

SOCIETY OF BIBLICAL LITERATURE ICI REPORT FOR SEPTEMBER 2015

(a) SPANISH VERSION OF NEWSLETTER

With the July 2015 newsletter we did the experiment to let the newsletter be translated into Spanish in order to determine how many scholars would want to receive it in Spanish. However, since the demand was very low (two requests), we decided for now not to do this on a regular basis. The explanation for the low demand is probably that our ICI address list presently includes mostly English native speakers or from Anglophone parts of the world. We will rather dedicate our energy to including more colleagues from Latin-America into our ICI address list at this stage, and should the demand to have a Spanish version increase later, we will be happy to provide that on a regular basis.

(b) VISA PROBLEMS

We are aware of the fact that many scholars from ICI countries often experience administrative problems to get a visa in time to attend the international and annual SBL conferences. Although bureaucratic protocols beyond our control are often involved in these difficulties, we are having discussions within the ICI leadership on how scholars can be assisted in this regard. Although no final answers are available yet, the following guidelines can be offered at this stage:

- Start planning your attendance of a particular conference well in advance – at least six months;
- Enquire well in advance from the particular embassy or consulate in your own country what the exact requirements are for applying for a visa, and how long the application would take to process;
- Make absolutely sure that you attend to all the requirements, and that you submit your visa application well in advance;
- Should you need an official invitation letter from the SBL Head Office, or from the organizing committee in the country where the SBL International meeting will take place, request that well in advance in order to include in your visa application (the contact details of the SBL staff member handling these requests is: Samantha Spitzner samantha.spitzner@sbl-site.org);
- Enquire regularly at the embassy or consulate where you have submitted your application.

(c) THE SBL ANNUAL MEETING 2015, ATLANTA

The SBL Annual Meeting will be held from November 21-24, 2015 in Atlanta, Georgia. Please note that the deadline for paper proposals has passed now.

Registration is open now, together with the conference accommodation reservations. The online version of the program book has been published on the website as well. For more information, see: <http://sbl-site.org/meetings/AnnualMeeting.aspx>

An **ICI Forum discussion** will be held again. Please join us there to hear what ICI offers to you, and to make suggestions of new initiatives. The meeting will be held on **Saturday, 21 November 2015 at 09h30-10h30AM. The venue will be Room 223 (level 2), Hyatt hotel.**

Like last year, we hereby supply a list of **accommodation options** that are a little further away from the conference venues, but are more affordable for ICI attendees and of good quality.

Hotel	Address	Price	Website
Savannah Suites Pine St.	140 Pine St. NE, Atlanta, GA	\$46/night	www.savannahsuites.com
The Ashby House	1071 Martin Luther King Dr., Atlanta, GA	\$225/person for 5 night stay	www.theashbyhouse.com
Red Roof Inn & Suites	585 Parkway Drive NE, Atlanta, GA	\$59/night	www.redroof.com/atlanta
AAE Wellesley Hotel & Hostel	1377 Virginia Ave.	\$61/night	www.atl.aeworldhotels.com
Motel 6 Atlanta Downtown	311 Courtland St., Atlanta, GA	\$80/night	www.motel6.com
Castleberry Inn & Suites	186 Northside Dr. SW, Atlanta, GA	\$92/night	www.castleberryinn.com

(d) THE NEXT SBL INTERNATIONAL MEETING: SEOUL 2016

The 2016 International Meeting will take place in Seoul from 3–7 July 2016. Watch this space and the SBL website for more information on the Call for Papers etc. Another ICI panel discussion will be held there, and more information will be communicated in due time. This will be another excellent opportunity to interact with our Asian colleagues. We wish the local organizing committee well for the hard work that lies ahead.

