תקצירים באנגלית

# TE'UDA

# VII
# STUDIES IN JUDAICA

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## THE CHAIM ROSENBERG SCHOOL
## OF JEWISH STUDIES RESEARCH SERIES

# VII
# STUDIES IN JUDAICA

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# ENGLISH SUMMARIES

# Epic Formulae in Biblical Narrative and the Origins of Ancient Hebrew Prose*

by

Frank Polak

U. Cassuto maintains that Biblical narrative originates from ancient Northwest-Semitic epic poetry, as evidenced by Ugaritic literature. This thesis is opposed to the view of H. Gunkel, who claims that Biblical narrative derives from the ancient Hebrew folktale. Cassuto found proof for his theory in a number of stock phrases frequent in certain sections of Biblical narrative (especially in the tales of the Patriarchs), for which he was able to adduce parallels in Ugaritic poetry, viz. וישא (in וייעץ ויאמר / ויבך, עיניו וירא ,וישא קולו ויקרא (Jud. 9:7; cf. Gen. 39:15,18), in Ugaritic wyᶜn only; ענה ואמר occurs in Aramaic Ahiqar and Sarmuge), ויקח וילך (note also Gen. 12:19; 22:2,6; 24:10 etc.), וישם פניו (Gen. 31:21; cf. also Aramaic Sarmuge).

In this article the author adduces additional set phrases, matched by formulae in Ugaritic (or Mesopotamian) epic or legal texts, which appear to corroborate Cassuto's thesis. Ugaritic epic poetry offers obvious parallels for such phrases as ותהר ותלד (cf. tšu...tštnn, tqḥ...tštn; Jud. 9:48; Ruth 4:16), ויקח וישם, ויאכל וישת (also Akkadian), ויפל/ויקד/ויקם וישתחו, and with adverbial complements ארצה (אפים) וישתחו, ויזבח שור ומריא (Num. 22:40; cf. ʿṭbḫ alpm ap ṣin, šql ṯrm wmri), ויזבח בקר וצאן ,ויתן קולו בבכי (Gen. 45:2; cf. Num. 14:1; ybky wyšnn ytn gh bky) and possibly also וישא רגליו וילך, וישא ויצא (Gen. 29:1, cf. Aramaic Sarmuge). The common expression ויקח ויתן (Lev. 7:34; Jos. 11:23; I Sam. 8:14), matched by the legal formula ittaši...iddinšu in Akkadian legal documents from Ugarit, has been adopted by simple narrative (e.g. Gen. 16:3; 30:9; 20:14 and passim); the phrase ויצל...ויתן (Gen. 31:9) has a parallel in Aramaic deeds from Elephantine. The well-known periphrase for anointment, יצק שמן על ראש (Gen. 28:18; I Sam. 10:1 e.a.) is matched by Ugaritic wlqḥ hw šmn bqrnh wyṣq hw lriš bt mlk a[mr] (RS 34.124, rev. 26'-28'). Akkadian parallels may be adduced for ויקרא ויאמר and ויקם וילך.

Many of these set phrases do not occur in Biblical poetry; others are closer to their ancient Ugaritic counterpart than to the sophisticated elaborations of Hebrew poetic language. Hence it seems logical to conclude that the formulaic phraseology of Hebrew prose narrative does not originate from Biblical poetry, but from the

ancient epic diction. In other words, the ancient Hebrew epic is the ancestor of Biblical narrative.

Significantly, many of these formulae are most frequent in the Abraham cycle and the Jacob narrative. In some of these tales, the density of the formulaic dicton is striking (Gen. 18:1-15; 21; 22; 24; 29-31; 33:1-5). Apparently, at the time that these stories assumed their basic form, the narrators were still quite conscious of the epic formulaic style (cf. also the Bileam pericope). This *post-epic* stage may be dated to the pre-regal period, with some extensions reaching into the time of the monarchy (the Bileam pericope).

In the Book of Samuel, the epic diction is still obvious, although to a lessening degree. Jud. 13-21, the Sinai pericope and parts of the Eliahu-Elisha cycle should be attributed to the same *classical* stage (*terminus ad quem*: middle Eighth Century BCE, as indicated by the Elisha narratives). In the third stage, formulaic language has all but vanished and many deviant formulae are evident. To this stage one should attribute most of the Exodus narrative, the section of the wanderings in the desert, the narrative parts of the Book of Joshua, I Kings 3-16 and the Jeremiah *vita*. Finally, in post-exilic narrative, the ancient formulaic register is almost totally extinct (cf. also the concluding sections of the Book of Kings).

