
THE SOCIETY FOR OLD TESTAMENT STUDY

BULLETIN

2017

92nd WINTER MEETING
3rd - 5th January 2017
Cripps Hall, Nottingham
Prof Paul Joyce presiding

Paul Joyce (London)

Presidential Address: The Way of the Future? Into Our Second Century

The address began by reflecting on some features of the Society's past and present, focusing on the challenges posed by issues of gender and sexuality; Judaism and the Society; religion and the secular; and Ireland, the rest of Europe, and the wider world. It then attempted to look ahead and consider the direction in which the Society and the study of the Old Testament might be moving. On the assumption that the plurality that has come to mark the field over the past generation, both in method as well as content, will continue to be a feature, the address explored one possible trajectory, making a conscious connection with the foregoing discussion of diversity and inclusion. It was argued that the healthy future of the Society depends on its increasingly global perspective and on its growing awareness of our shared humanity as scholars and as readers. This would involve a range of ways of taking the humanity of the reader more seriously, in his or her cultural context, individually and socially, and also learning from what the human sciences, critically received, might teach us

about the nature of the human person, as well as highlighting those aspects of the biblical tradition that focus on related questions. It was argued that such a development might help heal the impoverishment of some of our work and also complement the important and ongoing historical-critical dimension of our shared task. This trajectory was illustrated with some examples, each of them rather different, relating to language about divine anger and judgment in history, biblical metaphors of remembering and forgetting, and the solidarity of human beings *in extremis* as exposed through reception studies. The full text is available in the centennial volume *SOTS at 100* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017).

Andrew Mayes (Dublin)

Interpretations of the Joseph Story

This paper began by showing that in its canonical context the Joseph story makes a negative judgment on Joseph, based on his assimilation to Egyptian ways, where monarchic rule leads to slavery, and on his replacement as leader of the sons of Jacob by Judah. Positive understandings of Joseph assume an older independent Joseph story that has been secondarily adapted to its present context. There was such an older independent Joseph story; its prototype, however, is to be found in the Egyptian ‘Tale of Sinuhe’, with which there are many parallels in structure, theme and content. This tale is concerned to identify Egypt as the homeland for all Egyptians, which indicates that the purpose of the older Joseph story was similarly to establish Judah as the home for all Israelites. This suggests that the context of origin of the Joseph story was Judah in the late pre-exilic period when questions of the nature and identity of the Judean state were significant issues.

Elizabeth Robar (Cambridge)

Unmarked Questions & Theological Presuppositions

This paper began by observing that, like any language, Biblical Hebrew expresses modality. Contrary to the dictates of grammarians, however, it does not express modality primarily within the verbal system. A function-to-form inventory of modality provides many

other categories, including, most notably, the use of particles and word order. Modality indicated by word order correlates somewhat with the phenomenon of unmarked questions. The very reality of unmarked questions indicates that interrogative modality is not a discretely marked category in Biblical Hebrew. When it overlaps with other kinds of modality, such as deontic or deductive, there is an ambiguity in markedness that parallels the ambiguity in English punctuation: *Have we not had enough of the sin at Peor, that you too must turn away?* Alternatively: *Must you too turn away!* In such cases, English question marks and exclamation points are interchangeable, or even used together in colloquial writing: *Must you too turn away?!* The function of the overlapping interrogative modality is often to challenge: *Do you dare now turn away? Are you to take possession of the land?* Possibly the challenge, which inherently contrasts with the assumptions it is challenging, naturally attracts the syntactic signals for contrastive focus, namely, fronted constituents (i.e. verb-medial word order). This may indicate a semantic restriction (along the lines of Mitchell's incredulity, sarcasm and irony) of what kind of modality may be marked by word order. A brief analysis of the particles *אִם* *וְ* clarifies some functions of deductive modality and rhetorical questions. Cases with the particle *אִם* showcase an overlap between weak deontic modality and interrogative modality in polite interrogatives. In the analysis of unmarked and rhetorical questions, theological presuppositions are unavoidable and, indeed, an essential part of the scholarly arsenal. Scholarly integrity with humility is the only suggestion for moving forward.

David Janzen (Durham)

What historians do, and what the Chronicler (an historian) did

The first part of the presentation argued that the facts historians work with as they write historiographies are creations of narratives that bestow the status of fact onto things and events in the past. Historians create facts through narrative and then create further narratives to explain the significance of the facts, and this means that the past, insofar as it exists and is meaningful for us, is something that we create through our narratives. This means that there is not much difference between historians and fiction writers, since both write narratives and recent discussions among historians of the Hebrew

Bible manifest disagreement as to whether particular histories of ancient Israel produced by modern scholars should be seen as histories or as fictions. Different cultures have developed different understandings of objectivity, or standards to follow so that writers produce historiography rather than fiction, but these understandings of objectivity are culturally determined. The second part of the presentation noted that the Chronicler did not follow the kinds of objective rules modern historians do, since he or she plagiarizes, assigns causation to divine action, and seems to alter source material for theological reasons, and so on. But it would have been possible for Judeans of the fourth century BCE to have seen Chronicles as history rather than as fiction. When we examine examples of the ways in which the Chronicler alters source material, we can see how at least some readers of his or her day would not have seen this as simply fictional invention but as alterations that would agree with their worldview. Chronicles is a history—a fourth-century BCE Judean history, at any rate, that follows the objective standards of that culture—that likely would have been accepted as history rather than fiction by at least some readers.

