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EDITOR'S FOREWORD

The academic year 1984/5 marked the 60th anniversary of the founding of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and of its first Institute, dedicated to Jewish Studies. In the summer of 1986 the Twelfth Congress of the International Organization for the Study of the Old Testament is to be convened in Jerusalem — for the first time since the Organization's founding in 1950. These two occasions have provided the incentive for the publication of the present volume, dedicated to biblical studies.

At the Hebrew University, Bible is studied in several frameworks: in the departments of Hebrew language, History of Israel and Ancient Semitic Languages, in the School of Archaeology and others. The heart of this study, however, is to be found in the Department of Bible, wholly dedicated as it is to research and instruction in the many aspects of Scripture.

In this volume the reader will encounter contributions from all of the members of the Department of Bible, from the younger scholars newly launched on their careers of study, to the professors emeriti of the Department, who have been our teachers for many years. Many of the names in these pages are already well known to the international public of Bible scholars.

This volume has neither a pre-conceived plan nor a central theme. Rather, it can be viewed as a sort of "tableau" of the Department at this moment in time. Each of the contributors offered something from his or her desk — in some cases a translation of an already published Hebrew paper, but for the most part new articles prepared for this occasion. While not attempting in any way to be "representative" of the Department in its more characteristic features of Bible study, it is precisely the spontaneous nature of this collection which reflects many, although certainly not all, of the perspectives of our work.

The reader will very soon find that one cannot speak of a "Jerusalem

School” of research in the narrow sense of the term. There are here presented different attitudes and views concerning methodology, the history of biblical literature, the development of biblical religion, and other major issues in the field. Above all, there are strikingly different foci of interest in the individual approaches to the Bible among the contributors. One may, however, still recognize a “Jerusalem School” in the broader and more profound sense: a common striving to unite the venerable and unique heritage of Jewish Bible study with the methods and achievements of modern research, by which Jerusalem scholars forge their own special vital link with the “Book of Books”.

This volume could not have come into being without the co-operation of all concerned, and foremost among these are my colleagues who contributed the fruits of their work. It is a pleasure also to thank the University authorities — the Institute of Jewish Studies and the Faculty of the Humanities for their active material and moral support, and the Perry Foundation for Biblical Research which made its own contribution toward the publication.

All the work entailed in the creation of this volume has been done within the Bible Department. My “two right arms” in this enterprise were my two assistants, whose dedication and commitment have been all that any editor could wish for. Raphael Carse prepared the articles for publication, edited the style and gathered the index material, while Galen Marquis introduced us directly into the modern era with his expert computer arrangement and print-out of the book “ready for the camera”, overcoming on the way many difficulties, both expected and unforeseen. For their conscientious efficiency we are all in their debt.

Last, but not least, I wish to thank the Magnes Press for the final publication of this volume.

SARA JAPHET

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