Of course, the frequency of epic formulae cannot be the sole criterion for assessing the period of origin of a certain narrative. Some signs indicate that the ancient narrator of the Paradise tale consciously freed himself from the formulaic tradition (cf. the phrase ותפקחנה עיני שניהם וידעו, Gen. 3:7, a sophisticated transformation of וישא עיניו וירא). Such an inclination would be quite in tune with the highly developed poetic style for which this tale is famous. The same seems to apply to the Joseph narrative (note the rare formula of Gen. 45:2) and to the first part of the Book of Judges (Jud. 3:12-12:7). On the other hand, the post-exilic prose tale of Job contains many formulaic phrases. One notes, however, some deviant features which seem to indicate that the late narrator-poet consciously endeavoured to revive the ancient epic diction, which by that time had become a literary archaism (2:12). A similar judgment may be passed on the Scroll of Ruth (4:13 ויתן ה' לה הריון, a conspicuous deviation from the standard formula).

In short, the distribution of formulaic phrases confirms Cassuto's thesis. Not the folktale, but the ancient epic served as the fountain-head for Biblical narrative. The formulaic diction is especially frequent in some of the very same pericopes in which Gunkel thought to detect traces of the later art of the *Novelle* (Gen. 22; 24). This genre does not represent the later, artful development of the simple folktale, but is rather the direct heir of the time-honoured art of the epic.

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# The Repeated Situation – A Poetic Principal in the Modeling of the Joseph Narrative

by

## Yaira Amit

This article deals with the explanation offered by Joseph to Pharaoh concerning the identical situation described in both his dreams: "And for that the dream was doubled unto Pharaoh twice; it is because the thing is established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass" (Gen., 41:32).

The present article examines the following questions:

Is it possible to utilize the solution offered by Joseph as an explanation for all phenomena of repetitive situations occuring in this story? If so, could this solution also serve as an explanation for other cases of repeated situations in biblical narratives. In other words, if the repeated situation is a planned poetic principle, employed by the writers and the editors, it might shed new light on many repetitions and explain their existence, not as a combination of different sources or traditions, but rather as a poetical tool, possessing its own inherent teleology.

## *Ka-Te'enim Ha-Sho'arim* (Jer. 29:17)

by

## Aron Dotan

*Sho'arim* (Jer. 29:17) is a Hebrew *hapax legomenon* understood by most commentators and lexicographers as affiliated with *Sha'arura* (Jer. 5:30; 23:14), *Sha'aruriyyà* (Hos. 6:10) and *Sha'arurit* (Jer. 18:13), who have explained it accordingly.

It has thus been variably explained as 'dirty' (Jonah Ibn Janah, Solomon ben Parhon, David Qimhi), 'spoilt' (David ben Abraham Al-Fasi, Solomon ben Isaac and 'ugly', 'bitter' (Rashi). Most ancient translations (Jonathan, Peshittha, Vulgate) and most medieval and modern translations and dictionaries (Authorized Version, Second, Luther; Gesenius-Buhl, Ben-Yehuda) render it as 'bad', while others have translated 'disgusting' (Jehoash; Brown-Driver-Briggs, Steinberg [Mishpat-Ha-'Urim]), an explanation also offered by many modern commentators (A. Weiser, W. Rudolph, H. Yalon). Others have preferred 'wild' (S. Morag), 'frightening' (S. Mandelkern, F. Giesebrecht), 'cracked' (S. Mandelkern) etc.

As already pointed out by S.D. Luzzatto, all these attempts are etymologically

unfounded, and do not settle the difficulties of the text. The disagreement in gender between the adjective (masculine) and the noun 'figs' (feminine) is also an enigma.

The novel solution proposed herein by the present author derives the adjective from the noun *sha<sup>c</sup>ar* 'gate' as a denominative formation *sho<sup>c</sup>arim* ('staying/being at the gate'), plural of *sho<sup>c</sup>er*. The expression in our verse (Jer. 29:17) is to be understood as a reference to the original scene in Jeremiah's vision (Jer. 24:1-2) wherein he describes 'two baskets of figs set before the temple of the Lord'. *Ha-Te<sup>ᵓ</sup>enim Ha-Sho<sup>c</sup>arim* are thus the baskets *(duda'im* masculine) of figs *at the gate* of the Temple.

This explanation does not even require a change in vocalization to שְׁעָרִים (a plural of שׁוֹעֵר). The form שְׁעָרִים may be interpreted as the plural of שֹׁעָר – participle of the passive conjugation of Qal (compare לְקָח), expressing an intransitive designating state, and better suited than the active שֹׁעֲרִים. It is also possible that Ibn Janah, while explaining the expression differently, analysed it grammatically as a similar form.

# The Infinitive Constructus of the Verb "to Say" לֵאמֹר – a Study of its Syntactic, Semantic and Pragmatic Usage in Biblical Hebrew

by

Penina Trumer

The inf. cstr. לֵאמֹר ("say") appears in hundreds of cases in Biblical Hebrew, always complemented by a direct speech content clause.