David Mitchell (Brussels)

The Origins of Masoretic Cantillation

The cantillational marks or *te'amim* of the Masoretic text are widely thought to be of medieval origin. This paper proposed instead that they were a written tradition inherited by the Masoretes from the Sanhedrin of temple times. Reference is made, first, to the testimony of the Masoretes, Moshe ben Asher, his son Aharon, and Aharon of Jerusalem, and then to rabbinic testimony. It was then noted that if the Masoretes invented the accents, they would have done so in defiance of their own credo. Further, they seem to have been at a loss to explain them. Indeed, the sudden appearance of the highly-evolved Tiberian system is inexplicable if it is a medieval invention. Equally inexplicable is its widespread acceptance within Judaism if it was of medieval origin. There is also evidence within the system itself. Its two systems—poetic and prosodic—could not have developed at once; they must have developed sequentially and been received together by the Masoretes. In fact, there is evidence of a history of development within the two systems of *te'amim*, and even evidence of

a history of musical development within the poetic *te'amim* alone. The whole system shows a degree of musical expertise which the Masoretes lacked. Evidence is also adduced from the history of music notation. It is unthinkable that a sophisticated civilization like temple-period Israel did not have a system of musical notation when all their neighbours had. Further, the *te'amim* look like the musical notation of these neighbouring cultures. There is also evidence that the vocalic signs, the *nekudot*, date from the same period. The paper concluded that (1) The authority of the Masoretic text ultimately derives from the Jerusalem Sanhedrin, not from Tiberias, in fulfilment of the prophets (Isa. 2.3); (2) the *nekudot* and *te'amim* have the interpretational authority of the Sanhedrin; (3) the *nekudot* record the pronunciation of biblical times; and (4) the *te'amim* record the chant of the temple Levites.

Anselm Hagedorn (Berlin), Nathan MacDonald (Cambridge), Janet Tollington (Cambridge) and Katherine Southwood (Oxford)

Panel review of Katherine Southwood's *Marriage by Capture in the Book of Judges* (Cambridge: CUP, 2016)

This first volume in SOTS monograph series was reviewed briefly by the abovementioned panellists before the author offered a short response.

Johanna Stiebert (Leeds)

Is Biblical Studies in Crisis? Queering the Question

The paper began with an examination of Esther Fuchs's statement, 'The field of biblical studies is in crisis' (*Feminist Theory and the Bible: Interrogating the Sources*, Lexington Books, 2016, p.6) and probed the distinctions and dissent between what Fuchs characterises as traditional biblical scholarship on the one hand and 'nomadic' biblical scholarship on the other. Next, the paper explores queer biblical criticism and the possibilities of interpretive fluidities it opens up. To illustrate this situation, the paper drew on biblical examples of first degree incest (i.e. prohibited sexual contact between parent and offspring, or between siblings), demonstrating that the designation of 'incest laws' for Leviticus 18 and 20 can be

challenged. Moreover, as the paper went on to develop, even sexual contact between first degree relatives is not consistently or predominantly depicted in terms of illegality in Hebrew Bible narrative.

Bradford Anderson (Dublin)

Ireland and the Old Testament: Some Reflections on Transmission, Translation, and Significance

This paper explored the story of Ireland and the Old Testament, pointing to the complex yet significant place of this collection in the history of Ireland. Beginning with early Christian Ireland, the role of the Old Testament in the transmission of the Bible was investigated, including the use of the Psalms in education and piety, depictions of Old Testament scenes on high crosses, and the way in which Old Testament narrative is woven into accounts of early Irish myth and history, as seen in works such as the medieval *Book of Invasions*. Moving to the early modern period, the paper explored the story of the translation of the Old Testament into Irish under the guidance of William Bedell. Here we see how the translation of the Old Testament into Irish reflects many of the social and cultural issues of the day on the island, including colonialism, mission, and religious difference. Finally, the paper explored the emergence of several ideas from Ireland relating to the Old Testament that would have enduring and unexpected influence. Particular attention was afforded to James Ussher's famous dating of creation and the historical context out of which his research emerged, as well as the personal and social factors that gave rise to John Nelson Darby's dispensationalism and the use of the Old Testament within the development of his thought. Taken together, these snapshots present a picture of Ireland's rich and varied history of engagement with the Old Testament.

Dr Caroline Blyth (Auckland)

'And you see among the captives a beautiful woman, and you desire her': Plundering the woman's body in the Bible and Louis John Steele's *Spoils to the Victor*

This paper offered an analysis of Louis John Steele's painting, *The*

Spoils of the Victor (1908) which hangs in Auckland City Art Gallery; viewers of this painting can stand and gaze upon a Māori woman, naked from the waist up, who is positioned in the picture's foreground, tied to a wooden post among other items of "war spoil" collected by conquering warriors. The image may both shock us with its inherent violence but also invite us to look at – even admire – the sexualized image of this Māori captive. Arms tied above her head, she has been forced into a position that compels her to reveal her body to us and we are left with the option to either look (with interest, horror, or desire) or turn away, leaving her unassailed by our voyeuristic gaze but, at the same time, abandoning her to her fate. The presenter noted that whenever she looks at this painting, it conjures up for her the tradition of the "captive wife" in Deuteronomy 21.10-14, a legal code that essentially sanctions the treatment of captive women in war as "spoils of the victors." Regarded by some scholars as a "humanitarian" law for the beneficent treatment of war captives, this code nevertheless invites us likewise to gaze upon women's bodies as sexualized spoils of war. Its stipulations, which call for various rituals of "undress" and "removal" before the woman is "married" to her captor, serve to confine these unnamed female prisoners of war within a sacred narrative that weaves together sexual violence and sexual desire. This paper suggested how Steele's *The Spoils of the Victor* might offer new reflections on this biblical tradition, looking in particular at the way both texts locate the captive woman's body as an object of sexual plunder and eroticism.

