

## ICI REPORT FOR JANUARY 2014

### (a) SBL INTERNATIONAL MEETING IN VIENNA, AUSTRIA

The SBL is joining forces with the EABS (European Association of Biblical Studies) again for the International Meeting which will take place in Vienna, Austria, from 6-10 July. See <http://sbl-site.org/meetings/Internationalmeeting.aspx> for more information. REMEMBER: The cut-off time for the submission of paper proposals is **11:59 PM (23:59) Eastern Standard Time (UTC -5) on Tuesday, February 4, 2014.**

### (b) TRAVEL GRANTS FOR THE 2014 ANNUAL MEETING IN SAN DIEGO

The SBL Travel Grants offer opportunity to four current SBL members to attend the Annual Meeting, participate in the program, enhance their professional development, and network with fellow scholars. These grants help facilitate the work of Program Units and the International Cooperation Initiative (ICI). Two of the four awards (\$2,500.00 each) are made to members who have submitted accepted proposals to a Program Unit and have demonstrated that the work of the unit and the field will be enhanced by the person's participation. The Society will provide lodging (one room, single or shared) for four nights and complimentary meeting registration. Preference is given to members from ICI countries. The other two awards (\$1,000 each) will be granted to members participating in the ICI who have never attended an Annual Meeting. The grants defray transportation, hotel accommodations, and other expenses incurred for the Annual Meeting. Applications for the 2014 Annual Meeting will be accepted until March 1, 2014. For more information on applying for an SBL Travel Grant, please contact Beth Tracy [beth.tracy@sbl-site.org](mailto:beth.tracy@sbl-site.org).

### (c) PUBLICATION IN ANEM/MACO

ANEM/MACO is a series that was established by the SBL at the request of the International Cooperation Initiative (ICI), and which is co-edited by Ehud Ben Zvi and Roxanna Flammini. The series publishes volumes on the Ancient Near East (including ancient Israel) electronically and makes them freely available for download. (Paperback and hardback versions of the volumes are available too, for a reasonable price.) Any work published in ANEM/MACO is freely available in electronic version to anyone in perpetuity. Below is information on the latest volume, and we are looking forward to three more volumes that will be published in the coming months.

To view the volumes published in the series, please go to [http://www.sbl-site.org/publications/Books ANEmonographs.aspx](http://www.sbl-site.org/publications/Books_ANEmonographs.aspx)

**(d) PUBLICATION IN IVBS**

IVBS is a series that was established by the SBL at the request of the International Cooperation Initiative (ICI), and which is co-edited by Monica Melanchthon and Jione Havea (who took over as co-general editor from Louis Jonker in November 2013). IVBS encourages in particular submissions from scholars in the present seven international regions for which it has editorial boards: Africa, Central and Eastern Europe, Latin America, Middle East-South Asia, Northeast Asia, Pacific, and Southeast Asia. Interregional collaborations are also welcome. IVBS publishes works in English and in any other language for which its editors can find qualified peer reviewers. Any work published in IVBS is freely available to anyone in perpetuity. The series publishes work generally in the area of reception history and criticism. The scope is not limited to any particular biblical text or historical timeframe. The works will mainly be published in English and, wherever possible, also in primary languages of authors. For more information please go to <http://ivbs.sbl-site.org/home.aspx>

**(e) SBL GREEN OPEN ACCESS POLICY**

The Society of Biblical Literature has responded to the changing practices of modern international scholarship by developing a publishing program that provides books in multiple digital formats and books and journals in library databases for convenient one-stop researching. In addition, SBL publishes two open-access book series through its International Cooperation Initiative: Ancient Near Eastern Monographs and International Voices in Biblical Studies (see above). The ICI [Online Book](#) initiative also provides to students and scholars in ICI-qualifying countries free electronic access to many SBL publications as well as the publications of partner publishers.

Now SBL, through the careful review of the Research and Publications Committee, has developed a Green Open Access Policy for authors who contribute to the SBL publishing program.