The consistant appearance of direct speech after לֵאמֹר supposedly supports the accepted explanation that the appearance of לֵאמֹר before direct speech represents a usage similar to the syntactic conditions of the colon(:), which is ordinarily employed before direct speech in modern written Hebrew and in modern European Literature.

In the present study, the writer attempts to show that the primary usage of לֵאמֹר in Biblical Hebrew does not parallel that of the colon. Comprehending לֵאמֹר as an equivalent to the colon might have been satisfactory were all such occurrences preceded by explicit verbs of 'saying', thus obligating complementation by a content clause. However, a methodical investigation of all verses containing the inf. cstr. לֵאמֹר has shown that the explicit verbs preceding it are not necessarily verbs of 'saying'. The first step of the present study was to organize all occurrences of the

X

inf. cstr. into two main categories:

I. לאמר after explicit verbs, that are not verbs of 'saying' and do not obligate a complementary content clause; these verbs were semantically classified.

Even without a systematic examination, it would be logical to assume that the inf. cstr. לאמר next to non-'saying' verbs of category I, provides their wider (and unexpected) model with the semantical component of 'saying', which obligates complementation by a content clause.

A thorough examination of the relationship between the explicit verb and the inf. cstr. לאמר suggests other possibilities for analyzing the status of לאמר. Among them:

1. The inf. cstr. has the status of the explicit verb "say" and is coordinated with the explicit verb preceding it.

2. לאמר serves as an adverbial complement (purpose clause) of the main action expressed in the explicit verb preceding it.

3. The explicit verb together with inf. cstr. "say" create an adverbial predicative clause, in which inf. cstr. לאמר is the nucleus, and the explicit verb serves as its adverb.

4. לאמר and the content clause following it are the realization of the instrumental causing proposition in the semantic definition of the explicit verb preceding the inf. cstr. לאמר.

   II. The inf. cstr. לאמר next to explicit verbs from the 'saying' group. These have been subcategorized as follows:

   IIa. Inf cstr. לאמר after verbs of 'saying' that are not the explicit verb אמר "say" such as: הגיד tell; הודיע inform; ספר relate; שאל ask.

   IIb. Inf. cstr. לאמר after the explicit verb אמר.

This distinction is justified by the obvious fact that the verbs in subcategory IIa (excluding דבר) do not usually obligate direct complementation by direct speech, but through לאמר as an intermediary, whereas the explicit verb אמר "say" is usually complemented by direct speech.

The idea that the distance between the verb of 'saying' and the complementing content clause might necessitate the understanding of לאמר as an intermediate, is unconditionally rejected in lieu of the occurrences in which the direct speech clause is in close proximity to the verb of 'saying', *e.g.* n. 108 (Ex. 30:31): ואל בני ישראל תדבר לאמר שמן משחת קדש יהיה זה לי לדרתיכם

In this article, it is suggested that the use of לאמר in conjunction with the verbs of 'saying' mentioned above, should be viewed from the aspect of the "speech act theory".

According to the categories of the "speech act" suggested by J.R. Searle, the

verbs of subcategory IIa are classified into: directive verbs (צוה, הסית, האיץ,), commissive verbs (נשבע, נדר, הבטיח) and assertive verbs (התפלל, התחנן, (סיפר, הודיע, בישר, ענה, השיב דברים, גילה אוזן)

It is shown that לאמר is related to verbs of the directive type which express the attempt to cause an action by another person through speech; their conventional syntactic performance is as follows: צ״ש$_1$, *e.g.* n. 155 (1 פועל + צ״ש$_2$ + מקור נטוי Chron. 21:1): ויסת את דוד למנות את ישראל.

When לאמר 'say' + content clause join these verbs, לאמר furnishes the explicit description of the manner (utterance = of content in a characterized version) in which the directive act is to be performed. Something like:

A 'tried to cause' *[in saying so and so]* B 'act'
 the causing propostion.

In the verse ויסת את דוד בהם לאמר לך מנה את ישראל (2 Sam, 24:6) it is clear that the incitement was done through saying: לך מנה את ישראל.

This enables an explanation of the primary use of the inf. cstr. לאמר in proximity with the explicit verb "say" which from the aspect of the "speech act theory", belongs to the assertive group, relating to some other content through talking: אמר לאמר + משפט תוכן = אמר (מסר) למישהו תוכן (בכך שאמר לו את המשפט הבא...) לאמר + דיבור ישיר

During the course of time, the meaning of לאמר has dwindled, (possibly due to the fact that the idea of 'saying' has been acquired by the root אמר itself) and the role of the inf. cstr. לאמר became identified with these of the "colon" before direct speech. This explains the multiple occurrences of the explicit verb אמר "say" with direct speech, without the intermediation of the inf. cstr. לאמר.