Ronald Clements (Cambridge)

A Prophet in Wartime. Reading Jeremiah in 1917

This paper began with the suggestion that the study of the prophet Jeremiah, and of the pre-exilic prophets generally was fundamentally challenged by the commentary of Bernhard Duhm of 1899 which sharply distinguished between the prose and poetic strata of material preserved in the book. For a British audience, interpretation was profoundly affected by the exposition by John Skinner, Principal of Westminster College, Cambridge, published in 1922 with the title *Prophecy and Religion*. Based on lectures given in Edinburgh in 1920 in the aftermath of war and the heavy losses of student life, Skinner sought to address a situation in which national opinion was sorely

divided. He was strongly opposed to the war, critical of the eulogizing of military heroism and particularly of the introduction of compulsory conscription. He was supported in this by his colleague John Oman whose book *Grace and Personality* (published 1915) emphasised the divine gift of individual choice and insight. Skinner interpreted Jeremiah's remarkable appeal to surrender unconditionally to the besieging armies of Babylon in 587-6 BCE as a mark of divine inspiration. He developed this further to discern in Jeremiah, the breakthrough to a deep sense of individual choice and responsibility. This responsibility he saw echoed in the choices made by contemporary conscientious objectors to military service many of whom had been severely punished in consequence. Another commentator of the period, Arthur S. Peake took a similar position and published short lectures also citing the biblical example of Jeremiah in support and carried the title *Prisoners of Hope*.

In sharp contrast to this view and the appeal to the biblical Jeremiah another scholar Sir George Adam Smith, used his inaugural address in 1916 as incoming Moderator of the Free Church of Scotland to oppose individual choice on conscientious grounds as a reason for evading essential public moral duty. He was rewarded by being appointed as extraordinary ambassador to the USA to elicit American support for the war. It is also relevant that Henry Wheeler Robinson drew upon his wartime experience addressing ministers and clergy in a time of severe national suffering to give lectures on the Old Testament understanding of the subject, published as *The Cross of Job* (1917) and later supplemented with a treatment of the prophet Jeremiah (*The Cross of Jeremiah*, 1925). Other scholars and historians later elaborated on Skinner's interpretation which was strongly affected by the wartime background.

* * * * *

Carly Crouch (Nottingham) and Jonathan Stökl (London)

Exhibiting Jerusalem: A SOTS Centennial Project

On the afternoon of Wednesday 4th January, the above introduced attendees to the virtual exhibition 'Jerusalem: Fall of a City—Rise of a Vision' (<http://jerusalem.nottingham.ac.uk/>) created by a team under their supervision as part of the Society's centenary celebrations in 2017.

93rd SUMMER MEETING
17th – 20th July 2017
King's College, London
Prof Paul Joyce presiding

Benjamin D. Sommer (New York)

Proto-Kabbalistic Elements in the Pentateuch's Priestly Source:
Or, How Distinct Should Biblical Studies be within Religious Studies?

Noting that Moshe Idel has proposed that kabbalah is best defined as consisting of a set of ritual behaviors, especially theurgical ritual behavior and observing that kabbalah entails the ideas that explain and justify those rituals, this paper reviewed scholarship from the past several decades concerning the systems of ritual purity and sacrifice in the Pentateuch's Priestly Document, as well as that document's narrative of cosmogony and its relationship to the Tabernacle. In light of this scholarship (by scholars such as Jacob Milgrom, Baruch Schwartz, and Jonathan Klawans), it was suggested that the core of P's ritual system is what Idel would call 'drawing-down theurgy,' while P's narrative of a deliberately incomplete divine cosmogony (Genesis 1) and its long-delayed climax in human temple-building (Exodus 25-40) serve as the ideology justifying and explaining the ritual system. While the actual rituals prescribed by P and by medieval kabbalists are entirely different and without historical or genetic connection, their purposes are strikingly similar. From the point of view of the phenomenology of religion, P and classical kabbalah can be regarded as two manifestation of a single religious impulse. The difference between the legalism of E and D (which may be seen as proto-Maimonidean) and the entirely different conception of the law as a means to a theurgical end in P shows that core debates of Jewish thought are embedded in the earliest strata of Jewish literatures. Thus this paper encouraged greater dialogue among biblical critics, scholars of Jewish thought, and phenomenologists of religion. Further, it sought to identify essential themes of the P literature that have been overlooked, in particular its focus on God's desire to dwell on earth

among humanity. In light of this analysis, it becomes clear that the P document is at once proto-kabbalistic and the most Christian corpus within the Old Testament.

Casey Strine (Sheffield)

Sister Save Us: The Matriarchs as Breadwinners and Their Threat to Patriarchy in the Ancestral Narrative

In this paper it was observed that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob all experience forced displacement in one fashion or another, though at each stage they exercise some agency over where they migrate. Yet, Genesis does not offer merely a patriarchal narrative; rather, women play crucial roles and transform the story into an ancestral narrative that depicts the experiences of a whole family, not only three or four male figures. Sarah is displaced externally the first time (Gen 12), internally the second (Gen 20). Rebekah experiences environmentally induced internal displacement (Gen 26). In all three cases, circumstances compel the women to enter into a form of sex work in order to provide for their families. When the interpreter treats all the protagonists in the ancestral narrative—female *and* male—from the perspective of involuntary migration, the stories come to life in a way that they might have for an ancient community with the lived experience of involuntary migration. To reap the benefit of this basic insight, this paper proceeded in two steps. First, it investigated Gen 12:10-20 and 26:1-33 (leaving out Gen 20:1-18 because of time) by employing relevant cross-cultural insights from involuntary migration and combining them with previous feminist interpretations. Second, it reflected on how the gendered, male voice of the authors constrains and manipulates the stories. In doing so, the paper argued that the masculine authors of these stories have problems of consistently advocating patriarchy even though they attempt to occlude the danger to their own authority that follows from the lesson the texts substantiate: female sexual availability provides a real, immediate, powerful means for financially supporting the involuntary migrant community.

