

## **SOCIETY OF BIBLICAL LITERATURE ICI REPORT FOR FEBRUARY 2018**

### **(a) THE SBL ANNUAL MEETING 2018, DENVER**

The next SBL Annual Meeting will take place in Denver, Colorado, from 17 to 20 November 2018. The Call for Papers is open until 7 March 2018!! See this link: <https://www.sbl-site.org/meetings/Annualmeeting.aspx>

### **(b) THE SBL INTERNATIONAL MEETING 2018, HELSINKI**

The next SBL International Meeting will take place in Helsinki, Finland, from 30 July to 3 August 2018. The Call for Papers is closed. See this link: <https://www.sbl-site.org/meetings/Internationalmeeting.aspx>

A forum meeting of ICI will again take place at the Helsinki conference. The details will be conveyed through this newsletter at a later stage.

#### **Visa letters for travel to the Annual or International Meetings**

In order to facilitate attendance by those in ICI countries at SBL Congresses, [Samantha Spitzner](#) has been appointed as the SBL visa coordinator. Samantha will advise members who need visas in order to travel to and participate in the Annual or International Meetings. She will not prepare applications, but will be a source of information to aid members in submitting applications and will provide letters of intent if needed by those participating in the meeting as presenters or committee members. For more information, please contact Samantha directly.

### **(c) NEW!!!! SBL INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL AWARDS**

**Deadline: 1 March 2018!!**

The SBL International Travel Awards offer opportunities to current SBL members outside North America to attend the Annual or International Meeting, to participate in the program, to enhance their professional development, and to build their network with fellow scholars. These grants help facilitate the work of

Program Units and the International Cooperation Initiative (“ICI”). These grants are intended to support underrepresented and underresourced scholars. As such, preference will be given to women, people of historically underrepresented ethnicities, and members from ICI-qualifying countries. A key criterion is an applicant’s demonstrable financial need.

Four International Travel Award Panels (ITAP) will administer the awards each year, serving four geographic regions:

- Africa and Middle East
- Asia and Pacific
- Eastern Europe
- Latin America and Caribbean

For awards offered in 2018, each ITAP will administer \$3,000 in awards in each region. The panels may determine the best distribution of funds (e.g., as one \$1000 and one \$2000 award, or as three awards of \$1000 each). The applicants must attend the Annual or International Meetings, but may or may not participate in the program, depending upon their needs expressed in the application. All grants include lodging (one room, single or shared) for four nights and complimentary meeting registration. Recipients may not have attended an Annual or International Meeting within the last five (5) years.

<https://www.sbl-site.org/membership/AMtravelgrant.aspx>

(d) **PUBLICATION IN ANCIENT NEAR EAST MONOGRAPHS (ANEM) AN**

ANEM is a series that was established by the SBL at the request of the International Cooperation Initiative (ICI), jointly published with the Universidad Católica Argentina’s Centro de Estudios de Historia del Antiguo Oriente (CEHAO) and co-edited by Alan Lenzi and Juan Manuel Tebes. The series publishes volumes on the Ancient Near East (including ancient Israel) both in print and electronically, making them freely available for download. Paperback and hardback versions of the volumes are available, for a reasonable price.

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) (SBL English version)

<http://www.uca.edu.ar/anem> (CEHAO Spanish version)

The latest volumes in ANEM is:

**ASTER, S.Z. Reflections of Empire in Isaiah 1-39: Responses to Assyrian Ideology. Ancient Near East Monographs – Monografías sobre el Antiguo Oriente, Volume 19. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature – Centro de Estudios de Historia del Antiguo Oriente, 2017. 382 pp. ISBN 9781628372014**

In this new book Shawn Zelig Aster relates the prophecies found in First Isaiah to the historical events of the 8th century BCE, when Assyria controlled much of the ancient Near East. Aster elucidates the arguments of Isaiah 1–2, 6–8, 10–12, 14, 19, 31, and 36–37 by explaining that the passages contain hidden polemic along with the imperial propaganda of the Assyrian empire. Aster illustrates that the prophet adapts motifs from Assyrian propaganda, while subverting Assyrian claims to universal dominion. Aster argues that Isaiah does this in order to promote belief in a single omnipotent God, more powerful than any human empire. The book exposes the meaning behind these passages of Isaiah, as well as the history of Israel in the period 745–701 BCE.

Features:

- A critique of the predominant scholarly position that dates the material of First Isaiah to the Babylonian period and later.
- An analysis of the theology of First Isaiah in relation to Assyrian imperial propaganda.
- A strong case for dating First Isaiah to the time of Tiglath-pileser III, Sargon, and Sennacherib.