At the close of the present study, the writer singles out some rare uses of לאמר, *e.g.* לאמר together with קרא בשם "give name" indicating the reason for giving the name; לאמר with such special connotations as "marking", "pointing out", "in the meaning of" and "in other words".


## The *Raison d'Être* for the Delineation of the Borders of Eretz-Israel in Tannaitic Sources

by

Meir Bar-Ilan


The borders of the Land of Israel described in the Mishnah have been discussed from two principle aspects: (a) The topographical identification of the places

mentioned (b) The historical background of Jewish settlement reflected by the borders and by the place-names mentioned in connection with these borders.

In the present article, the author attempts to clarify the border tradition from yet another standpoint: the relativity of the borders. Changes in the borders were not limited to the historical sphere, since they were effected by Jewish law as well. The halakha does not recognize one border (or 'the border'), of the Land of Israel, but postulates different borders for different purposes. The borders of the Land of Israel have been described in the Mishnah in conjunction with the following laws: (a) Laws dependent on the Land of Israel *(mizvot hatluyot ba'arez)*; (b) The Sabbatical year and the law of Hallah; (c) The laws concerning the delivery of the bill of divorce (d) The laws of purity and impurity.

After discussing the *Sitz-im-Leben* of these relative and different borders of the Land of Israel, the author presents a Form-Critical study of the opening section of the Mishnah, Tractate Gittin. It is suggested that the borders of the Land of Israel described in Gittin 1:2 were transferred to that location from *Seder Zeraim* (or *Seder Toharot*).

## "We Have Made Ourselves As Lawyers"

by

Zvi Arie Steinfeld

The plain meaning of the statement of Judah ben Tabbai, in its original context, 'Do not act as lawyers' (Avot 1, 8), refers to a judge sitting in judgment. However, Babylonian *sugyot* (Ketubot 52b, 85b-86a) imply that R. Yohanan and R. Nahman applied the rule to any man, forbidding one to advise a litigant and help him in the presentation of his arguments. The Talmud relates that they themselves helped relatives with legal advice, later on regretting having done so. The *sugyot* imply that their view was that ordinary persons may not provide such assistance to strangers, although they are, nevertheless, permitted to assist relatives. However, an 'important person' may not grant legal advice even to a relative.

From other sources in the Yerushalmi (Bava Batra 9: 1 and Ketubot 4: 11), it is evident that the anonymous *sugya* interpreted Judah b. Tabbai's statement, in the sense of not telling a litigant the expected outcome of his litigation, as applying to any person. In contrast, it appears that in the view of R. Joshua b. Levi, and, explicitly, in the view of R. Matanya, (according to the textual variant recorded by R. Yom Tov b. Abraham of Seville), the prohibition applies only to a judge sitting in judgment.

An investigation of parallel sources in the Babylonian and Jerusalem Talmuds supports the suggestion that R. Yohanan never regretted having given his advice; in the transfer of the story about him from the Land of Israel to Babylonia, the story was combined with the anonymous challenge addressed to his behavior based on the statement of Judah b. Tabbai, quoted by the Yerushalmi. As a result, this very challenge ('we have made ourselves as lawyers') became attributed to R. Yohanan and to R. Nahman as well, due to the similarity between the two incidents involving them.

Rava was angered by the advice given to R. Mari b. Issur, the Proselyte (Bava Batra 149a), not because he viewed the giving of the advice as improper, but for the rather prosaic reason that it caused him a serious loss. Abbaye also revealed the law to an individual, and this act was not challenged on the grounds of Judah b. Tabbai's statement. In both cases, these Amoraim were not sitting in judgment. On the other hand, in a case in which R. Lazar was sitting in judgment, he declared that he "had told them nothing," implying that he had not revealed the law to them, which would otherwise have meant a violation of the plain meaning of Judah b. Tabbai's injunction.

In conclusion, it appears that all the Amoraim interpreted Judah b. Tabbai's statement as referring to a judge sitting in judgment. Only as a result of the anonymous view in the Yerushalmi did the Babylonian Talmud subsequently broaden the prohibition, while attributing this extension of the prohibition to some of the leading Amoraim.

# "Is This Not Simple According to the Opinion of R. ....?"
## (׳לית דא פשיטא על שיטת רבי...׳)

by

Moshe Assis

In this article, the author discusses the expression: ....לית דא פשיטא על שיטת רבי This expression is found four times in the Yerushalmi: 1) Bava Qamma 3: 4. 2) Bava Mezi<sup>c</sup>a 8:10. 3) Sanhedrin 7:8. 4) Shavuot 6:6. From a careful study of the first three *sugyot* it is deduced, that the meaning of this expression is basically interrogative: 'Is this not simple according to the opinion of...? As to the fourth *sugya*, the author attempts to show that the text has been corrupted by a copyist's error, and that the reading פשיטא should be substituted by פליגא.