David Clines (Sheffield)**Alleged Female Language about the Deity in the Hebrew Bible**

This paper began by suggesting that when the topic of divine masculinity in the Hebrew Bible is broached, attention is often drawn to alleged examples of female language about the deity in our texts as countervailing evidence. It was observed that there had not been, to the author's knowledge, a systematic critique of such instances, including passages where God is said to be described as a human or animal mother, and a range of passages where language that seems appropriate only to women (e.g. of birthing and of female bodily organs) is used in reference to the deity. This paper assessed 23 such passages and concluded that there is not a single instance of female language about the deity in the Hebrew Bible, that is, of language suggesting that the deity is viewed as a female. There are indeed two cases where the deity is compared to a woman, but they do not mean that the deity is in any sense female.

Jan Joosten (Oxford)**Etiologies of Monotheism and their Significance in the Hebrew Bible**

This paper noted that in various parts of the Hebrew Bible, one finds attempts to explain why the God of Israel is different from other gods, and how he came to be so. Representing different literary genres, these 'etiologies of monotheism' tend to follow a similar scheme: Gods pretended to govern the world, but they proved to be unworthy of this, thus losing the right even to be called Gods, which led eventually to their demotion or complete disappearance; they were supplanted by one God who had a different approach to the universe. The clearest articulation of the scheme is found in Psalm 82, but Gen 6:1-4, the frame of Deut 32 and Psalm 8 also represent this motif. These texts show that the authors of the biblical texts were conscious that their religious views diverged from what was usual in their time and world.

Francesca Stavrakopoulou (Exeter)**The Troublesome Corpse**

This paper began with the suggestion that the Bible is cluttered with

dead bodies, but our preoccupation with the minutiae of texts all too often obscures the corpse in the corpus. With the primary exception of the dead body of Jesus, most of the Bible's corpses have been pushed to the margins in favour of debates about the philological, textual, and historical-critical particulars of biblical deathways. Even when attempts are made to theorize the corpse in its biblical and cultural contexts, the diverse portrayals of the corpse within and across biblical texts often go unseen, and the *significance* of their diversity remains unrecognised. But not all corpses are the same. This paper dealt with the 'troublesome' corpse: a corpse that poses an unusual or particular problem to the living community; a corpse that unsettles or challenges social preferences concerning local deathways; a corpse that manifests dangerous disorder. Focusing on the 'curation' of Saul's corpse in 1 Samuel 31, it argued that the troublesome corpse manifests and communicates an inherent and particularly powerful sociality, enchainning different social groups, places, and materialities in productive and enduring ways.

Frances Reynolds (Oxford)

Scholarship and Politics in Hellenistic Babylon: Aspects of the Transmission History of Marduk and Ti'amat's Battle

This paper began by suggesting that Marduk's defeat of Ti'amat and her army was interpreted and reinterpreted in Mesopotamian cuneiform scholarship and cult. This battle was highly charged with political meaning and inextricably linked with ritual. The classic account in *Enūma eliš* validates and celebrates the rise of Marduk, Babylon's city god, to headship of the Babylonian pantheon. *Enūma eliš* was probably composed under Nebuchadnezzar I after his retrieval of Marduk's statue, taken to Elam as booty by Kutir-Nahhunte. *Enūma Eliš* includes a mythological prototype of the New Year festival and the epic was recited before Marduk's statue. Marduk killing Ti'amat to secure kingship is pivotal to both epic and festival. *Enūma eliš* implicitly and the festival explicitly reaffirm the authority of Babylonia's human king as a parallel to Marduk, its divine king. A calendar treatise, probably from Marduk's temple Esagil in Hellenistic Babylon, aimed to validate Esagil rituals as essential apotropaia against Babylonia's portended invasion. Past warfare involving Kutir-Nahhunte, Nebuchadnezzar I, and less importantly Tukultī-Ninurta I,

provided archetypal precedents. An *ex eventu* prophecy portends a Babylonian golden age for a king identifiable as Nebuchadnezzar I mirroring the Late Babylonian king. This warfare was innovatively mythologized: Marduk and his two enemies Ti'amat and Qingu represent Babylonia/Babylon and its two enemies Elam and Subartu. The treatise aimed to demonstrate Esagil's continued centrality for the security of Babylonia and its imperial ruler. Hellenistic Elam, Greek Elymais, was probably a perceived threat. The treatise occupies the so-called middle ground or contact zone between Esagil's scholars and their imperial rulers. Marduk's combat myth was redeployed to help boost the diminished prestige of a local temple elite under externally imposed political change. My book on this treatise will soon be published by OUP.

