they date from the formative period of Christianity and rabbinic Judaism, when the consonantal text was being standardized ('Theodotion' c. 50 BCE–50 CE, Aquila 130 CE, Symmachus c. 200 CE). Thus these versions represent a vital link in the history of the Hebrew text, between on the one hand the Qumran fragments and the earliest stage of the LXX, and on the other, the Masoretic tradition, the Peshitta, the Targumim, the Samaritan Pentateuch, and the Vulgate. They provide evidence for the consonantal text, variant vocalizations, and Jewish philological traditions. It should be noted that Jerome, for all his ability in Hebrew, depended greatly on the 'Three' and on contemporary Jewish informants. Therefore the Vulgate is not a completely independent translation but a collection of data from Palestinian Jewish sources from the second to fourth centuries, with the additional influence of the LXX and Old Latin. The most up-to-date source for readings from the 'Three' is the second apparatus in the Göttingen edition of the LXX, but the Hexapla Project is compiling a database of all the fragments which will also be published in hard copy. Such work may encourage more biblical commentators to make use of the material.

Professor Gordon McConville (Cheltenham)

Joshua: Mosaic Monarch?

The aim of the paper was to place the figure of Joshua in relation to the political ideas presupposed or advocated in the book of Joshua. The paper began by questioning the view that, on the one hand, Joshua and Moses together are 'regal' figures, and on the other, that Joshua is 'a thinly disguised Josianic figure' (R.D. Nelson). There were significant differences between them. In Exodus–Deuteronomy Joshua was carefully presented as less than Moses (C. Schäfer-Lichtenberger). Conversely, Joshua was virtually absent from Judges–Kings, and had no evident typological significance there; indeed, he appeared to have been expressly overlooked. In the book of Joshua, he was often portrayed as acting in concert with other agents, including 'the leaders of the congregation' and the people of Israel as such. His role in covenant-making was noticeably different from that of Josiah, with a greater emphasis on the role of the people themselves as agents. Finally it was suggested that Joshua shared with Deuteronomy (J.-M. Carrière) a concept of nationhood involving a distinctive view of land, people, law and institutions, in which these components transcended 'primordial' (S. Grosby) and local forms. In such a concept political agency is shared, and the sovereignty of the people as such represented by the 'congregation'. Joshua's temporary and limited role, together with his retreat into anonymity at the end, and lack of a successor, all fitted with such a concept.

Dr Peter Addinall (Carperby)

Why Was Micaiah So Sure?

It is natural to assume, and no doubt the biblical author intended us to believe, that the prophet Micaiah (in 1 Kings 22) was sure of Ahab's death because he was genuinely inspired and could therefore 'see' into the future. There are, however, strong objections to this simple view of 'prophecy', not least that it ill accords with the general picture of prophetic activity given in Samuel–Kings. A more likely answer to the question emphasizes the role of the prophet in actively trying to bring about the fulfilment of the divine will in human affairs. In the case of Micaiah, he was a member of the extreme wing of the Yahwist movement in which Elijah and Elisha were prominent. These men shared with Syria a desire to destroy Omri's dynasty, and the battle for Ramoth-Gilead offered an excellent opportunity to take a significant step towards the fulfilment of this aim by killing Ahab. Emphasis on prophecy as miraculous prediction is seriously misleading, and obscures its true character as a kind of fierce morality conceived as a divine categorical imperative.

Dr Walter Moberly (Durham)

A Response to Peter Addinall

After a brief summary of Dr Addinall's paper 'Why Was Micaiah So Sure?', noting its concern to develop a moral account of prophecy which marginalizes predictive aspects (and so ascribes Micaiah's certainty not to divine inspiration but to moral judgment and secret dealings with the king of Syria), a number of possible difficulties with the thesis were suggested. (1) Why should Micaiah's knowing that the king of Syria wished to kill Ahab offer any assurance that the wish would be realized? (2) Micaiah's first vision, the narrative reason for his certainty, has many parallels in other contexts, including many today, and needs fuller analysis. (3) Addinall's commending of a moral construal of prophecy is in some tension with his portrayal of Micaiah as a 'ruthless extremist'. (4) There are unresolved issues of method — 'historical' in relation to 'literary' — in the handling of the biblical texts. (5) Addinall makes no use of Jeremiah or Ezekiel, despite their offering paradigmatic accounts of the nature of prophetic language, and their having terminological and conceptual similarities to the Micaiah narrative. (6) If Micaiah wanted Ahab to be killed, then his jeopardizing of his own life through confronting Ahab seems an odd way of going about it.