(e) PUBLICATION IN ANCIENT NEAR EAST MONOGRAPHS (ANEM) / MONOGRAFÍAS SOBRE EL ANTIGUO CERCAÑO ORIENTE (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 (with the assistance of Alan Lenzi and Juan Tebes). 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. To view the volumes published in the series, please go to http://www.sbl-site.org/publications/Books_ANEmonographs.aspx

The latest volume in ANEM/MACO is:

Disembodied Souls: The Nefesh in Israel and Kindred Spirits in the Ancient Near East, with an Appendix on the Katumuwa Inscription

Authored by Richard Steiner

Biblical scholars have long claimed that the Israelites “could not conceive of a disembodied *nefesh* [soul].” In this book, Richard C. Steiner rejects that claim based on a broad spectrum of textual, linguistic, archaeological, and anthropological evidence spanning the millennia from prehistoric times to the present. The biblical evidence includes a prophecy of Ezekiel condemning women who pretend to trap the wandering souls of sleeping people—a prophecy that has been only partially understood until now because of the obscure technical terms that it contains. The extrabiblical evidence suggests that a belief in the existence of disembodied souls was part of the common religious heritage of the peoples of the ancient Near East.

To download the book for free, paste the following link into your browser:

http://www.sbl-site.org/assets/pdfs/pubs/9781628370775_OA.pdf

(f) PUBLICATION IN INTERNATIONAL VOICES IN BIBLICAL STUDIES (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. 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>. If you would consider publishing your work in this series, feel free to contact one of the two general editors, [Monica Melanchthon](#) or [Jione Havea](#).

The latest volume in IVBS is:

Migration and Diaspora: Exegetical Voices of Women in Northeast Asian Countries

Edited by Hisako Kinukawa

The third meeting of the Society of Asian Biblical Studies was held at Sabah in June 2012, addressing the theme of Migration and Diaspora. This book contains five essays written by women from Northeast Asian countries for this occasion. Three are on Hebrew Scriptures and two are on the Christian Testament. All writers used a cultural analysis of their own social locations, and literary, historical, and postcolonial criticism as their methods of reading the texts, even though they may not explicitly mention which criticisms are used.

To download the book for free, paste the following link into your browser:

<http://ivbs.sbl-site.org/uploads/IVBS%20PAPERS1.pdf>

(g) PUBLICATIONS: ONLINE BOOKS – NEW BOOKS ADDED

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

Paul as Infant and Nursing Mother: Metaphor, Rhetoric, and Identity in 1 Thessalonians 2:5–8

Mcneel, Jennifer Houston. *Paul as Infant and Nursing Mother: Metaphor, Rhetoric, and Identity in 1 Thessalonians 2:5–8*. Early Christianity and Its Literature 12. Atlanta: SBL Press, 2014.

Paul employed metaphors of childbirth or breastfeeding in four out of the seven undisputed epistles. In this book, McNeel uses cognitive metaphor theory and social identity analysis to examine the meaning and function of these maternal metaphors. She asserts that metaphors carry cognitive content and that they are central to how humans process information, construct reality, and shape group identity.

Features:

- A focus on “identity” as the way in which people understand themselves in relation to one another, to society, and to those perceived as outsiders

- Examination of metaphor as part of Paul’s rhetorical strategy
- Integration of the work of philosopher Max Black with the work of cognitive linguists George Lakoff and Mark Johnson

Historical Roots of the Old Testament (1200-63 BCE)

Nelson, Richard D. *Historical Roots of the Old Testament (1200–63 BCE)*. Biblical Encyclopedia 13. Atlanta: SBL Press, 2014.

Richard D. Nelson charts the beginning of the Iron Age and the emergence of Israel and its literature, including the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, the downfall of Israel, Judah in the Assyrian and Babylonian periods, Yehud and Persia, and the Hellenistic period. Each chapter provides a summary of the period under consideration, a historical reconstruction of the period, based on biblical and extrabiblical evidence; a critical study of the biblical literature deriving from or associated with the period, and theological conclusions that readers may draw from the relevant biblical texts.

Features:

- Balanced coverage of controversial topics
- Extensive bibliographies at the beginning of each chapter
- Lists of rulers and key dates for reference and classroom use

(h) ICI TEACHING COLLABORATION PROGRAM

In order to facilitate the exchange of scholars and institutions in biblical studies across the globe, a teaching collaboration program is run by the ICI. The facility consists of lists of scholars and institutions interested in exchanges that are made available on the SBL website. See: <http://sbl-site.org/educational/ICITeaching.aspx>. If you or your institution is interested in such collaboration, please visit the site and enroll yourself in these lists.

(i) JOURNAL OF BIBLICAL LITERATURE (JBL) ARCHIVE

Take note that an archive with JBL articles from volume 122.1 of 2003 through volume 130.1 of 2011 is now available online to people accessing the SBL website from any ICI country. See http://www.sbl-site.org/publications/ICI_JBLarchive.aspx. All articles in those volumes can be downloaded for free!