Jennifer Dines (Cambridge)

Flight and Pursuit in Septuagint Amos and in the Twelve

This paper noted that various key moments in the Book of Amos (especially 2:14-16; 5:19 and 9:1) involve menacing images of flight and pursuit adding to the central theme of the inescapability of divine judgement. The Greek verbs used are φεύγειν and διώξειν with their cognates and associated words. These reproduce a range of Hebrew terms. For the most part, Greek and Hebrew correspond more or less appropriately. In Amos 6:5, however, LXX diverges spectacularly from MT. The Greek contains an ambiguous φεύγοντα (is it neuter plural or masculine singular?) which is difficult to correlate with the other 'flight' passages. Various possibilities were discussed and some suggestions and interpretations offered. Then, in the light of the findings in LXX Amos, the other books of the Twelve were briefly examined with five questions in mind: 1. Do they contain a similar range of translation equivalents? 2. Is there special material in the LXX not found in the MT? 3. Are there places where the LXX gives a different slant to the Hebrew? 4. Do both literal and figurative examples occur? 5. Are any shifts of perspective towards the meaning of flight discernible? Some final comments suggested that the occurrence of the φεύγειν / διώκειν range across the Twelve is yet one more of the linguistic and conceptual threads which bind these books together.

Martin Goodman (Oxford)

Bible Interpretation in the first century CE: the significance of Philo,
De Migratione Abrahami 89-93

This lecture discussed the significance of this passage, in which Philo referred to extreme allegorists who ignored the literal interpretation of the laws in the Torah, as evidence for the extent of variety in modes of bible interpretation in Philo's time. In view of the widespread claims by Jews in antiquity that Moses was unique in being divinely inspired as a lawgiver, the choice of these extreme allegorists to treat the laws as only symbolic is far more shocking than has generally been acknowledged by scholars. If Philo had simply wished to demonstrate the importance of accepting the literal meaning of the Bible, he could have done so by discussing the relationship between myth and history in the text of Genesis which was his subject in this treatise. His choice to attack instead those who deliberately ignored the literal meaning of the laws was caused in part by his desire to present an argument at this point in the treatise for the importance of a good reputation, which involves being seen to be good as well as actually being good, but his choice seems also to have been motivated by the existence of at least some extreme allegorists in his own society. Philo himself was aghast at the interpretation of the biblical text by these extreme allegorists. Modern scholars have been less horrified only because of the impact of nearly two millennia of bible interpretation by Christians who have understood the laws in just the same way as those attacked by Philo. It is indeed a puzzle how this passage in Philo's writings came to be preserved by Christian copyists; it seems probable that the scribes did not understand the text they copied.

Joan Taylor (London), Dennis Mizzi (Malta) and Marcello Fidanio (Lugano)

Qumran Caves Dispersed Artefacts and Archives Project

This presentation reviewed the aims and achievements of the Leverhulme-funded International Network for the Study of Dispersed Qumran Cave Artefacts and Archival Sources (King's college London, University of Malta, Faculty of Theology, Lugano). The project will make available new findings via a website (www.dqcaas.com) and publications, and also feed data into a new book series on the

archaeology of the Qumran caves edited by J. B. Humbert and M. Fidanzio, with the first volume of this series (on Cave 11Q) appearing next year. The work thus far has concentrated on materials connected with Qumran Cave 1Q and 11Q. In regard to Cave 1Q, there has been a particular focus on the jars dispersed around the globe in various museums and collections. Cave 11Q linen has been radiocarbon dated with interesting results. The photographic collection of the Allegro archive in Manchester Museum is currently being digitised, and other archival materials elsewhere continue to be identified. The network investigators are keen to hear from anyone with photographs and materials of the Qumran caves from the 1950s and 1960s.

Jessica Keady (Helsinki)

Masculinities and the Men of the Qumran Communities: Re-Evaluating the Ideals of Purification, Power and Performance in the Dead Sea Scrolls

This lecture suggested that there is an emerging wave of scholarship which is moving away from rigid, systemic and monolithic approaches to purity literature, in favour of a more dynamic and performative understanding of the purification laws. This paper used Gender Studies, especially Masculinity Studies, to reassess the ways in which the male is constructed in the Dead Sea Scrolls and how this construction is affected by impurity. The male body has a significant connection to culture and to discourse and is one of the main avenues through which culture attempts to construct masculinities. This paper argued that the fluidity and dynamic nature of masculinities, also reflects the fluidity and dynamic nature of purity and impurity.

Andrew Mein (Cambridge)

The Imprecatory Psalms at War

Should Christians ever use the imprecatory psalms in prayer? This lecture noted that the curses of Psalm 58 stood at the heart of a controversy that flared up in Britain during July 1917. This brought together two apparently unrelated issues: Church of England liturgical revision and the morality of reprisals for German air raids. In the first week of July 1917 the Convocation of Canterbury (predecessor of

today's General Synod) received a report on revision of the Psalter. Among other recommendations, it proposed that the whole of Psalm 58, together with the imprecatory verses from nine other Psalms, should be removed from liturgical use. Convocation's decision quickly provoked a stir in the Press. On July 6th the Daily Express ran a front page banner headline: 'BISHOPS BOYCOTT DAVID'S REPRISAL PSALMS' while headlines below ran 'BAN ON REPRISAL PSALMS' and 'DAVID'S WICKED IDEAS OF VENGEANCE!'. Similar headlines appeared in other newspapers, and from the outset the connection between the imprecatory Psalms and the question of reprisals was clearly at the front of people's minds. At the same time Convocation was not without its defenders, who saw the move as a step forward for civilization and a courageous attempt to stem the public's thirst for vengeance against Germany. This paper explored the controversy as it developed over the ensuing weeks, and argued that it is strong evidence for the vitality of British biblical culture during the war years.

James Aitken (Cambridge), Margaret Barker (Borrowash), Bernhard Lang (Paderborn) and Alan Millard (Liverpool)

The Jordanian Lead Books – Panel discussion

The above panellists presented on and discussed issues and questions relating to the character, provenance and authenticity of the 'Jordanian Lead Books'.

