

SOCIETY OF BIBLICAL LITERATURE ICI REPORT FOR AUGUST 2015

(a) 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

(b) 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.

(c) 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

(d) 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>

(e) PUBLICATIONS: ONLINE BOOKS – NEW BOOKS ADDED

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

The Shape and Shaping of the Book of Psalms: The Current State of Scholarship

deClaissé-Walford, Nancy L. *The Shape and Shaping of the Book of Psalms: The Current State of Scholarship*. Ancient Israel and Its Literature 20. Atlanta: SBL Press, 2014.

Drawing inspiration from Gerald H. Wilson's *The Editing of the Hebrew Psalter*, this volume explores questions of the formation of the Psalter from the perspective of canonical criticism. Though called "canonical criticism," the study actually employs a number of historically traditional and nontraditional approaches to reading the text including form criticism, historical criticism of individual psalms as well as of the whole Psalter, and redaction criticism.

Features:

- Exploration of collections of psalms, theological viewpoints, sovereignty, and the shape and shaping of Psalms
- Examination of the impact of canonical criticism on the study of the Psalter
- Sixteen essays from the Book of Psalms Consultation group and invited scholars

Mark, Mutuality, and Mental Health: Encounters with Jesus

Mainwaring, Simon. *Mark, Mutuality, and Mental Health: Encounters with Jesus*. Semeia Studies 79. Atlanta: SBL Press, 2014.

Mainwaring explores the societal contexts of those who suffer poor mental health, and in particular the relational dynamics of how identity, agency, and dialogue are negotiated in personal encounters. This work seeks to serve as an experiment, such that interested readers might better understand the dynamics of relational power that pervade encounters with persons with poor mental health.

Features:

- Foucauldian analysis of the relational dynamics of poor mental health used to re-imagine hegemonic relational dynamics
- Close readings of encounters between individual characters to evaluate how mutuality operates in those encounters
- Study of mutuality as it has emerged in mental health literature, feminist theologies, and theologies of disability

Memory and Identity in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity: A Conversation with Barry Schwartz

Thatcher, Tom, ed. *Memory and Identity in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity: A Conversation with Barry Schwartz*. Semeia Studies 78. Atlanta: SBL Press, 2014.

In this collection scholars of biblical texts and rabbinics engage the work of Barry Schwartz, Professor Emeritus in the Department of Sociology at the University of Georgia. Schwartz provides an introductory essay on the study of collective memory. Articles that follow integrate his work into the study of early Jewish and Christian texts. The volume concludes with a response from Schwartz that continues this warm and fruitful dialogue between fields.

Features:

- Articles that integrate the study of collective memory and social psychology into religious studies
- Essays from Barry Schwartz
- Theories applied rather than left as abstract principles

Nonnus of Nisibis, Commentary on the Gospel of Saint John

Thomson, Robert W. *Nonnus of Nisibis, Commentary on the Gospel of Saint John*. Writings from the Islamic World 1. Atlanta: SBL Press, 2014.

Robert W. Thomson translates this ninth-century commentary defending the miaphysite theological position of the Armenian church against the chalcedonian position of the Greek Byzantine church. Nonnus's exegesis of the gospel falls in the context of trends in Eastern Christian biblical exposition, primarily the Syrian tradition. Therefore, Thomson emphasizes the parallels in Syriac commentaries on the book of John, noting also earlier Greek writers whose works were influential in Syria. This book is essential reading for anyone interested in the Armenian church and church history.

Features:

- Introductory material on the text's history, manuscript traditions, and theological importance
- Translation of the Armenian text and commentary
- Bibliography covering the Armenian, Greek, Syriac, and Arabic texts as well as secondary sources

(f) 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!

(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—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.

September 2, 2015

Sociedad Latinoamericana para las Ciencias Bíblicas (SOLACIB)

Wednesday, September 2 at 7:00 pm - Central American Theological Seminary, Room C-1 (Bolivar Avenue 30-42, Zone 3, Guatemala). Theme: An introduction to discourse analysis and its impact on the narratology of the Old Testament. Contact Prof. Abner B. Bartolo H. at ab_beens@yahoo.es or solacib@yahoo.com for more information.

September 11-13, 2015

Oceania Biblical Studies Association

Conference will be held at Piula Theological College, Upolu, Samoa, in the beautiful South Pacific.

Email the Secretary for OBSA: Nasili Vaka'uta for more information.

September 24-28, 2015

Society of Biblical Scholars (SBS) & Institute for Biblical Preaching (IBP) in Africa

(at St. Paul's University, Kenya) This year's SBS conference, and IBP seminar, organized by Hokma House—Centre for Biblical Research (Jos, Nigeria), will be hosted by St. Paul's University (Limuru, Kenya). Paper and panel proposals are invited on the interdisciplinary theme: 'Engaging Scripture, Transforming Culture: Exegesis, Criticism, Hermeneutics, and Theology'. How can biblical exegesis, criticism, hermeneutics and theology shape and contribute more meaningfully to our engagement of the scriptures, esp. in Africa? Presenters and panelists may focus on one or more of these four areas, but will need to be conversant with the history, development and current state of research in each area in order to be able to evaluate the current enterprise of biblical studies, esp. in Africa, and propose major ways forward for the discipline. The second part of the theme explores the role of exegesis, criticism, hermeneutics and theology in transforming culture. Papers outside the theme are welcome! SBS membership is not required to attend or participate in this year's meeting. New members are welcome to apply for membership.

Contact: Rev. Dr. Randee Ijatuyi-Morphé, Director, and Professor of Biblical Studies, ECWA Theological Seminary, Jos, Nigeria (hokmahouse@gmail.com; meetings@hokmahouse.org); Rev. Dr. K. Gatumu, Senior Lecturer, SBS/IBP Liaison at SPU (kgatumu@spu.ac.ke).

(For more information: www.hokmahouse.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 [more information here](#)

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

Atlanta, Georgia

[More information](#)

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 meiravi@herzlinstitute.org

[Call for Papers](#)

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

Seoul, South Korea

[More information](#)

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 [official](#)

[website](#). Register there with your e-mail address to receive automatic updates and the Call for Papers. Questions contact: [Prof Louis Jonker](#)

November 19-22, 2015
2016 SBL Annual Meeting
San Antonio, Texas
[More information](#)

(h) 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!

(i) 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