# Studies in Loan Words and their Textual Variants

by

## Daniel Sperber

### 1. פמינליא – feminalia

This word is found several times in Rabbinic Literature, but never in an exact transcription. The various transcriptions seem to represent different dialectic forms and/or scribal errors. However, once the errors are removed, the resultant dialectic forms appear to be legitimate, even though hithereto unattested in classical sources. It is thus apparent that these variants should not be emended in order to make them conform to one specific transcriptional form.

### 2. איסתבינתא – ἐσθημα[ν]τα

איסתבינתא in Leviticus Rabba 37:2, ed Margulies, p. 857, which appears as a variant to קלוב = κολόβ[ιον], should be emended to איסתמנתא = εσθηματα in a nasalized form *ἐσθημαντα thus parallelling κολόβιον

### 3. קרבטין – κραβατιον

In textual variants, this word is sometimes confused with or substituted by קובטין. The latter form should not be viewed as a corruption, but actually represents [ἀκ]κουβιτον, which is of similar meaning.

### 4. פיפודיון – περιοδιον

The form פיפודיון appears in Leviticus Rabba 36:3, p. 843 as a variant of איפטייה = υπατεια. It should be slightly emended to read פיריודין – περιοδιον, which fits well into the context, and therefore consitutes a parallel tradition.

## אטלין

by

## Abraham Tal

An attempt has been made to explain אטלין – "a place of pagan worship" (Mekhilta de R. Yishmael, *Va'yehi Beshallah* 1, ed. Horowitz – Rabin, p. 83), as an Aramaic loanword אטלין, viz. a tree giving shade, derived from טל״ל = shade. This meaning becomes apparent from the Samaritan rendition of אשרה (Ex. 34:13 *et al*) as אטלה.

# The Phrase כיר יד and the Signing of the Second Tablets of the Decalogue in Tosefta and Midrash

by

Mordechai A. Friedman

The phrase כיר יד is not listed in any dictionary. In the first part of the paper, ample documentation for this phrase is adduced from Cairo Geniza documents, most of which were written in Eretz Israel and Fustat in the eleventh century. In these texts, it indicates handwriting or signature. In most of them it appears in Hebrew, but some Aramaic examples are also evident. Furthermore, *ker ed* "handwriting" is common in Samaritan Aramaic, both in liturgical poems and in texts of a midrashic nature *(Tibat Marqe)* dating from approximately the fourth century, recently published by Z. Ben-Hayyim. Almost all of the Samaritan texts refer to the Lord's "writing," and the phrase denotes the tablets of the Decalogue or the Tora. Late Samaritan Hebrew continued to use כיר יד ("handwritng") apparently until the present century, as may be seen from a passage in a unique collection of Samaritan responsa, a copy of which is found in the possession of the author.

It is argued that כיר יד is derived from the Mishnaic Hebrew root כיר used in the *pi'el* form, and that the basic meaning of the noun כיר is "line." Evidence for this derivation is adduced from Gaonic responsa. The Geniza texts and the Samaritan tradition prove that the correct orthography of this word in Mishnaic Hebrew is כייר and not כייד.

The second part of the paper discusses a passage in Tos. BQ 7:4 (ed. Lieberman, p. 29) and parallel sources. Here R. Yohanan b. Zakkai compares the second tablets of the Decalogue to the second writ of betrothal of a woman divorced by her husband, the king, after the first betrothal had been terminated due to an act of infidelity. While he had written the first deed with his own hand, he insisted that she hire a scribe to execute the second writ and merely agreed to give כתב הכר יד שלו. It is suggested that הכר יד, an old crux, may be a slightly corrupted form of כיר יד, familiar from part one of the paper. In context, it is clear that the king promised only to sign the second writ; and it is argued that this interpretation is required regardless of the proposed emendation. In antiquity, it was common for the groom to sign the writs of betrothal and marriage. Elsewhere, the sages claim that Moses wrote the second tablets, the Lord merely signing them; His signature is supposedly contained in the first word, אנכי ("I").

Appendix A examines the midrashim which have been identified as attributing

the writing of the second tablets to the Lord. Except for one late midrash, these are shown to be secondary literary adaptations of earlier sources which attribute the writing to Moses.

The difference of opinion as to who wrote the second tablets is associated with the ambiguous passage in Ex. 34:27-28 ("Write down these words," etc.). Appendix B examines a homily in Midrash Tanhuma which interprets verse 27 as referring to the writing of the entire Tora (in contrast to the Oral Law) and discusses the phrase ועד עכשיו המאזנים מעויין ("until now the scale is balanced.")