The general policy states: The SBL endorses a Green Open Access (GOA) policy. This policy allows the author to post or archive a PDF file of the postprint manuscript in specified types of open-access locations—the author’s institutional repository (IR) and the author’s personal or institutional website—following an eighteen-month embargo from publication date. The complete article citation must be provided as specified by SBL.

For complete policy details, please select this [link](#) or go to the lower right of the [SBL Publications page](#), where authors may also find a [permission request form](#).

**(f) PUBLICATIONS: ONLINE BOOKS – NEW BOOKS ADDED**

(For the full list, please go to [http://www.sbl-site.org/publications/Books\\_ICIbooks.aspx](http://www.sbl-site.org/publications/Books_ICIbooks.aspx))

**Jeremiah Closer Up: The Prophet and the Book**

Lundbom, Jack R., *Jeremiah Closer Up: The Prophet and the Book*. Hebrew Bible Monographs 31. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2010.

Closer up than what? Many recent studies of Jeremiah leave us with but a faint glimmer of this great Hebrew prophet; in some he disappears completely into later tradition. Some scholars think that the book of Jeremiah lacks historical veracity: when it was composed, supposedly in the late exilic or postexilic periods, historical memories had been dimmed and ideology had come to dominate the Jeremiah legacy. The present essays combine to argue that both the prophet and his book can be viewed “closer up” than the imagination of many modern-day interpreters will allow.

The first three essays discuss the text, rhetoric and composition of the book of Jeremiah. The longer Hebrew text is given preference over the Greek Septuagint text, which means that we can dispense entirely with the idea that scribes were busily writing, editing and expanding the Jeremiah book in Babylon. Rhetorical and other delimiting criteria show that Jeremiah’s so-called ‘Temple Sermon’ (7.1-15) is rather a cluster of three oracles manifesting a rudimentary form of logic. Finally, a correlation of Gedaliah’s murder with the exile of 582 argues for a nearly four-year existence of the remnant community at Mizpah, more than enough time for Jeremiah and Baruch to write up the events following the destruction of Jerusalem.

The remaining essays discuss Jeremiah’s views of history, the created order, the covenant, and nations of the world, as well as the prophet’s so-called ‘confessions’. These extraordinary insights into the interior disposition of a Hebrew prophet reveal how Jeremiah felt about the word he had to preach, and what impact it had on him personally. The confessions are analysed both as formal psalm-like laments, and as gems of rhetorical composition.

**Gregory of Nyssa: Homilies on the Song of Songs**

Norris, Richard A., Jr., trans. *Gregory of Nyssa: Homilies on the Song of Songs*. Writings from the Greco Roman World 13. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2012.

Gregory of Nyssa’s fifteen homilies on the Song of Songs offer an important resource for the history of Christian biblical exegesis, as well as for the history of Christian ascetical and spiritual teaching, and stand alongside Origen’s commentary on the Song as a

source for the later interpretative tradition. In addition to offering the original text and first English translation of all fifteen homilies, Norris provides an analysis of the characteristic themes of Gregory's ascetical teaching, emphasizes its connection in his mind with the institution of baptism, and stresses the degree to which Gregory sees the teaching of the Song as addressed not to a special class of believers but to any and all Christians.

### **Paul and Scripture: Extending the Conversation**

Stanley, Christopher D., ed. *Paul and Scripture: Extending the Conversation*. Early Christianity and Its Literature 9. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2012.

This book, which grew out of the Society of Biblical Literature's Paul and Scripture Seminar, explores some of the methodological problems that have arisen during the last few decades of scholarly research on the apostle Paul's engagement with his ancestral Scriptures. Essays explore the historical backgrounds of Paul's interpretive practices, the question of Paul's "faithfulness" to the context of his biblical references, the presence of Scripture in letters other than the Hauptbriefe, and the role of Scripture in Paul's theology. All of the essays look at old questions through new lenses in an effort to break through scholarly impasses and advance the debate in new directions.

### **Armenian Apocrypha Relating to Abraham**

Stone, Michael E., *Armenian Apocrypha Relating to Abraham*. Early Judaism and Its Literature 37. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2012.