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

[https://www.sbl-site.org/assets/pdfs/pubs/9780884142720\\_OA.pdf](https://www.sbl-site.org/assets/pdfs/pubs/9780884142720_OA.pdf)

**(e) 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:

**Nofoaiga, V. A Samoan Reading of Discipleship in Matthew. Atlanta: SBL Press, 2017.**

A reading of discipleship as service from the ancient Galilee to contemporary Samoa

The Bible contains a collection of perspectives that should not be privileged over and against the perspectives of readers from other lands. This book offers an alternative understanding of discipleship under the influence of the Samoan tautua (servant), for whom the needs of family and local people are foremost, and approaches in biblical criticism that affirm locatedness of readers. Because discipleship is also about place, which might be in-between spaces, Nofoaiga offers tautuaileva (service in-between spaces) readings of Matthew 4:12–25 and Matthew 7:24–8:22 that emphasize place (Galilee) as well as the marginalized and excluded (the crowd). With the twirlings and ebbings expected from natives of oral cultures,

Nofoaiga holds the complexity of tautuaileva in this study and offers it as his contribution to the assembling and assembly of islander criticism.

Features:

*Tautuaileva*, or service in-between spaces or in relational places, as a method of islander criticism.

A critique of traditional interpretations of the meaning of discipleship as abandoning family, duty, and responsibility.

Glossary of important Samoan terms and phrases.

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

[http://www.sbl-site.org/assets/pdfs/pubs/9780884142621\\_OA.pdf](http://www.sbl-site.org/assets/pdfs/pubs/9780884142621_OA.pdf)

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

For a **full alphabetic list of all publications available for free in the ICI book repository program**, please go to:

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

**Dowling Long, Siobhán. *The Sacrifice of Isaac: The Reception of a Biblical Story in Music*. The Bible in the Modern World 54. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2013.**

The biblical story of the sacrifice of Isaac (Genesis 22), or the Akedah in Hebrew tradition, has inspired composers, artists, writers, and dramatists down through the centuries to produce some of the greatest musical, artistic, literary, and dramatic masterpieces the world knows today. This book explores the reception of Genesis 22 in five compositions that not only have been influential in the history of classical art music but also present some of the most insightful and distinctive interpretations of the biblical story. Spanning more than four hundred years, and stemming from a variety of musical genres, the works selected include an oratorio latino by Giacomo Carissimi, the 'Father of Oratorio'; an oratorio volgare by the Bohemian Josef Myslivecek; a canticle, and a movement from the War Requiem of the eminent British composer Benjamin Britten; and a cantata by the Jewish American composer Judith Lang Zaimont. Dowling Long argues that, despite

intensive exegetical work on Genesis 22 and the attention given to the concept of seeing in the narrative, biblical commentators have generally neglected the concept of hearing, which features prominently in the story's reception in music.

**Keshet, Shula. “Say You Are My Sister”: Danger, Seduction and the Foreign in Biblical Literature and Beyond. *Bible in the Modern World* 53. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2013.**

Throughout biblical and Jewish literature we encounter a repeated story of a Hebrew or Jewish character who becomes involved in a dangerous erotic relationship. The sexual tension in these tales articulates the ambivalence between the national identities of the character and of the foreign other. The first exemplification of the *topos* occurs in Genesis, where the matriarchs Sarah and Rebekah are handed over (or almost so) by their husbands to a foreign king. The other biblical cases are those of Joseph, who experiences the danger of seduction by Potiphar's wife, and Esther, who is taken by force into the harem of the Persian emperor. In modern Hebrew literature, the theme reappears in the short story by the Nobel Prize winner S.Y. Agnon, 'The Lady and the Pedlar' from 1943, in which the Jewish pedlar is at risk of becoming the prey of a foreign cannibalistic woman, and in the novel *Inta Omri* (1994) by the poet-author Smadar Herzfeld, which describes a desperate love affair between an Israeli woman and a Palestinian man against the backdrop of the Intifada in the late 1980s. Between the chapters devoted to these works lies a discussion of the film by the Swedish director Ingmar Bergman, *The Touch* (1971), the story of a Jewish archaeologist who falls in love with a Swedish woman, which Keshet reads as another instance of the same theme, but this time as a metaphor of Jewish-Christian relations from the perspective not of the Jewish character but of the foreign other.