## The Ben Buyaᶜa Pentateuch Manuscript
### Evidence Concerning the Tiberian Massorah Prior to its General Acceptance

by

Rivka Yarkoni

An ancient manuscript of the Pentateuch dating from 930 CE, which was copied by Solomon and Ephraim ben Buyaᶜa, is located in the Saltykov – Shchedrin Library, Leningrad. This manuscript is vocalized and contains cantillations, based on the accepted Tiberian system, attributed to Aaron ben Asher, the renowned massorete whose Torah scroll was highly recommended by Maimonides. As a result of Maimonides' approval, the methodology of ben Asher was granted recognition as the most authoritative system.

It has been postulated that Aaron ben Asher flourished during the first half of the tenth century. An examination of the above mentioned manuscript, which was copied and vocalized during that very same period, reveals to what extent the system of ben Asher had already been considered authoritative by his contemporaries, much like the reception it received following the codified ruling of Maimonides.

## Medieval Hebrew Poems in Biblical Style

by

Ezra Fleischer

In the present article, the author analyzes the relationship between certain early medieval Hebrew poetic compositions and biblical poetry. He emphasizes the fact

that after having followed biblical models for more than a millenium, the Hebrew poets of the talmudic period abandoned this path. Early paytanic poetry heightened this departure from biblical poetry to an even greater extent, and by adopting rhyme, severed its last remaining ties with the poetic tradition of the Bible. Indeed the poetics of classical Piyyut reveal almost no affinity with the aesthetic foundations of biblical poetry.

Nevertheless, some highly interesting exceptions to this rule are extant in the vast corpus of medieval Hebrew poetry. In this connection, the author resumes the discussion concerning the alleged Qumranic 'Fragments of the Songs of David' discovered in the Geniza by A.A. Harkavi and re-published by D. Flusser and Sh. Safrai in *Te\`uda,* 2 (1982), pp. 83-105. A review of the recent editors' conjecture concerning the provenance of these texts and a thorough analysis of their linguistic and literary features, have led the present author to conclude that the texts are undoubtedly medieval; they were written, as already suggested by Harkavi, by some medieval false Messiah or 'prophet', who preferred that his mystical prayers reflect the archaic biblical style, rather than the paytanic poetics of his time.

This method of expression was by no means unique in the Middle Ages as evinced by a series of newly discovered poems from the Geniza, which display the very same biblical peculiarities. In the present article, nine fragments written in an almost perfect biblical style from two non-consecutive Geniza manuscripts (ULC T-S N.S. 112.20 and 151.199) are published. The poems, some of which are numbered (from 4 to 7), while two of them display an alphabetical acrostic, even contain occasional biblical cantillations typical to the poetic books of the Bible (Psalms, Proverbs and Job). Yet the texts explicitly mention the destruction of the Second Temple by Titus and bewail the length of the Exile; they are thus obviously post-exilic.

The poems are short prayers, some of them of a personal nature, but others bear a rather liturgical character. Although they seem to be quite conventional as far as their contents are concerned, they, nevertheless, include certain references which may be interpreted as allusions to sectarian (liturgical) usages.

In spite of the fact that there are no clear indications of the chronological setting of these texts, they, nevertheless, prove that the biblical model did indeed fascinate Hebrew poets during the Middle Ages, and that some of them even attempted, albeit in somewhat uncommon contexts, to shape their work according to this model.

# The "Ways" of the Hebrew Verb according to the Karaite Grammarians Abu-Al-Faraj Harun and the Author of *Me'or Ha'ayin*

by

D. Becker

This article deals with a unique phenomenon in the history of Hebrew grammar: a system which classifies the various forms of the Hebrew verb by dividing it into "ways", i.e. the basic forms of a certain conjugation in the following order: imperative, past, active participle, passive participle, future. Each "way" (or "ways") has its mnemonic sign. Each sign containe two syllables, and these signs are of two distinct types: (a) a sign whose first vowel is equal to the first vowel of the imperative form of the "way" and whose last vowel is equal to the first vowel of its past form *e.g.* under the sign הָשֵׁב – הָשִׁיב we have the "way" הָבֵא (b) a sign whose first vowel is equal to the last vowel of the imperative form of the "way", and whose last vowel is equal to the last vowel of its past form, *e.g.* under the sign הוּשַׁב – הוּשִׁיב we have the "way" עֲדִי. This system includes almost all of the various conjugations of the strong and the weak verbs.