A **reception** was given on the first evening of the Meeting by the Department of Theology, University of Birmingham.

80th SUMMER MEETING
19th–22nd July 2004
St Catherine's College, University of Oxford
Professor Hugh Williamson presiding

Dr James Aitken (Reading)

Wisdom and Paideia: The Late Septuagint Books

The latest LXX books (the translations of Canticles and Ecclesiastes) are thought to have been completed in the first and second centuries AD. Why they were not translated before, and the implications of this, are puzzling. Focusing on Ecclesiastes, it is thought to be early second century in view of the similarity of its translation techniques to those of Aquila, but internal evidence of the language has not been used to prove such a date. The translation of Ecclesiastes displays rhetorical and poetic devices whilst maintaining quantitative equivalence in the words. The language is typically koine, but some features conform to a date in the Roman period, and the philosophical language and interests in kingship are reflective of ideas in the second sophistic. A date in the first or second century AD remains, therefore, the most likely hypothesis, and the use of rhetorical devices whilst writing in standard koine suggest that the author sees himself within the tradition of philosophical writers of the time.

Professor Reinhard Gregor Kratz (Göttingen)

Israel in the Book of Isaiah

The name 'Israel' is employed by all sections of Isaiah in various ways and with various meanings. As such, the book takes part in the fundamental transformation the name has undergone both in the history of Israel and in the literary history of the Bible as it evolved from a political to a theological concept, from the Israel of history to the Israel of faith. According to an insightful thesis proposed by Leonard Rost, this development took its point of departure from the prophets of the eighth century BCE and has left especially deep traces in First and Second Isaiah. The name Israel can thus serve as a leitmotiv that allows us to retrace the development of Isaianic prophecy as well as the various stages of the book's origins. This was done in three steps. Firstly, the paper investigated the name 'the Holy One of Israel' and related designations for God that are dispersed throughout the entire book in order to show how they came from First to Second Isaiah. Secondly, consideration was given to the name 'Jacob-Israel', which is employed above all in Second Isaiah, and other designations for the people in order to show how they found their way into First Isaiah.

Thirdly, the paper investigated the political significance of the name 'Israel', which predominates above all in First Isaiah, the Judean Isaiah, in order to show how it became a designation for the people and part of the title for the God of Israel in both First and Second Isaiah.

Dr Katharine Dell (Cambridge)

Does the Song of Songs Have Any Connections to Wisdom?

The issue of the relationship of the Song of Songs to wisdom was discussed in this paper under three headings, that of the Solomonic attribution and references to the king; that of editorial links with the genre of wisdom; and finally that of relationship to wisdom motifs and female configurations in Proverbs. It was argued that the Solomonic inspiration for the work extends beyond the attribution alone to include references to him in the text and that references to 'the king' enhance this sense. Editorial links with wisdom can be seen in 8:6b-7, which manifests the abstract nature of proverbial wisdom, and also in the refrains of 2:7; 3:5 and 8:4. This wisdom connection may, however, form a pre-literary layer in connection with the Solomonic context rather than simply a redactional one. Finally it was argued that there are close links in themes and imagery with the figures of woman Wisdom and the loose woman that suggest that the Song of Songs may have been an inspiration for the portrayal of such figures, although the more moralistic framework of the wisdom material was acknowledged. Thus whilst the Song was not classified as wisdom literature, its genre being primarily that of 'love songs', its links with wisdom circles were acknowledged, both at the stage of oral inspiration and at that of writing down, and evidence for its ongoing relevance as an inspiration to the wisdom writers was found in the portrayal of female figures in Proverbs 1-9.