**Lan Nguyen, Kim. *Chorus in the Dark: The Voices of the Book of Lamentations*. Hebrew Bible Monographs 54. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2013.**

Chorus in the Dark invites attention to the treaty negotiated by the voices of Lamentations. The issues of God's justice and human rights are at the centre of a forceful discussion embodied in the five poems of Lamentations. Difficult questions are subtly raised: How can God's justice be recognized and honoured in the midst of suffering? How can the human right to protest against mistreatment be respected? How can loss, grief, and shame be overcome? What future is there for the victims? How can these sensitive issues be negotiated without loss? Zion is the first major speaker in Lamentations. Zion projects the voice of a woman crying by the grave. Her pain is intense, her loss is vast, her anger is uncontrollable. Zion is unable to see any future. God is indeed just in destroying her, but her surviving children do not deserve her fate. The other major speaker is the man of Lamentations 3. He too speaks of the pain, grief, anger, and desire for vengeance of a victim bent under the yoke of affliction. Yet, like a Davidic king, he dares to claim covenant promises and hope that darkness will eventually turn to light. Through both harmony and discord, and with a profound ambivalence toward the future, the separate voices of Lamentations resonate in a timbre that transcends the sum of its parts. The five poems, while having unique value individually, are meant to be read together as a living documentation of a moment of suspension, a great turning point in the history of Israel.

### **Other Publishers' Resources and Resources in Spanish**

We thank the Instituto Multidisciplinario de Historia y Ciencias Humanas who is willing to make some direct links to free Spanish publications available on the ICI book repository page. See the following [link](#). Links are available there to the following books (in Spanish):

- Excavation reports of Tell el-Ghaba (Egypt)
- Study of Stela of Gebel Barkal (Egypt)
- Proceedings I institute workshop (includes articles on ANE)
- Proceedings II institute workshop (includes articles on ANE)

- Proceedings III institute workshop (includes articles on ANE)

There is also a link to the following Spanish journal:

- Journal of Egyptological Studies (REE)

We also thank the Universidad Católica Argentina for allowing direct link to the following book:

- Flammini, Roxana, ed. Aproximación al Antiguo Egipto. Buenos Aires: Educa, 2004.

JSTOR provides free or low cost access to more than 1,500 institutions in 69 countries

More than 1,500 institutions in Africa and other developing nations receive access to JSTOR free of charge or for steeply reduced fees. This is made possible through a combination of philanthropic support and the fees paid by libraries in other countries around the world, as well as publishers' eagerness to support this work. More information is available about JSTOR's [African Access Initiative](#) and [Developing Nations Access Initiative](#) programs.

Need JSTOR Access?

As part of your Society of Biblical Literature membership, save 50% on the annual JPASS plan, your personal access to the JSTOR archive. With more than 1,900 scholarly journals, JSTOR is one of the world's leading academic databases. Millions of users worldwide rely on JSTOR for research, fact checking, and book reviews. This discounted subscription includes unlimited reading access and 120 article downloads. JSTOR adds new titles every month so you'll have a growing collection of the world's leading peer-reviewed journals only a click away.

To access the discounted JPASS, log-in to the SBL website with your member ID. Just below where you entered your member ID, click membership benefits. You will see JSTOR's JPASS among the benefits and a link "To get your savings: click here."

**(g) 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. For more information, contact [Jackie du Toit](#).

**(h) 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 available online to people accessing the SBL website from any ICI country. See [http://www.sbl-site.org/publications/ICI\\_JBLarchive.aspx](http://www.sbl-site.org/publications/ICI_JBLarchive.aspx).

All articles in those volumes can be downloaded for free!

**(i) 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 (you have to log in with your membership number):

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

**(j) 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](mailto:sharon.johnson@sbl-site.org).

**4/29-5/3 Orion Center International Symposium**

To mark seventy years since the initial discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, an international symposium will be held in Jerusalem, hosted by The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, the University of Vienna, New York University, the Israel Antiquities Authority and The Israel Museum.

The overarching symposium theme will be “The Wilderness”—as a real place; as the location of biblical episodes, most notably during the formative years of Israel's wandering from Egypt to the Promised Land; as a motif; and as a concept (sometimes idealized, sometimes demonized).

<http://orion.mscc.huji.ac.il/>

**6/12-6/15 The Future of Syriac Studies and the Legacy of Sebastian P. Brock**

On the occasion of the 80th birthday of Sebastian P. Brock, Sankt Ignatios Theological Academy & Stockholm School of Theology, Sweden, is hosting a major conference on “The Future of Syriac Studies.” Sebastian Brock has agreed to be present and participate and it is expected that this will be a significant and memorable event for Syriac studies. Several senior scholars have agreed to present plenary papers. Papers are now being invited and solicited for a limited number of spaces in general sessions. Papers should be 20-25 minutes in order to give time for discussion, and may concern any topic in the broad range of Syriac studies.