John Barton

Some Thoughts on Biblical Translation

Despite the huge number of English translations of the Hebrew Bible, there are still unexplored possibilities for further reflection. This paper considered four aspects: (1) the formal/functional equivalence issue, on which the author argued both for a bolder approach to functional equivalence and for attention to the Buber-Rosenzweig method of close formal equivalence, now being continued by Everett Fox; (2) the need for more attention to style and register; (3) the possibility of translating so as to signal the development of the Hebrew language over time; and (4) the question how far critical questions should be reflected in the translation.

* * * * *

In the evening of 18th July, members attended a performance of *The David Fragments – After Bertolt Brecht*, staged at the Greenwood Theatre following its premiere at the Beckett Theatre in Dublin earlier that same month. A creative output of a larger collaborative project between Nicholas Johnson (Dublin) and a member of the Society, David Shepherd (Dublin), the performance was funded in part by the Society as part of its centennial celebrations. In addition to receptions sponsored by the Department of Theology & Religious Studies, King's College London and Bloomsbury Press, members enjoyed an outing to the National Gallery where they were introduced by Ben Quash (KCL) and his team to selected biblical paintings and the Visual Bible Commentary project, before enjoying the President's Tea at the Gallery.

SOTS Website

Don't forget to look at the SOTS website (<http://sots1917.org/>) for news updates and details of forthcoming meetings. Copies of Previous Bulletins as well as the members' address list and minutes of past business meetings can be found on the secure members' area. If you have forgotten it, the password is obtainable from the Information Officer, Dr Jonathan Stökl (jonathan.stokl@kcl.ac.uk).

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Among **appointments, promotions and honours** received by members of the Society were the following: Laura Quick, appointed as Assistant Professor of Religion and Judaic Studies at Princeton University; Madhavi Nevader, appointed as Lecturer in Hebrew Bible/Old Testament at St. Andrews University; Zoltan Schwab, appointed as tutor in Old Testament at Spurgeon's College; Penny Barter, appointed as assistant professor at Tilburg University; Andrew Mein, appointed at Durham University; Anja Klein, promoted to

Senior Lecturer in Hebrew Bible/Old Testament at the University of Edinburgh; Carly Crouch, recipient of SBL's David Noel Freedman Award for Excellence and Creativity in Hebrew Bible Scholarship for 2017; Charlotte Hempel, on the successful completion of her presidency of the British Association of Jewish Studies and Professor Joachim Schaper, elected as President of the International Organization for the Study of the Old Testament.

The Society learned with regret of the **deaths** of Moyra McCallum, Grace Emmerson, Gwynn ap Gwilym, Helen Kraus, Ed Conrad and David Wulstan.

The following have been **elected to membership** of the Society. At the Winter Meeting: Rev Dr Matthew Ayars, Dr Teófilo Correa, Rev Nathan Eddy, Ms Olga Fabrikantova, Rev Isabelle Hamley, Ms Allison Harmon, Mr Peter Ho, Dr Paul Jones, Mr Neill Morrison, Rev Aboseh Ngwana, Ms Kate Oxsen, Mr Néstor Petruk and Ms Lucy Skerratt. At the Summer Meeting: Dr Rachelle Gilmour, Mrs Sarah Holt, Prof Brian Irwin, Ms Marian Kelsey, Dr Ekaterina Kozlova, Dr Ivan Milanov and Mr Ka Yu Wong.

The **current Honorary Members** are Professors Bertil Albrektson (1983), Athalya Brenner (2002), Walter Brueggemann (1997), Tamara Eskenazi (2010), Michael Fox (2011), Norman Gottwald (2009), Norman Habel (2011), Sara Japhet (1999), Otto Kaiser (1992), Reinhard Kratz (2015), Bernhard Lang (1997), Tryggve Mettinger (2003), Johannes de Moor (2004), Carol Newsom (2013), Martti Nissinen (2013), Eduard Nielsen (1988), Kirsten Nielsen (2000), Rudolf Smend (1979).

Members are reminded that they may submit to the Committee (via the Secretary or President) the name of any person thought appropriate to be considered for office in the Society or for Honorary Membership of the Society. Each year sees the election of a new President-elect, as well as two new Committee members, and in most years there is also need for a new Programme Sub-Committee member and/or a new Publications Sub-Committee member.

MISCELLANEOUS NOTICES

Centenary Volume

The volume of essays which was published to mark the centenary of the Society in 2017 is available to purchase.

Essay Prize

The Society awards an Essay Prize with a value of £500. Members of the Society who are doctoral students and early-career members (normally within five years of completion of PhD), and who are members at the time of submission are eligible to apply. The call for essays, to be of a publishable standard, and not more than 15,000 words in length, will be made in the autumn mailing each year; essays should be submitted to the President by 31st December of the following year. It is expected that essays will be concerned with topics related to Old Testament/Tanakh/Hebrew Bible. Co-authored essays may be submitted. If the winning essay is co-authored the prize money will be shared equally amongst the authors. Each essay submitted will be reviewed by a small group of qualified SOTS members to be selected by the President assisted by the immediate past and incoming Presidents. The ad hoc group thus established will be expected to reach a recommendation in time for an announcement at the Summer Meeting of the same year. However, the Society reserves the right not to make an award if no suitable submission is received. It is anticipated that an offer of publication in JSOT will be made, subject to the consent of the author(s) and editors; further, the winner(s) will be encouraged to offer a version of the paper suitable for presentation at SOTS, such a proposal to be given priority by the programme committee.