The system of "ways" developed against the background of the conception of uniliteral and biliteral roots, which was ubiquitous during the tenth century until the time of Hayyūj. This signs system is extant in the works of two Karaite scholars: the well-known Abu Al-Faraj Hārūn (the first half of the eleventh century), and the anonymous author of a work on Hebrew grammar entitled *Me'or Ha'ayin* (the second half of the eleventh century, or the first half of the twelfth century). Both of these scholars lived after the completion of Hayyūj's works on the Hebrew verbs but were apparently unaware of their existence, or perhaps they ignored them.

The material published herein includes the following: (a) some manuscripts from the Second Firkovich Collection in Leningrad, (b) two leaves of a Cairo Geniza fragment now in the Taylor-Schechter Geniza Collection in Cambridge. The Leningrad manuscripts have been published in part by M.N. Zislin in Russian journals, while the Geniza fragment, identified by the author of the present article, has not been previously published. The article presents the material in its entirety, together with a comprehensive introduction analyzing the issue in detail.

# Palestine during the First Muslim Period (634 – 1099) – Additions, Notes and Corrections

by

## Moshe Gil

Seven years have elapsed since the publication of *Palestine during the First Muslim Period,* Tel Aviv, 1983. In the present article, the author focuses attention on 25 additional Geniza documents pertaining to the subjects dealt with in this work. The article also includes additional notes relating to the various sections of the book, based on novel Arabic sources, as well as on recent and previous studies. The decipherment of the text, interpretation and significance of some of the fragmentary documents edited in vol. II and III of the book have been greatly facilitated by virtue of additional fragments relating to these documents, recently identified by the author, which are published herein.

# Additional Biographical Data Concerning R. Moses Castro from a Geniza Fragment

by

## Abraham David

R. Moses b. Zadik Castro was one of the Spanish scholars of Jerusalem during the first half of the sixteenth century. He was a stepson of the famous Spanish Cabbalist, R. Abraham Ha-Levi and a nephew of R. Abraham Zacuo, the Spanish astronomer and historian. R. Moses was active in Jerusalem's communal leadership at the beginning of the second decade of the 16th century. He studied under the scholars of Jerusalem – R. Levi Ibn Haviv, R. David Ibn Shoshan and R. Jacob Berav – and in 1521 he was a member of one of its two talmudic academies. R. Moses Castro was involved in the famous Ordination controversy (1538); R. Jacob Berav of Safed planned to establish a supreme court, similar to the Sanhedrin of the Second Temple era. R. Levi Ibn Haviv of Jerusalem sharply opposed this innovation, mainly from an halakhic point of view. From one of his responsa it is apparent that he agreed with his master, R. Levi Ibn Haviv.

Several additional details concerning the biography of R. Moses Castro are evinced by a Jewish court decision issued in Cairo in 1547, (extent in the Geniza collection of the *Bodleian Library, Oxford; MS. Heb. e. 98 fol. 57)*, which is published herein.

This document deals with the claim of R. Moses' widow, Esther, for an amount of money from Samuel, the son of the late merchant and philanthropist, Abraham Ibn Sanji, and Abraham Ibn Zur, both of them merchants in Egypt at that time. It is thus likely that they were the partners of R. Moses in an unknown business. From this source and others it may be concluded that R. Moses Castro passed away between the years 1538-1547.

## Love of God in the Teachings of R. Shneur Zalman of Liadi

by

Yoram Jacobson

The present article deals with the essence of loving the Divine, its significance for human existence and its various phases which reflect the stages of man's spiritual development. Love of God represents the most important experience of human religious worship, and when achieving its ultimate, man virtually stands on the threshold of *Unio Mystica*.

Described as the deep-seated desire of man's heart (רצון הלב), Love of God appears as the central phenomenon in the emotional realm. Man is requested to abolish his own wishes and to discover the Divine Will in the depth of his heart. In this manner, man participates in achieving the ultimate goal of discovering that God is everywhere (בתחתונים דירה), even in the demonic realm, which, according to the Hasidic system, is represented by man's "closed" and self-concentrated heart. In his love, man "opens" his heart and activates the divine life in it, and thus makes remarkable steps towards the discovery of his inner divine essence. However, man's intensive longing towards God is a testimony to the fact that he still recognizes his own personal qualities, acts according to his own selfish desires, and has not yet reached the ultimate, in which there is nothing but God. However, upon achieving the zenith in his love of the Divine, man has overcome his own self-consciousness and does not experience any more love, since he has united himself with the Deity and there is no longer any gap between himself and God.

