

## תוכן העניינים

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## ENGLISH ABSTRACTS

### EZEKIEL'S THEOLOGY OF HOLINESS AND IMPURITY AS A KEY TO UNDERSTANDING THE DESCRIPTION OF THE DEPARTURE OF THE 'GLORY OF YHWH' FROM THE TEMPLE (EZEKIEL 8-11)

Ariel Kopilovitz

Ezekiel's account of his first visionary journey to Jerusalem (Ezekiel 8-11) contains two narratives of simultaneously occurring and intersecting events. The first describes in detail the abominations that the prophet observes during his tour of the Temple; the second describes the gradual departure of the 'Glory of YHWH' – the *kābôd* – from the Temple.

The description of the departure of the Glory raises a number of exegetical questions. What is the exact location of each of the several stations where the Glory stops as it departs? What is the relationship between the Glory's movement noted in 9:3 and that described in 10:4? Precisely how does the Glory proceed from station to station? What is the relationship between the Glory proper and the Cherubim – the stationary Cherubim in the Temple and the flying Cherubim that serve as the celestial Chariot? This article suggests that the ascent mentioned in 10:4 is an independent vertical movement and not merely a doublet of 9:3.

The description of the abominations in the Temple raises a number of issues as well. What is the precise character of each abomination? Where exactly within the Temple precincts did each of the abominations occur? And did these outrages really take place in Ezekiel's own time, or are they past or perhaps even imaginary misdeeds?

To answer these questions, the article presents Ezekiel's unique theology of holiness and impurity and the relationship between them as compared with that found in the Priestly literature. Ezekiel perceives the potency of both holiness and impurity more intensely than did the Priestly literature, and this attitude has influenced his description of the future Temple (Chapters 40-48), some of his laws, and other aspects of his teaching. It has also influenced the description of the departure of the Glory, and to understand the vision of Chapters 8-11, it is suggested that the two intertwined narratives should be read as connected not only chronologically but ideologically and literarily as well.

### THE STORY OF THE EXODUS BETWEEN HISTORICAL MEMORY AND HISTORIOGRAPHICAL COMPOSITION

Nadav Na'aman

The factual background of the Exodus story is the most perplexing issue in biblical historical studies. On the one hand, the Exodus tradition is very old, and its status as the central Israelite foundation story finds remarkable expression in every genre of biblical literature.

On the other hand, most scholars today doubt the historicity of the story, and generally consider it to be the vague memory of a small group, which was gradually adopted by all the other Israelite tribal groups. The contrast between the central place of the Exodus in Israelite memory and its questionable historical status requires explanation. The article seeks to explore this contrast by shifting the focus of discussion from the historical question to the role the Exodus story played in shaping the self-portrait and self-consciousness of early Israelite society.

I first consider the oppressive nature of Egyptian rule in Canaan at the time of the XIXth and XXth Dynasties and the growing pressure this placed on all the inhabitants of Canaan. Then I examine the story of the Exodus and emphasize the inconsistencies between the story and the reality of Egypt under the Ramessides. I suggest that the bondage, the suffering, and the miraculous delivery from slavery actually took place in Canaan and that the locus of these memories was later transferred from Canaan to Egypt. The transfer of memory explains why the Bible fails to mention the long Egyptian occupation of Canaan. The displaced memories of bondage and suffering were replaced by vague memory of the conquest, which reflects the way early Israelite society sought to present its past. The bondage in Egypt, the suffering, and the miraculous delivery were experienced by all tribal groups that lived at the time in Canaan; hence the centrality of the Exodus tradition in every segment of early Israelite society.

### A NEW GENIZAH FRAGMENT OF THE *ARAMAIC LEVI DOCUMENT*

Gideon Bohak

The text currently known as the *Aramaic Levi Document* was first discovered in the Cambridge Genizah collection at the very end of the nineteenth century. The Cambridge fragment was soon joined by another fragment from the same tenth-century manuscript in the Oxford Genizah collection at the Bodleian Library, and these fragments were later supplemented by fragments of the same composition found among the Dead Sea Scrolls. The present paper publishes a third fragment of the same Genizah manuscript, this time from the Manchester Genizah collection (fragment no. P 1185, measuring 12.8 x 11.4 cm). The new fragment covers parts of the story of the destruction of Shechem by Jacob's sons after the rape of Dinah, and sheds new light on Aramaic Levi's version of these events.