Call for Essays

Qualified members are invited to submit essays concerned with topics related to Old Testament/Tanakh/Hebrew Bible, as per above, to the President-elect for 2018, Prof Walter Moberly by 31st December, 2018 (r.w.l.moberly@durham.ac.uk).

Future Meetings

The **Winter Meeting 2018** will be held on **2nd – 4th January** at Newark Hall, Jubilee Campus, Nottingham and the **Summer Meeting 2018** will be held on **16th – 19th July 2018**, at St John's College, Durham. Both meetings will be under the presidency of Prof Walter Moberly.

The Programme Sub-Committee is pleased to receive **proposals for papers**—particularly for shorter papers (25 minutes)—as well as for workshops and other sessions. All proposals should be sent to the Secretary at least four weeks in advance of a Meeting of the Society in order to be considered for presentation at some future meeting. Due to fluctuation in the number of programme slots available, if a proposal is accepted by the Programme Sub-Committee, it may be scheduled for a Meeting some distance in the future.

Members are also reminded that the Society is able to award each year a number of **conference grants** ('bursaries') to assist those who would otherwise be unable to attend a Meeting. You should bear in mind that grants are for members or for persons who are seriously considering membership rather than for occasional guests, that they are intended to meet cases of genuine need (and so are not normally available to those who are in full-time employment), and that they are intended to 'top up' resources rather than meet all costs associated with attending a Meeting (and so the normal maximum for a grant is the package price minus the booking fee). An application form is available on the SOTS website, or alternatively applicants may write to the Secretary at least one week before the cut-off date for discount-price bookings for the relevant Meeting.

Financial support for carers to enable members to attend meetings is available on a trial basis. The grant is limited but may be put toward the cost of employing a carer or toward additional expenses incurred in a partner's attendance. Applications must be received 5 weeks prior to the meeting for which support is requested and should be submitted to the Secretary, Dr David Shepherd (shepherd@tcd.ie).

IMPORTANT REMINDER TO ALL SOTS MEMBERS

As the SOTS Bulletin, Winter and Summer Meeting programmes and booking form are now sent out electronically (as pdf files), **please ensure that the email address we hold for you is up to date**. Changes to this and other contact details should be communicated to the Membership Secretary, Dr Janet Tollington, at the address at the end of this Bulletin.

ACCOUNTS FOR 2016

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT for year ended 30th September 2016

	General fund £	Bursary fund £	Legacy fund £	Total Funds 2016 £	Total Funds 2015 £
Income					
Activities for generating funds					
Subscriptions & Donations	8,319	2,893		11,212	9,664
Conference income	39,125			39,125	41,875
Investment income					
Interest & Royalties	51			51	93
Total income	47,495	2,893		50,388	51,632
Expenditure					
Conference costs	37,978			37,978	45,339
Book list grant	46			46	10,518
Bursaries		2,715		2,715	2,849
Committee costs					293
Printing, Postage, Stationery etc	1,880			1,880	964
Accountancy fees	846			846	820
Project costs			4,317	4,317	555
Bank charges	610			610	644
Total Expenditure	41,360	2,715	4,317	48,392	61,982
 Surplus/ (Deficit) for year	 6,135	 178	 (4,317)	 1,996	 (10,350)
 Balance as at 1 October 2015	 50,947	 (462)	 57,295	 107,780	 118,130
 Balance as at 30 September 2016	 57,082	 (284)	 52,978	 109,776	 107,780

BALANCE SHEET as at 30th September 2016

	2016		2015	
	£	£	£	£
Cash at bank and in Hand				
Current Account	9,456		(752)	
Business Premium	102,157		106,105	
		111,603		105,353
 Debtors: falling due within one year				
Prepayments & accrued Income				3,249
 Creditors: falling due within one year				
Accruals & deferred income		(1,837)		(822)
 Reserves:	£	£		
General Fund	57,082	50,947		
Bursary Fund	(284)	(462)		
Legacy Fund	52,978	57,295		

Notes to the Financial Statements (for the Year Ended 30 September 2016):

1. Accounting policies

Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

Going concern

The Society has cash resources and has no requirement for external funding. The Committee have a reasonable expectation that the Society has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. They continue to believe the going concern basis of accounting appropriate in preparing the annual financial statements.

The principal accounting policies adopted in the preparation of the financial statements are as follows.

Income

All income is accounted for on a receivables basis.

Expenditure

Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis. Expenditure is inclusive of VAT.

Stocks

No account is taken of unused stocks of book lists or general stationery.

Fixed Assets and Depredation

Fixed assets that have no resale value are fully written off in the year of purchase.

Depreciation on other assets is calculated on a straight line basis and aims to write down the cost of fixed assets over their expected useful lives.

The rate applicable is 20% per annum.

Fund accounting

Funds held by the Society are either:

- General fund - monies which can be used in accordance with the Society's aims at the discretion of the Committee.
- Bursary fund - monies for the payment of costs in support of members in need of financial assistance.
- Legacy fund - these are funds that can only be used for the particular restricted purpose as specified by the donor.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of the legacy fund is included in the notes to the financial statements at note 2.

2. Legacy fund

	At 1 October 2015 £	Income £	Expenditure £	At 30 September 2016 £
Porter Legacy	57,295		4,317	52,978

The Porter Legacy fund will be used in part to cover costs of Centenary celebrations.

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

Based on the work described above we consider that:

- a) The Society has an adequate accounting system;
- b) The attached Income and Expenditure Account and Balance Sheet are in agreement with the Society's accounting records and information as provided.