Dr Aulikki Nahkola (Oxford)

Who Wrote (Down) the Bible? Orality and Textualization in Israelite Traditions

This paper sought to address two questions, namely, if any of the traditions now recorded in the Old Testament had been orally composed and transmitted, how would we know, and what difference would such knowledge make to our understanding of how the Bible came to be and how parts of it should be interpreted today? To answer the first of these questions, four main approaches employed in biblical scholarship were briefly surveyed: the source-critical tendency of regarding any potential orality as 'veiled and inaccessible'; the form- and tradition-critical interest in tracing the evolution of orally composed and transmitted passages by employing various oral 'laws of change'; the oral-formulaic focus on detecting orality by recognizing formulas in the text, presumed to have constituted a compositional aid for the performer; and the literacy debate attempting to define when and to

what measure literacy was present among the ancient Israelites. To answer the second question, another model, based on the most recent studies in the performance event by folklorists and ethnolinguists, was applied to some key interests of Old Testament scholarship, namely the nature of the text itself, its authorship and context. According to the performance approach there is no 'master text' recoverable through 'oral laws', as the performer's 'mental text' is not a ready-made text, but a store of elements such as plot, unmissable episodes, names, stock phrases and formulas, and is actualized, i.e. textualized differently and 'unpredictably' at every performance. More about the meaning of the original orality could be gleaned by attempting to reconstruct some of the elements of this now lost performance, e.g. accompanying tones of voice, gestures and artifacts. Understanding the dynamics of the performance is also integral to developing poetics culturally relevant to ancient Israelite traditions. In relation to authorship, the focus is back on the individual — as opposed to the collective — contribution, which could have included forming songs or narratives into larger cycles. At the final end of the textualization process, setting a tradition into writing, the various possible roles of the scribe were looked at.

Professor E.C. John (Bangalore)

The Reception of the Old Testament in India

The purpose of this paper was not to trace any possible historical connections between the Old Testament and India, as indicated for example in 1 Kings 10:22 or Esther 1:1, but rather to indicate the kind of reception the Old Testament has been given in India. The views of Hindu scholars have not been uniform. Govind Ranade interprets themes such as 'election' and 'possession of the land' as paradigms applicable to the Hindus and India (1902). Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan thinks that the 'intolerance of a narrow monotheism' and the destruction of the enemies of Israel are reflected in the colonial expansion of Western countries (cf. *Eastern Religions and Western Thought* [London, 1939]); however, he has a word of praise for the prophets. Mahatma Gandhi found the Old Testament boring. Arun Shourie detests the God of the Old Testament who commands the enemies of Israel to be killed and who sulks when this is not done (cf. *Harvesting Our Souls: Missionaries, Their Design, Their Claims* [New Delhi, 2000]). A few Christian theologians have argued that the Church should replace the Old Testament with the Hindu Scriptures. S.K. George sees the Exodus story as a paradigm for the Indian freedom struggle (1932). Both he and Vengal Chakkarai highly value the Old Testament prophets as agents of social change in the struggle for justice in society. Christians from the subaltern sections of Indians find parts of the Old Testament a useful tool in their struggle for justice and equality. The Churches in India continue to regard the Old

Testament as Christian Scripture, but the use of it is selective, mainly christological (e.g. promise and fulfilment, partial revelation and full revelation). The Old Testament ought to be understood and interpreted on its own, in its own context, though in this process some parts of it may merit more attention than others.

Dr David Clark (Woking)

Anthropology and the End User: The Influence of Receptor Cultures on the Translation of the Bible

Anthropological considerations have a significant impact on the interpretation of the biblical source texts. They may have an even greater impact on the way the biblical text is expressed in translation into various receptor languages. Just as the original authors/redactors wrote from within the framework of their culturally based experience, knowledge, and presuppositions, so modern audiences read or hear the Bible from within their own analogous frames of reference, and translators must take account of this. The greater the distance between the source language and the receptor language in terms of geography, climate, ecology, history, social structure, value systems, metaphysical assumptions, lexical and grammatical categories, and oral or literary conventions, the more important is an anthropological sensitivity in translating the Bible. This paper arose from the speaker's field notes of work as a Bible Society Translation Consultant between 1987 and 1994, specifically with Old Testament translation projects into Akha, Kuy, Mien, and Pattani Malay, four minority languages of Thailand. These communities are of different sizes, inhabit widely different parts of the country, and have diverse religious backgrounds and different degrees of responsiveness to the Christian message. The paper gave examples to illustrate problems in handling features of the natural world, the social world, and the spiritual world. They included such topics as folk taxonomies (a lion may be classified as a kind of bear rather than a kind of tiger), attitudes to sexual activity (rendering a prohibition against adultery may be more complex than it seems), obligatory linguistic categories (did Jacob in Genesis 30:37 peel bark in circles or in strips?), figures of speech ('Nimrod had a big gall bladder'), ideophones (is there an unrecognised one in the MT of Job 39:25?), and divine anthropomorphisms (God cannot have fingers or nostrils, but may have a voice).