(j) CONVENIENT SEARCH TOOLS ON THE SBL WEBSITE

The SBL website (on the SBL Press page) has a facility where one can search the full text of all SBL books! For this very convenient tool, see:

<http://sbl-site.org/publications/default.aspx>

For searching reviews of a vast number of academic publications, see the website of Review of Biblical Literature (RBL) at:

<http://www.bookreviews.org/>

(k) 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—mainly those taking place in ICI regions.

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

November 18-19, 2015**Bible, Empire, and Reception History**

Columbia Theological Seminary will host a conference exploring the production and use of the Bible in various historical contexts of empire. It will consider the use of postcolonial criticism in interpreting biblical texts and its implications in modern contexts. The conference will consist of four sessions, each focusing on a particular geographical or historical set of contexts.

See <http://bibleempireandreceptionhistory.net/>

November 21-24, 2015**2015 SBL Annual Meeting**

Atlanta, Georgia

<http://sbl-site.org/meetings/Annualmeeting.aspx>

December 20-23, 2015**Philosophical Investigation of the Hebrew Scriptures, Talmud and Midrash**

The conference will take place in Jerusalem and will explore "The Questions of God's Perfection." The conference will explore whether understanding God as perfect being is appropriate as a basis for Jewish theology and for religious belief more generally, bringing together perspectives on this question from philosophers, theologians, scholars

of Bible and scholars of rabbinic literature. Invited participants will be Oliver Crisp, James Diamond, Jerome Gellman, Lenn E. Goodman, Moshe Halbertal, Yoram Hazony, Brian Leftow, Berel Dov Lerner Alan Mittleman, David Shatz, Eleonore Stump, Alan Torrance, Shmuel Trigano, and Howard Wettstein. Scholars wishing to present papers at the conference should submit abstracts of 500-1,000 words together with a current CV to meiravj@herzlinstitute.org
<http://bibleandphilosophy.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/2015-conference-announcement-v-4.pdf>

July 3-7, 2016**2016 SBL International Meeting**

Seoul, South Korea

<http://sbl-site.org/meetings/Internationalmeeting.aspx>

August 2-5, 2016**General Meeting of Studiorum Novi Testament Societas**

Society for New Testament Studies (SNTS) will hold their 2016 General Meeting in Montreal, Canada.

For updates and information, see <https://www.edugroepen.nl/sites/SNTS/default.aspx>

September 4-9, 2016**2016 Meeting of the International Organization for the Study of the Old Testament (IOSOT)**

For the first time in its more than 50-years history the IOSOT will convene on African soil in 2016. The triennial meeting will take place at the University of Stellenbosch, Western Cape, South Africa. Updates and more information will be posted on the <http://www.iosot2016.co.za/> Register there with your e-mail address to receive automatic updates and the Call for Papers. Questions contact: LCJ@sun.ac.za

November 19-22, 2016**2016 SBL Annual Meeting**

San Antonio, Texas

<http://sbl-site.org/meetings/Annualmeeting.aspx>

(I) SBL EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES FREELY AVAILABLE

There are links to numerous educational resources on the SBL website. The following are freely available: (i) Resources on Teaching the Bible; (ii) Freely downloadable Hebrew, Greek and Transliteration fonts (amongst others); (iii) Resources on Bible translations and commentaries; and (iv) Research tool resources.

See <http://sbl-site.org/educational/default.aspx>

Also remember to check the newly-developed **Bible Odyssey** online portal. See www.bibleodyssey.org. This portal offers wonderful educational resources, but also resources for broader popular audiences. Use this site to popularize our academic studies in faith communities!

(m) PLEASE PASS ON THE INFORMATION

Please share this newsletter with your colleagues and students and become a liaison for your institution and SBL. (Please contact our liaison officer, [Tim Langille](#), if you would like to assist as contact person in your region.) Your advocacy for ICI strengthens biblical studies as a discipline and builds relationships in the global community. Thank you to those who have done so in the past—we also receive letters from people who received the newsletter from someone else.

With best wishes for your Bible scholarship!

Louis Jonker, SBL – International Cooperation Initiative