Hardie Caldwell LLP
Independent Examiner Chartered Accountants
Citypoint 2
25 Tyndrum Street
Glasgow, G4 0JY

OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES FOR 2018

President: Professor Walter Moberly, Department of Theology, University of Durham, Abbey House, Palace Green, Durham DH1 3RS, England (email: r.w.l.moberly@durham.ac.uk)

Retiring President: Professor Paul Joyce, Department of Theology & Religious Studies, King's College London, Strand, London WC2R 2LS (email: paul.joyce@kcl.ac.uk)

President-elect: Professor Susan Gillingham, Faculty of Theology and Religion, University of Oxford, Gibson Building, Radcliffe Observatory Quarter, Woodstock Road, Oxford, OX2 6GG, England (email: susan.gillingham@theology.ox.ac.uk)

Treasurer: Dr Alastair Hunter, 487 Shields Road, Glasgow G41 2RG (email: alastair189@live.co.uk)

Secretary: Dr David Shepherd, School of Religions, Peace Studies and Theology, Trinity College Dublin, College Green, Dublin 2, Eire (email: shepherd@tcd.ie)

Secretary for Honorary Members: Professor Lester Grabbe, Department of Theology, The University, Hull HU6 7RX (email: l.l.grabbe@hull.ac.uk)

Membership Secretary: Dr Janet Tollington, 118 Balland Fields, Willingham, Cambridge CB24 5JU (email: jet40@cam.ac.uk)

Hospitality Secretary: Mr James Patrick, Mansfield College, Mansfield Road Oxford OX1 3TF (email: sotshospitality@gmail.com)

Book List Editor: Dr John Jarick, Regent's Park College, Pusey Street, Oxford OX1 2LB (email: john.jarick@theology.ox.ac.uk)

Information Officer: Dr Jonathan Stökl, King's College London, Strand, London WC2R 2LS (email: jonathan.stokl@kcl.ac.uk)

Archivist: Professor Eryl Davies, School of Philosophy and Religion, Bangor University, Bangor LL57 2DG (email: rsse03@bangor.ac.uk)

Committee: The above Officers of the Society plus: Dr Siobhán Dowling-Long, Dr Alison Gray, Dr Doug Ingram, Dr Sandra Jacobs, Dr Anja Klein, Dr Chris Meredith, Dr Holly Morse and Professor Nick Wyatt.

Programme Sub-Committee: The Secretary (Convener), President, President-elect, Secretary for Honorary Members and Hospitality Secretary, plus Dr Jessica Keady, Dr Katharine Dell and Dr Casey Strine.

Publications Sub-Committee: The Book List Editor (Convener), Dr Adrian Curtis (as Guides Editor), Dr Lena-Sofia Tiemeyer (as Monographs Editor), and Professor Hugh Williamson (as SOTS representative on the OTS Board); plus Professor George Brooke, Dr Matthew Collins, Dr Elizabeth Hayes and Dr Ann Jeffers.

PAST PRESIDENTS OF THE SOCIETY

1917-19	William Bennett	1967	Donald Coggan
1920	Archibald Kennedy	1968	Matthew Black
1921	Robert Kennett	1969	John Schofield
1922	Buchanan Gray	1970	Arthur Herbert
1923	George Box	1971	Edward Ullendorff
1924	Arthur Peake	1972	Peter Ackroyd
1925	Stanley Cook	1973	James Barr
1926	William Stevenson	1974	Dafydd Ap-Thomas
1927	David Simpson	1975	Eileen de Ward
1928	Theodore Robinson	1976	Douglas Jones
1929	Wheeler Robinson	1977	Ronald Williams
1930	Claude Montefiore	1978	William McKane
1931	William Oesterley	1979	John Emerton
1932	William Lofthouse	1980	Donald Wiseman
1933	William Wardle	1981	Raphael Loewe
1934	Adam Welch	1982	Norman Whybray
1935	Emery Barnes	1983	Roy Porter
1936	Battersby Harford	1984	Wilfred Lambert
1937-38	Godfrey Driver	1985	Ronald Clements
1939-40	Herbert Loewe	1986	Barnabas Lindars
1941-45	Wheeler Robinson	1987	Robert Murray
1946	Theodore Robinson	1988	Ernest Nicholson
1947	Cuthbert Lattey	1989	John Rogerson
1948	Edward Robertson	1990	William Johnstone
1949	Christopher North	1991	Anthony Gelston
1950	Harold Rowley	1992	Andrew Mayes
1951	Samuel Hooke	1993	Richard Coggins
1952	John Barton	1994	John Gibson
1953	Winton Thomas	1995	Gwilym Jones
1954	Norman Porteous	1996	David Clines
1955	Alfred Guillaume	1997	Rex Mason
1956	Aubrey Johnson	1998	Margaret Barker
1957	Norman Snaith	1999	Robert Carroll
1958	Leonard Elliott-Binns	2000	Joseph Blenkinsopp
1959	John Mauchline	2001	Michael Goulder
1960	Cuthbert Simpson	2002	John Bartlett
1961	Jacob Weingreen	2003	Robert Gordon
1962	Hedley Sparks	2004	Hugh Williamson
1963	George Anderson	2005	Graeme Auld
1964	Bleddyn Roberts	2006	Robert Hayward
1965	Frederick Bruce	2007	Philip Davies
1966	Henton Davies	2008	John Barton

Past Presidents of the Society

(continued)

2009 Lester Grabbe

2010 Cheryl Exum

2011 John Sawyer

2012 George Brooke

2013 Eryl W. Davies

2014 John Day

2015 Hans Barstad

2016 Adrian Curtis