Professor Bertil Albrektson (Uppsala)

Masoretic or Mixed: On Choosing a Textual Basis for a Translation of the Hebrew Bible

The point of departure was a paper by Emanuel Tov, 'The Textual Basis of Modern Translations of the Hebrew Bible: The Argument against Eclecticism' (*Textus* 20 [2000]). Tov suggests that the Masoretic Text should never be abandoned, not even in corrupt passages.

The advice of so eminent an authority must be taken seriously. It was argued, however, that his reasoning is unconvincing. The main problem for Tov is the fact that eclecticism ‘involves the subjective selection of readings’. But his use of the term ‘subjective’ is sweeping and vague. It was shown that Tov himself in his text-critical work is aware that some ‘subjective’ decisions are reliable and convincing. The MT is the basis for a translation of the Old Testament, but scribal mistakes can and should be corrected. Tov’s recommendation to reproduce the MT *consistently* is impossible to follow, as was illustrated by examples from the New Jewish Version. The ‘unconventional solutions’ favoured by Tov in corrupt passages are as ‘subjective’ as evaluations of variants, and also unfair to readers. The disadvantages of Tov’s proposal were exposed in a number of passages: Isaiah 14:4; Psalm 49:12; 1 Samuel 1:24; 14:41; 2 Samuel 18:2; Micah 5:5 (ET 6). It is futile to wish to relieve translators of the responsibility to make textual choices. The uncertainty of such decisions is unavoidable, as the Bible was written and copied by human beings.

Dr Eric Christianson (Chester)

Voltaire’s Précis of Ecclesiastes: A Case Study in the Bible’s Afterlife

In 1756 Voltaire was invited to write a paraphrase of the Psalms for the recent Christian convert, and influential mistress of Louis XV, Madame de Pompadour. With the subtlest touch of satire, Voltaire reportedly replied that he was ‘not the right man for the Psalms’. The idea likely took root in some form, since in 1759, in what appears to be an unsolicited act, he wrote two striking *précis* of biblical texts that perhaps suited his temperament more clearly: Ecclesiastes and Song of Songs. In his Ecclesiastes text Voltaire translated portions from the Hebrew and arranged them by theme, with opposing stanzas of reflective verse. Voltaire’s reading is remarkably free of the polemical and satirical approach he takes in almost all of his other published work on the Bible. It is also unorthodox in its empathetic and inventive approach to Qoheleth’s themes, and as such is a valuable reading for stimulating new reflection on Ecclesiastes. Providing a fulsome account of the context for the composition of the *Précis*, making use of the *Précis* itself and undertaking some exposition of the *Zeitgeist* of Voltaire’s era, the paper reflected on the significance of this unusual example of the Bible’s reception.

Professor Cheryl Exum (Sheffield)

The Poetic Genius of the Song of Songs

Although the Song of Songs is routinely praised for its poetic achievement and various of its poetic features subjected to scrutiny, the real genius of the Song has gone virtually unnoticed. This paper discussed the poetic genius of the Song of Songs as twofold. (1) It lies in the way the poet shows us, as well as tells us, that love is strong as death.

Among the poet's strategies for immortalizing love are such features as *the illusion of immediacy*, the impression that, far from being simply reported, the action is taking place in the present, unfolding before the reader; *conjuring* (and allowing to disappear), that is, the way the lovers materialize and dematerialize through speech in an infinite deferral of presence; *the invitation to the reader* to enter into a seemingly private world of eroticism; *the blurring of distinctions between anticipation, enjoyment of love's delights and satisfaction* (and so between past, present, and future); and *the resistance to closure*, the way the poem folds back upon itself so that it can begin again with desire *in medias res* ('let him kiss me ...'). These are strategies by which the poet strives to make present, through language, what cannot be captured on the page, the lovers themselves, who stand for all lovers and ultimately for love itself. (2) The poetic genius of the Song of Songs also lies in the way the poet explores the nature of love, looking at what it is like to be in love from both a woman's and a man's point of view. Differences in the ways the lovers talk about love reveal the poet's creative sensitivity to differences between women and men, as well as cultural assumptions about gender differences and roles.