### BLESSINGS OVER *MITZVOT* IN ERETZ ISRAEL AND IN BABYLONIA: FURTHER TO DAVID ROSENTHAL, 'TEFILLIN BLESSING IN ERETZ ISRAEL AND IN BABYLONIA'

Binyamin Katzoff

Professor David Rosenthal, 'Tefillin Blessing in Eretz Israel and in Babylonia', *Tarbiz*, 79 (5770/71), pp. 63-86, draws attention to a difference in the practices of Eretz Israel and Babylonia concerning the single blessing recited in late antiquity over *tefillin*. In Eretz Israel the final words were 'al mitzvat tefillin, on the commandment of tefillin', whereas in Babylonia they were 'lehaniah tefillin, to place tefillin', or 'al hanaḥat tefillin, on the

placing of *tefillin*'. This difference, I suggest, is part of a broader variation in the practice of blessings over *mitzvot*.

Three models are found for the concluding words of blessings over *mitzvot*: one in which there is express mention of the word *mitzvah* (*vetzivanu al mitzvat X*, and commanded us the commandment X), and two in which the reference to *mitzvah* is replaced by the infinitive (*vetzivanu la'asot*) or by the action noun (*vetzivanu 'al ha'asiah*). Whereas with respect to some *mitzvot* there is unanimity concerning the form of the blessing, with respect to others there is a difference in practice – sources from Eretz Israel display the first model, sources from Babylonia display the second or third. The difference may have been more far-reaching than is evident in our sources today, for some of the evidence may have been contaminated by the influence of the one tradition on the other, as indeed happened in the case of the blessing over *tefillin*.

## MS MANTOVA 30

Yacov Fuchs

In the fourteenth century, *Hilkhot Ha-Rif* served as the basic pedagogical text for many Torah scholars in Ashkenaz and in France. This is becoming evident through the large number of Ashkenazic manuscripts of the Rif. Because the Rif's understanding of the Talmud and his Halakhic rulings differed from the Ashkenazic tradition, many of these manuscripts contain commentary that provided learners with Rashi's view on one side of *Hilkhot Ha-Rif*, and Tosafot and Ashkenazic halakhic rulings on the other side.

In this article, we examine Manuscript Mantova – Comunita Israelitica ebr. 30, which is identical in its contents to Manuscript Paris – Bibliothèque Nationale héb. 314. Both manuscripts were written in the 14<sup>th</sup> century in France. Alongside the Rif they contain Tosafot and a commentary. For a long time the Tosafot in Paris 314 were attributed to Rabbi Moshe ben Yom Tov of London. However, this attribution has been rejected by prominent academic authorities. Contrary to their view, because Mantova 30 is a more voluminous manuscript than Paris 314, we contend that it is possible to prove that Rabbi Moshe ben Yom Tov indeed authored the Tosafot in both manuscripts and that his writings refer to the Rif. Although we cannot be certain exactly what portions of the Tosafot can be attributed to him, we have no doubt that he was the author of a large portion of the Tosafot in this manuscript.

The commentary in the manuscripts consists mainly of Rashi's commentary on the Talmud. But, in some tractates, we find commentary by Rabbi Yehudah ben Natan (Riban) and Rabbi Shmuel ben Meir (Rashbam). However, the unknown author of these commentaries presents his own ideas on various topics. We find highly noteworthy his ideas concerning the relationship of the Jews and the gentile community.

‘EXEGESIS IN PERPETUAL MOTION’: THE SHORT COMMENTARY OF IBN EZRA AS A  
SOURCE FOR RASHBAM IN HIS COMMENTARY ON THE PENTATEUCH

Itamar Kislev

The question of the affinities between the Pentateuch commentaries of Rashbam and Ibn Ezra is crucial for the understanding of the development of the Peshat exegesis in Northern France. Scholars have investigated the possibility that Ibn Ezra’s long commentary (written in France in 1153) was influenced by that of Rashbam; however, the possibility that the short commentary of Ibn Ezra (written in Italy in the middle of the fifth decade of the 12th century) influenced Rashbam’s Pentateuch commentary has hardly been taken into account. A comprehensive examination of the latter two commentaries reveals important similarities between them, far more than mere correspondences between two commentaries with similar tendencies, suggesting that Rashbam’s commentary was indeed influenced by the short commentary of Ibn Ezra.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE MEAN AND ASCETICISM:  
ON THE UNIFORMITY OF MAIMONIDES’ ETHICS

Aviram Ravitsky

In his writings Maimonides depicted the ethical Doctrine of the Mean as it found expression in Aristotle’s *Ethics* and in the writings of al-Farabi. However, he also expressed extremist ethical attitudes, even regarding the same issues on which he agrees with Aristotle’s Golden Mean. Both trends in Maimonides’ ethics have been noted by researchers, some of whom describing Maimonides as a representative of the Aristotelian ethics, while others depicted him as an adherent of asceticism.