Please keep in mind that the theme of this conference aims to focus upon new directions and methodologies, as well as to forge new resolutions to traditional issues. The deadline for submittal of a title and abstract (ca. 200 words) is 1 February 2018. The conference committee will notify those whose papers have been accepted by 1 March 2018. During the concluding session, Sebastian Brock will be awarded the Order of Sankt Ignatios for his long and valued contribution to all matters Syriac, along with his mentorship to so many scholars. In addition to the plenary and general sessions, events of Syriac song and poetry are being planned, as well as a round-table discussion of the future of Syriac studies.

Housing and meals will be available for all participants at the Sigtuna Conference Centre or in the close vicinity. Sigtuna is one of the oldest settlements in Sweden and is located only 20 minutes from the Stockholm Arlanda Airport.

A registration form will be available shortly at [www.sanktignatios.com](http://www.sanktignatios.com)

**7/25-7/27 Colloquium Biblicum Lovaniense LXVII, 2018 (President: Pierre Van Hecke, Leuven)**

For many centuries, the Song of Songs was by far one of the most commented biblical books, especially taking into consideration its limited length. After a period of diminished interest, recent scholarship is rediscovering the book. The present colloquium aims at bringing together the leading voices in contemporary Songs scholarship and by fostering the dialogue between them, at inaugurating a new phase in the research. Firstly, the colloquium will deal with the redaction history and the dating of the book. A second important discussion concerns the structure or unity of the book: is the scroll a collection of thematically loosely connected poems, or does it display in its final redactional form a unity? Given their uniqueness in the biblical corpus, scholarship has paid quite some attention to possible parallels of the Songs in the surrounding cultures as well as to the early Christian reception of Song of Songs. The latter developments are not unrelated with the reopening of the hermeneutically important question whether the book was composed with an allegorical reading in mind or not. Finally, the Song of Songs continues to fascinate the readers by its highly poetic and at times difficult language. A renewed attention for the book's metaphorical richness will therefore be an important aspect of this colloquium.

**CALL FOR SHORT PAPERS:** Short paper proposals (including name, institutional affiliation, title and abstract of 200-300 words) should be sent to: Pierre Van Hecke, President CBL 2018, [pierre.vanhecke@kuleuven.be](mailto:pierre.vanhecke@kuleuven.be) no later than March 1, 2018.

[https://theo.kuleuven.be/en/research/centres/centr\\_collbibl](https://theo.kuleuven.be/en/research/centres/centr_collbibl)

**7/30-8/3 SBL International Meeting**

Will be held in Helsinki, Finland in conjunction with EABS.

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

**7/30-8/3 European Association of Biblical Studies**

Helsinki, 30 July-3 August: joint conference with ISBL

<https://eabs.net/site/>

**9/25-9/27 CFP: Religious and Philosophical Conversion in the Ancient Mediterranean Traditions**

The Conference on Religious and Philosophical Conversion explore will explore conversion or converting experience in the environment of the ancient Hellenistic world(s) with attention to early Judaism and early Christianity/the New Testament. Presentations will undertake both historical and philological reconstructions relying on source material and utilizing interdisciplinary approaches.

<https://www.etf.uni-bonn.de/de/ev-theol/institute/corpc/>

**10/23-10/24 Resurrection in the Bible and Ancient Mediterranean World**

A Conference of the Institute of Biblical Studies, John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, Poland. The main theme of the symposium will be resurrection in the Bible and extra-biblical traditions of the ancient Mediterranean World. The topics covered by conference papers can include: the shape and character of the idea of resurrection in the Bible and extra-biblical literature; the historical, anthropologico-cultural and theological analysis of the ancient texts and traditions on resurrection; the genesis and development of the idea of resurrection in the Hebrew Bible; the historical, socio-cultural and theological analysis of the idea of resurrection in New Testament texts together with their moral and ecclesiological implications; resurrection in Early Christian writings and traditions.

<http://ocs.academicon.pl/index.php/test/Resurrection2018>

**11/17-11/20 SBL Annual Meeting in Denver, Colorado.**

<https://www.sbl-site.org/meetings/AnnualMeeting.aspx>

### (k) 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](http://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!

Any topics you would like to see Bible Odyssey address? Just send a message to: [bow@sbl-site.org](mailto:bow@sbl-site.org)

### (l) 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, [Jackie du Toit](#), 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.

Thanks a lot for your interest and spread the word!

Juan

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Juan Manuel Tebes

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