Dr Knut Heim (Birmingham) presented a paper on *Repetition, Variation, Metaphor: Some New Insights into the Nature of Biblical Parallelism*; and **Dr Hugh Pypier (Leeds)** led a session (on behalf of the Learning and Teaching Support Network for Philosophical and Religious Studies) on *Teaching Biblical Hebrew*.

A **reception** was given on the first evening of the Meeting by the Oxford University Unit for Teaching and Research in Hebrew and Jewish Studies. On 21st July there was an **outing** to the Bodleian Library (including a viewing of the recently-acquired 11th-century Arabic *Book of Curiosities*) and to Christ Church, the President's college (including tea in the Hall by invitation of the President).

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Among **honours** received by members of the Society: Professor Sara Japhet was the Israel Prize Laureate in Biblical Scholarship for 2003-2004. Professor Gwilym Jones has been awarded an honorary D.Litt. by the University of Wales, and Dr Rex Mason a D.D. by the University of Oxford. Personal chairs have been awarded to Dr John Day (University of Oxford), Dr Carmel McCarthy (University College, Dublin), and Dr Gordon McConville (University of Gloucestershire).

Mr Edward Ball has been elected to succeed Professor John Rogerson as the Society's Archivist. Dr Paul Joyce has been appointed to the Peer Review College of the Arts and Humanities Research Board, following his nomination by the Society.

The Society has learned with regret of the **deaths** of Revd George Farr, Professor Georg Fohrer (Honorary Member), Revd Professor William McKane (President of the Society in 1978), Revd Dr Terence McKenna, Professor J.B. Segal, and Professor Cyril Williams.

The following have been **elected to membership** of the Society. At the Winter Meeting: Dr Stephan Ahrnke, Mr Mark Brummitt, Ms Mary Fennell, Dr David Firth, Ms Sarah Hall, Revd Timothy Swinglehurst, and Dr Andy Warren. At the Summer Meeting: Dr Elie Assis, Dr Duncan Burns, Professor Victor Hurowitz, Professor Reinhard Gregor Kratz, Revd Peter Loment, Mr Simon Stocks, and Professor Johannes de Moor (Honorary Member).

The **current Honorary Members** are Professors Bertil Albrektson (1983), Athalya Brenner (2002), Walter Brueggemann (1997), Henri Cazelles (1972), Brevard Childs (1979), Frank Moore Cross (1988), Menahem Haran (1981), Sara Japhet (1999), Otto Kaiser (1992), Bernhard Lang (1997), Avraham Malamat (1976), Tryggve Mettinger (2003), Johannes de Moor (2004), Eduard Nielsen (1988), Kirsten Nielsen (2000), Helmer Ringgren (1973), Rudolf Smend (1979), and Jan Alberto Soggin (1992).

MISCELLANEOUS NOTICES

The **Winter Meeting 2005** will be held on 5th–7th January at Manor House, University of Birmingham, and the **Summer Meeting 2005** will be held on 18th–21st July at the Pollock Halls of Residence, University of Edinburgh, both meetings under the Presidency of Professor Graeme Auld.

An **international symposium** to mark the 70th birthday of Professor Antoon Schoors will be held on 21st–22nd October at the Groot Begijnhof in Leuven, under the title 'The Language of Qohelet and its Context'. Members of SOTS are cordially invited to the symposium. Further information is available from Professor Angelika Berlejung (e-mail angelika.berlejung@arts.kuleuven.ac.be) or from Dr Pierre Van Hecke (e-mail p.j.p.vanhecke@uvt.nl).

Members may find of interest the article by B.S. Childs, '**A Tribute to the Book List of SOTS**', in J.C. Exum & H.G.M. Williamson (eds.), *Reading from Right to Left: Essays on the Hebrew Bible in Honour of David J.A. Clines* (JSOTS 373; London: SAP, 2003), pp. 90-94.

