

CSBS SCÉB

CANADIAN SOCIETY OF BIBLICAL STUDIES
SOCIÉTÉ CANADIENNE DES ÉTUDES BIBLIQUES

2021 Complete Programme

(updated: April 19, 2021)

Friday, May 28

2:00-5:00 p.m.
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, May 31

Monday 12:00-2:00 p.m. (Eastern)

STUDENT ESSAY PRIZES

Presided by: J. Richard Middleton (Northeastern Seminary)

- 12:00-12:30 *2020 Founders Prize Paper*
Julie Dykes (McMaster Divinity College): The Genre and Metaphorical Layers of the Song of the Vineyard (Isa 5:1-7)
- 12:30-12:40 Questions
- 12:40-1:10 *2020 Jeremias Prize Paper*
Rebecca Runneson Sanfridson (University of Toronto): Centurions in the Jesus Movement?
The Diffusion of the Christ Cult into Roman Military Networks
- 1:10-1:20 Questions
- 1:20-1:50 *2021 Jeremias Prize Paper*
Martin Sanfridson (McMaster): “Neither Circumcision Nor Foreskin Is Anything”: A Re-Evaluation of Paul’s Stance on Circumcision with Regards to Christ Followers
- 1:50-2:00 Questions

(The Zoom Meeting will remain open during this 30-minute break to allow members to socialize either in the main Zoom Room or in smaller groups in Breakout Rooms chosen by participants.)

Monday 2:30-4:00 p.m. (Eastern)
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Presided by: J. Richard Middleton (Northeastern Seminary)

(The Zoom Meeting will remain open during this 30-minute break to allow members to socialize either in the main Zoom Room or in smaller groups in Breakout Rooms chosen by participants.)

Monday 4:30-5:30 p.m. (Eastern)
PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS
Presided by: Colleen Shantz (St. Michael's College, Toronto School of Theology)

J. Richard Middleton
(Northeastern Seminary at Roberts Wesleyan College)

Did Abraham Pass the Test? Unbinding the Aqedah from the Straitjacket of Tradition

Traditional Jewish and Christian readings of Genesis 22 hold Abraham up as a paradigm of virtue. Although many contemporary readers find it problematic to valorize someone for attempting to sacrifice another human being as a sign of devotion to God, there has been minimal exegetical work that could challenge this traditional reading. Both Jon Levenson and Walter Moberly (from Jewish and Christian perspectives, respectively) warn that any attempt to disrupt the traditional valorization of Abraham is the result of imposing an extrinsic, modern perspective on an ancient text.

This paper takes up the challenge of responding to the Levenson-Moberly warning by engaging in a close reading of the Aqedah in the context of the Abraham story, in order to dispute—on exegetical grounds—the traditional view that Abraham's unquestioning obedience to the divine command to sacrifice his son is meant to be either morally or religiously exemplary.

Tuesday 12:00-1:45 p.m. (Eastern)

HEBREW BIBLE STUDIES I

Presided by: TBD

- 12:00-12:30 Andrew Brockman (McGill University)
Does the Spirit come upon a Prophet or a King? רוּחַ יְהוָה in 1 Samuel
While many recognize 1 Samuel 15:1-16:13 as written by a different hand than chapters 1-14 and 16:14ff, relatively little comparative research on these narratives has been conducted. Comparing the meaning of רוּחַ יְהוָה or “spirit of yhwh in 16:13 and 16:14, however, reveals a stark contrast between the two narratives. This paper will examine each reference to רוּחַ יְהוָה in 1 Samuel to demonstrate that 16:13 is the only occurrence that is related to the election of a king and will argue that the anointing of David in 16:1-13 is extraneously placed before the introduction of Saul’s evil spirit to act as an interpretive gloss.
- 12:30-1:00 Christopher R. Lortie (Providence University College)
“Your love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women” (2 Samuel 1:26): Jonathan as Model Saulide for Embracing Davidic Rule
David’s lament in 2 Samuel 1:17-27 in response to the deaths of Saul and Jonathan is the transition point between the reign of Saul and the reign of David. With Saul and Jonathan now dead, the way is clear for David to assume the role that he was anointed for in 1 Samuel 16. However, as 2 Samuel 1–5 describes, David is not granted kingship over all of Israel without significant conflict. This study will explore the importance of David’s lament in shaping the narrative of 2 Samuel, with specific attention to 1:26 where David celebrates Jonathan’s love as being “wonderful, passing the love of women.” It will be argued that David depicts Jonathan as his ideal supporter, whereas Merab and Michal are foils, and that David’s lament calls for allegiance to him over against the house of Saul.
- 1:00-1:15 Break
- 1:15-1:45 Aleksander Krogevoll (St. Michael’s College, University of Toronto)
God Comes From the South: Exploring Yahweh’s Original Character in Light of His Southern Origins
Over the last century scholars have sought to explain the epigraphical absence of an early Yahwistic cult in the West-Semitic world through the Midianite-Kenite hypothesis. Despite this, the majority of scholars have searched for Yahweh’s original profile through comparisons with Canaanite deities. Mark S. Smith has called these attempts “partially misleading” and suggests that attention should be directed to the southern region where Yahweh arguably originated. This presentation will highlight how inquiries into Yahweh’s original location have led scholars to attribute widely different characteristics to Yahweh.