Due to its divine origin, the Love of God is hidden in the depth of every Jewish soul. This conclusion evinces two related corollaries: a) This profound love is intangible and lacks a conscious appearance; b) It is obscured by the 'shells' of the soul, i.e. by individual desires and by man's self-consciousness. However, when man unveils this hidden love by virtue of his spiritual efforts, its revelation is effected in several stages:

a) The conceived idea of loving God via one's intellect (במוחו ובתעלומות לבו).

b) 'Eternal Love' (אהבת עולם) which encompasses man's spiritual desire to achieve

higher and higher levels of divine existence. This love is characterized by a very clear aspect of self-consciousness. Since he is connected with the material world, the worldly aspects of love provide man with the energy to strengthen its holy flame. The Hasidic system interprets the appearance of this love from its hidden source as an indication of the Lurianic process of redeeming the holy sparks.

c) The final elevated stage of 'Ultimate Love' (אהבה רבה), which has no apparent motive and is completely devoid of any individual dimension or private interest. In this profound experience, the 'shell' that blocks man's mind and emotional life no longer exists. R. Shneur Zalman reiterates the affirmation that this stage signifies the achieving of the world's ultimate goal: the self-discovery that there is nothing but God, on earth and in the depth of man's soul.

# The 1862 Contract ("Pesher") for the Distribution of the Monetary Assets of Western European Jewry

by

Svi Karagila

The fulcrum of Diaspora – *Yishuv* relations centered on diaspora support for the Jewish communities of Eretz-Israel. At the beginning of the 19th century, Western European Jewry reorganized its systems of economic support for the *Yishuv* through the establishment of the Organization of *Peqidim* and *Amarkalim* in Amsterdam. The efficiency and modern style of this organization led to the strengthening of economic support. The monies collected were distributed among the various Jewish communities *(Kolelim)* on the basis of mutual agreement. Nevertheless, this led to a long-term conflict between the Ashkenazi and Sephardi communities, since each demanded a larger share of the resources. These demands were made to the Organization. This paper deals with the conflict ensuing the amended arrangement proposed by the Organization in 1860.

Economic circumstances resulting from the Crimean War (1854-1856) made it much more difficult for the *Kolelim* to obtain financial support from Eastern Europe and Turkey, and so economic support from the Western European countries became the major source of investment funding. This placed undue pressure on the Organization which found it difficult to honor its contracts; the overseers thus passed on the responsibility of allocating the limited funds to the *Kolelim*. This unique situation presented the *Yishuv*, with an opportunity to determine its own economic support for the first time. Unable to meet this challenge, the *Yishuv*

reverted the responsibility for allocating the funds back to the Organization. These events attest to the major role played by the Organization of *Peqidim* and *Amarkalim* in Amsterdam through the second half of the 19th century, as well as its decisive influence.

## Hebrew Enlightenment Playrights and the Bible

by

Ben-Ami Feingold

The adaptation of biblical drama represents one of the characteristic aspects of the Hebrew Enlightenment *(Haskalah)* period in the history of Modern Hebrew Literature.

To be sure, the playright's subject matter bears traditional canonic references which impede his poetic license. On the one hand, his expressed intention is to interpret biblical themes from an artistic and philosophic stance which calls for modernity and autonomy, but on the other hand, he is bound by traditional hermeneutics and theological dogma.

The modern secular contemporary playright overcomes this confusing dilemma by simply disregarding it, whereas *Haskalah* playrights acted in a more complex fashion. Though they were, relatively speaking, modern playrights, the *Haskalah* writers still belonged to the old world and thus made the pretension of representing traditional orthodox approaches to the Bible.

This confusing situation was detrimental to the inner coherence of the biblical plays of the period, which imply two conflicting norms, whose integration into a coherent comprehensive artistic form was nigh impossible.

Most of the plays open with an introduction declaring the author's positive motivation towards traditional exegetics. The *Haskalah* playrights quote talmudic and rabbinical sources as proof of their acceptance of authorized canonics norms. Although they accept the rabbinical ban on the theatre as a symbol of idolatry and justify it, they, nevertheless, speak highly of drama that provides answers to hermeneutical and didactic questions. The biblical play, they claim, makes the Bible more explicit and strengthens faith.

However the actual treatment of the biblical subject matter denies such presumptions. The playright, despite his orthodox credo, is a creative artist. Drama has it's own rules. His adopted subject matter invites modern approaches and perspectives: psychological, political *etc.* The *Haskalah* playright tries, even

unconsciously, to ignore his announced canonic norms, and to develop theme, plot and character from an entirely non-canonic point of view. Nevertheless, whenever his play comes to any decisive climax or turning point, he immediately turns back to his canonic presumptions and transforms, sometimes arbitrarily, the basic traits of plot and character established during the course of the drama. King David, for example, can never play the villain. And if he unfortunately does so, there is always a loyal playright who will restore his good name and treat him in traditional fashion as 'King Saviour', despite his actual impersonation during the course of the play.

This article examines various examples of the above-mentioned literary and cultural phenomenon, which exemplify one of the most interesting features of biblical drama during the Hebrew Enlightenment and which also focus on the interaction between art and ideology in general.