ACCOUNTS FOR 2003

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT for the year ended 31st October 2003

	<i>Bursaries</i>	<i>Book</i>	<i>Confer-</i>	<i>General</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>2002</i>
	£	List	ences	Fund	£	£
Income						
Subscriptions and donations	–	–	–	8577	8577	8141
Income tax recovered in respect of deeds of covenant	–	–	–	796	796	737
Conference income	–	–	26178	–	26178	21757
Bursaries	–	–	–	–	–	–
Dividends and interest received and receivable	–	–	–	1101	1101	850
Total income	–	–	26178	10474	36652	31485
Expenditure						
Printing and stationery	–	46	1482	1032	2560	2461
Postage and secretarial expenses	–	2517	149	833	3499	3004
Conference expenses	–	–	25248	–	25248	22085
Accountancy	–	–	–	253	253	263
Bursaries	311	–	–	–	311	490
Bank charges	–	–	–	430	430	390
Total expenditure	311	2563	26879	2548	32301	28693
Net surplus/(deficit)	(311)	(2563)	(701)	7926	4351	2792

BALANCE SHEET at 31st October 2003

	<i>2003</i>	<i>2002</i>
	£	£
Assets		
Fixed assets (note 1)	1	1
Debtors	800	2698
Bank accounts (note 2)	40775	34559
Investments at cost (note 3)	1053	1020
	<u>42629</u>	<u>38278</u>
Liabilities		
Sundry creditors and reserves	250	250
	<u>42379</u>	<u>38028</u>
Represented by		
Accumulated surpluses and reserves (note 4)		
General fund	40979	36617
Bursary fund	1400	1411
	<u>42379</u>	<u>38028</u>

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS for the year ended 31st October 2003

1. Fixed assets	<i>Computer Equipment</i>
Costs at 1st November 2002 and at 31st October 2003	864
Depreciation at 1st November 2002 and at 31st October 2003	863
Net book amount at 1st November 2002 and at 31st October 2003	1

2. Bank accounts	2003	2002
Barclays Bank plc: Current Account	2571	1720
Higher Interest Business Account	7356	15027
National Savings Bank Investment Account	30848	17812
	40775	34559

3. Investment at cost		
549,6863 units, Friends Provident Stewardship Growth Fund retail shares (market value £2621.47 at 31st October 2003)	1053	1020

4. Accumulated surpluses and reserves	<i>General Fund</i>	<i>Bursary Fund</i>	<i>Total</i>
At 1st November 2002	36617	1411	38028
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	4662	(311)	4351
Transfers	(300)	300	–
At 31st October 2003	40979	1400	42379

PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

The principal accounting policies of the Society are substantially unchanged from the previous year and are set out below.

Subscriptions and donations received: these represent amounts received during the year and no account is taken of any subscriptions due but unpaid at the date of the balance sheet.

Income tax recoverable: no account is taken of any income tax recoverable but not yet received in respect of subscriptions under Gift Aid or investment income received during the year.

Stocks: no account is taken of unused stocks of book lists or general stationery.

Depreciation: depreciation is calculated on a straight line basis and aims to write down the cost of fixed assets over their expected normal lives; the rate applicable is 20% per annum.

Investments: investments are included in the accounts at historic cost and no account is taken of unrealised investment gains and losses; the Society's investments are held in the Friends Provident Stewardship Growth Fund Retail Shares and any distributions due are now being reinvested in the fund.

Accumulated surpluses and reserves: the recognition of separately designated funds is primarily for the purpose of administration and control, and any accumulated surpluses shown are part of the general reserves of the Society and, as such, are unrestricted in application.

ACCOUNTANTS' REPORT

We have prepared the accounts and notes for the year ended 31st October 2003 without audit. We confirm that the accounts are in agreement with the books and information supplied to us.

O'Reilly Chartered Accountants, Kiln Hill, Market Place, Hawes, North Yorkshire

OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES FOR 2005

President: Professor Graeme Auld, Nether Swanshiel, Hobkirk, Bonchester Bridge, by Hawick TD9 8JW (tel. 01450 860 636, e-mail a.g.auld@ed.ac.uk).

Retiring President: Professor Hugh Williamson, Oriental Institute, Pusey Lane, Oxford OX1 2LE (tel. 01865 278218, e-mail hugh.williamson@orinst.ox.ac.uk).

President-elect: Professor Robert Hayward, Department of Theology, Abbey House, Palace Green, Durham DH1 3RS (tel. 0191 334 3950, e-mail c.t.r.hayward@durham.ac.uk).

Treasurer: Dr Janet Tollington, Westminster College, Cambridge CB3 OAA (tel. 01223 741 091, e-mail jet40@cam.ac.uk).

Home Secretary: Dr John Jarick, St Stephen's House, 16 Marston Street, Oxford OX4 1JX (tel. 01865 432298, e-mail john.jarick@theology.ox.ac.uk).