In this paper I argue that the Doctrine of Mean in Maimonides’ thought has only didactic meaning. Maimonides subordinated all aspects of human life to intellectual perfection and to gaining proximity to God. Accordingly, in his ethics, the criterion by which one should evaluate a person’s deeds is the usefulness in promoting human perfection. Hence, Maimonides did not consider the Doctrine of the Mean as a method by which one can determine what action is appropriate in a given set of circumstances. Rather, he saw it as a general principle by which one evaluates the suitability of an action for intellectual life. The Mean, in other words, has no intrinsic ethical content in Maimonides’ thought. It is merely a general method of teaching the ethical behavior that should lead every individual to his final end.

This paper demonstrates that textual and terminological considerations indicate that even when Maimonides advocated extremely rigorous ethical behavior he did not see it as a deviation from the Doctrine of the Mean. In Maimonides’ thought extreme ethical rigor exceeds the mean only for some people, whereas for others it is the proper means for perfection. Following al-Farabi’s understanding of Aristotle’s relativism of the ethical mean, Maimonides saw the mean as a guide that leads everyone to the same end, although their specific actions might be different.

Hence Maimonides' approach to the ethical mean is individualistic, unlike his discussions of the general principles of ethics. Hence, he even defined asceticism, for certain people in certain circumstances, as the Golden Mean.

## SEFER YETZIRAH: TWELVE COMMENTARIES ON SEFER YETZIRAH AND THE EXTANT REMNANTS OF R. ISAAC OF BEDRESH'S COMMENTARY

Moshe Idel

The study deals with the formative role played by *Sefer Yetzirah* in the emergence of the ecstatic Kabbalah of Abraham Abulafia. According to his own testimony, Abulafia's system is a synthesis of techniques related to *Sefer Yetzirah* and the views found in Maimonides' *Guide of the Perplexed*. The study also deals in detail with a list of twelve commentaries on *Sefer Yetzirah*, found in Abulafia's book *Otzar Eden Ganuz*. Abulafia studied these commentaries in 1270-1271 in Barcelona, and he presents the remnants of one of them, written by R. Isaac of Bedresh [Béziers], references to whom are dispersed throughout Abulafia's writings. An attempt is made to identify this figure with R. Isaac ben Jacob ha-Kohen.

The study further discusses the various techniques of combination of letters of the Hebrew alphabet that are central to R. Isaac's commentary, and the centrality of R. Isaac's commentary for the manner in which Abulafia and other works from his school described the path to human perfection.

An appendix discusses a quotation of a certain R. Joseph, who taught Abulafia the meaning of a certain passage from *Sefer Yetzirah*.

## HOW DID THE HATAM-SOFER SEEK TO TRUMP SPINOZA? TEXT, HERMENEUTICS, AND ROMANTICISM IN THE WRITINGS OF R. MOSES SOFER

Maoz Kahana

This paper presents a particular interpretation of Rabbi Moshe Sofer's conceptual understanding of *Torah*. The Hatam Sofer (Frankfurt a.M. 1762 – Pressburg 1839), one of the most important conservative Jewish leaders in the modern era, left behind a massive body of work. From this wide-ranging corpus I will present his unique response toward challenging the text critics, including Spinoza, who sought to establish the 'plain' meaning of the text (*Peshat*) in biblical exegesis, as it developed in the major trends of European thought in the early modern era. This paper claims that at the core of the Hatam Sofer's response stand the theme of the 'unknown' and that of the enduring renewal of Torah insights (*hidush*). The interrelations between These two poles inform issues of primary importance in the Hatam Sofer's thought and activities, such as the concept of the holy text, the role of exegesis, the procedure of daily *Torah* study and teaching, and the nature of the anticipation of redemption. In order to clarify the Hatam Sofer's concepts, I compare them briefly with the attitudes of the GRA (Rabbi Elijah of Vilna, 1720-1797) and Rabbi Nachman of Bratzlav (1772-1810). I also analyze them in relation to certain strains in the contemporary European Romantic movement.