This volume introduces a cycle of stories about Abraham as preserved in fifteen unpublished, late medieval manuscripts in Armenian, published here in English for the first time with commentaries, annotations, and critical apparatus. The texts present embroidered Abraham stories dealing with his youth, his life in Egypt, the binding of Isaac, the story of Melchizedek, and other tales. Embedding Jewish, Christian, Islamic, and other ancient traditions, these texts demonstrate mutual borrowing and influence over centuries.

### **Reading Paul's Letter to the Romans**

Sumney, Jerry L. *Reading Paul's Letter to the Romans*. Resources for Biblical Study, 73. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2012.

In this volume, leading scholars in the study of Romans invite students and nonspecialists to engage this text and thus come to a more complete understanding of both the letter and Paul's theology. The contributors include interpreters with different

understandings of Romans so that readers see a range of interpretations of central issues in the study of the text. Each essay includes a short review of different positions on a topic and an argument for the author's position, set out in clear, nontechnical terms, making the volume an ideal classroom tool.

### **Reel Revelations: Apocalypse and Film**

Wallis, John and Lee Quinby, Editors. *Reel Revelations: Apocalypse and Film*. Bible in the Modern World, 31. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2010.

In the last decades, writers and directors have increasingly found the Book of Revelation a fitting cinematic muse for an age beset by possibilities of world destruction. Many apocalyptic films stay remarkably close to the idea of apocalypse as a revelation about the future, often quoting or using imagery from Revelation, as well as its Old Testament antecedents in Daniel, Ezekiel, and Isaiah.

The apocalyptic paradigm often instigates social criticism. Kim Paffenroth examines how zombie films deploy apocalyptic language and motifs to critique oppressive values in American culture. Lee Quinby shows how Richard Kelly's *Southland Tales* critiques not only social and economic crises in the USA but also Revelation's depictions of Good versus Evil as absolute oppositions. Frances Flannery points out how Josh Whedon's *Serenity* deconstructs the apocalypse precisely by using elements of it, depicting humans as their own created monsters.

### **(g) EVENTS**

The SBL maintains a significant list of events taking place anywhere in the globe. For the full list please go to <http://www.sbl-site.org/meetings/events.aspx>

A selection of events is listed below.

Please provide information on conferences in your region, including calls for papers, to Sharon Johnson at [sharon.johnson@sbl-site.org](mailto:sharon.johnson@sbl-site.org).

#### **June 22-25, 2014**

#### **[Meeting of Society of Asian Biblical Studies \(SABS\)](#)**

The next meeting of the SABS will be held from the 22nd to the 25th of June 2014 (arrival 22nd and departure 26th) in Chiang Mai, Thailand. The meeting is jointly hosted by the Church of Christ in Thailand and the McGilvary College of Divinity, Payap University. The theme of the conference is "Violence in the Human and Earth

Community—Asian Biblical Response.” For more information regarding this conference go to <http://www.sabs-site.com/>. Please write to [the Secretary](#) for any queries.

**July 6-10, 2014**

**[SBL International Meeting &  
European Association of Biblical Studies Meeting](#)**

To be held in Vienna. Call for papers is presently open and is closing on February 4, 2014.

**(h) NEW FREE FONT – SBL BibLit**

The Society of Biblical Literature is pleased to announce the newest font in the SBL fonts series, SBL BibLit. This font contains Latin, Greek, and Hebrew characters, including the characters suitable for the transliteration of Ancient Near Eastern and Mediterranean languages. When combined with appropriate software keyboards, SBL BibLit allows for the use of one font for all biblical languages. For more information, please go to <http://www.sbl-site.org/assets/pdfs/2013FontAnnouncement.pdf>

**(i) PLEASE PASS THE INFORMATION.**

It is surprising that we continue to have correspondence from scholars in ICI countries that are just learning about the ICI programs. Please share this newsletter with your colleagues and students and become a liaison for your institution and SBL. Your advocacy for ICI strengthens biblical studies as a discipline and builds relationships in the global community.

We wish all readers of this newsletter a prosperous 2014!

Louis Jonker, SBL – International Cooperation Initiative