Foreign Secretary: Professor David Clines, Department of Biblical Studies, University of Sheffield, Sheffield S10 2TN (tel. 0114 222 0505, e-mail d.clines@sheffield.ac.uk).

Membership Secretary: Professor Heather McKay, Edge Hill College of Higher Education, St Helens Road, Ormskirk L39 4QP (tel. 01695 584293, e-mail mckayh@edgehill.ac.uk).

Hospitality Secretary: Ms Elizabeth Harper, 85 Brentry Lane, Brentry, Bristol BS10 6RH (tel. 0117 959 1743, e-mail elizabeth@wemtc.freeserve.co.uk).

Book List Editor: Professor George Brooke, Department of Religions & Theology, University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester M13 9PL (tel. 0161 275 3609, e-mail g.brooke@man.ac.uk).

Information Officer: Dr Philip Jenson, 15 Henleaze Road, Henleaze, Bristol BS9 4EX (tel. 0117 968 2803, e-mail philip.jenson@trinity-bris.ac.uk).

Committee: The above Officers of the Society plus Dr Adrian Curtis, Dr Kieran Heskin, Dr Walter Houston, Dr Nathan MacDonald, Dr Mary Mills, Dr Deborah Rooke, Ms Judith Shiel, and Professor Gordon Wenham.

Programme Sub-Committee: The President, President-elect, Home Secretary, and Foreign Secretary; plus Dr James Aitken, Dr Jennifer Dines, and Dr Hugh Pyper.

Publications Sub-Committee: The *Book List* Editor (Convener) and the Editor of the monograph series; plus Professor David Clines, Professor Graham Davies, Dr David Reimer, and Professor Hugh Williamson.

Editorial Board of the SOTS monograph series: Mrs Margaret Barker (Editor), Mr Edward Ball, Dr Eryl Davies, Dr Katharine Dell, and Dr Paul Joyce. (Proposed manuscripts for the series should be sent to Mrs Barker at The White House, 24 Gordon Road, Borrowash DE72 3JX.)

PAST PRESIDENTS OF THE SOCIETY

1917-19 William Bennett	1965 Frederick Bruce
1920 Archibald Kennedy	1966 Gwynne Henton Davies
1921 Robert Kennett	1967 Donald Coggan
1922 George Gray	1968 Matthew Black
1923 George Box	1969 John Schofield
1924 Arthur Peake	1970 Arthur Herbert
1925 Stanley Cook	1971 Edward Ullendorff
1926 William Stevenson	1972 Peter Ackroyd
1927 David Simpson	1973 James Barr
1928 Theodore Robinson	1974 Dafydd Ap-Thomas
1929 Henry Wheeler Robinson	1975 Eileen de Ward
1930 Claude Montefiore	1976 Douglas Jones
1931 William Oesterley	1977 Ronald Williams
1932 William Lofthouse	1978 William McKane
1933 William Wardle	1979 John Emerton
1934 Adam Welch	1980 Donald Wiseman
1935 William Emery Barnes	1981 Raphael Loewe
1936 John Battersby Harford	1982 Norman Whybray
1937-38 Godfrey Driver	1983 Roy Porter
1939-40 Herbert Loewe	1984 Wilfred Lambert
1941-45 Henry Wheeler Robinson	1985 Ronald Clements
1946 Theodore Robinson	1986 Barnabas Lindars
1947 Cuthbert Lattey	1987 Robert Murray
1948 Edward Robertson	1988 Ernest Nicholson
1949 Christopher North	1989 John Rogerson
1950 Harold Rowley	1990 William Johnstone
1951 Samuel Hooke	1991 Anthony Gelston
1952 John Barton	1992 Andrew Mayes
1953 David Winton Thomas	1993 Richard Coggins
1954 Norman Porteous	1994 John Gibson
1955 Alfred Guillaume	1995 Gwilym Jones
1956 Aubrey Johnson	1996 David Clines
1957 Norman Snaith	1997 Rex Mason
1958 Leonard Elliott-Binns	1998 Margaret Barker
1959 John Mauchline	1999 Robert Carroll
1960 Cuthbert Simpson	2000 Joseph Blenkinsopp
1961 Jacob Weingreen	2001 Michael Goulder
1962 Hedley Sparks	2002 John Bartlett
1963 George Anderson	2003 Robert Gordon
1964 Bleddyn Roberts	2004 Hugh Williamson