Tuesday 12:00-2:15 p.m. (Eastern)

SECOND TEMPLE JEWS

Presided by: Andrew Perrin (Athabasca University)

- 12:00-12:30 Carmen Palmer (Martin Luther University College)
Philo's Hellenistic-Jewish Approach in On the Decalogue: Blending Wisdom of Solomon's Critique against Idols with a Hellenistic Notion of Moderation
Philo is well-known for integrating Hellenistic ideals into the interpretation of Jewish scriptures. In Philo's *On the Decalogue* (the Ten Commandments), he appears to draw on the Wisdom of Solomon and its critique against idols, a work that itself draws on a criticism of idols evident in Isaiah 44. In this regard, Philo's scriptural influences are relatively clear. But upon which Hellenistic notion might Philo be drawing in this work? This paper will argue that Philo is reworking the critique against idols evident in Wisdom of Solomon to forward an apologetic in favour of a Hellenistic notion of moderation. Moderation enables one to follow the laws of Moses, instead of the distracting excesses involved in the worship of idols. On this occasion, the excesses of idols may represent various Roman expressions of excess.
- 12:30-1:00 Esther Kobel (Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz)
Paul's Cultural Transfer Activities: Natural Law as a Test Case
Paul, a Jew, was called to proclaim the gospel of Christ to the nations. In order to win them over, Paul had to convey concepts from his Hellenistic Jewish world to his predominantly gentile audiences in the Greco-Roman world, and to facilitate the process he borrowed concepts and ideas from their particular cultural backgrounds. This paper takes an approach informed by "histoire croisée" in order to explore how such cultural transfer can function. It focuses on the topic of natural law, specifically Paul's elaborations in Rom 2:12–15, as a test case and example. It thereby readdresses the longstanding scholarly discussion of whether or not Rom 2:14–15 affirms the Greco-Roman concept of natural law, and argues that the macro-structure of Paul's thinking remains profoundly Jewish. His rhetorical strategy is to subordinate terms from gentile philosophy to the task of guiding his audiences within Jewish structures of thought.
- 1:00-1:15 Break
- 1:15-1:45 Joshua M. Matson (Florida State University)
Scrolls by any other Name: Re-naming the Dead Sea Scrolls Minor Prophets Manuscripts
In their 2014 *Revue de Qumran* article, Hindy Najman and Eibert Tigchelaar trace the history of Dead Sea Scrolls nomenclature and reflect on the process of identifying compositions and fragments. At the conclusion of their article, they challenge Dead Sea Scrolls scholars to rethink the names given to the scrolls and their categorization into groups dictated by a biblical vocabulary. In this paper, I will accept Najman's and Tigchelaar's challenge with a focused discussion on the eleven manuscripts associated with the Hebrew Bible Minor Prophets found among the Dead Sea Scrolls. After outlining the history of the naming of each of the Minor Prophet manuscripts, I will articulate the challenges and misconceptions that have been inherited by scholars because of the identification of these manuscripts as part of a scroll of the "Book of the Twelve." This paper will then outline resolutions to combat these challenges and propose a nomenclature for these manuscripts that clearly articulates each manuscripts content,

while at the same time dismissing outdated categories that view these texts through an anachronistic biblical vocabulary.

1:45-2:15 Matthew L. Walsh (Acadia Divinity College)

What Angel or Prince is Like Your Effectual Help? Reevaluating the Assistance Envisioned in 1QM 13:14

Commentators have noted the “rich inventory” of designations for angels employed in the Qumran sectarian texts; both the creative rearrangement of traditional angelic epithets and the introduction of new terminology by the Qumran movement has been well documented. Such usage undoubtedly stems from the fascination the sect had with the heavenly realm and their claims to have a unique connection to it. With this subject in mind, a curious passage is 1QM 13:14, which has been widely understood to be a statement that praises God via the disparagement of angels. In short, this paper will reevaluate 1QM 13:14, comparing it with not only other sections of the War Scroll but also contemporaneous Jewish texts. It will be proposed that the “help” of 1QM 13:14 is most accurately read, not as the exaltation of God at the angels’ expense, but as a reference to God-commissioned angelic support.

Tuesday 2:45-4:30 p.m. (Eastern)

HEBREW BIBLE STUDIES II

Presided by: TBD

2:45-3:15 Goran Zivkovic (McMaster Divinity College)

The Rites of Space Passage: The Role of Ritual in the Production of Space in the Book of Haggai

The significance of ancient Israel’s space and cultic system and their essential place within the Old Testament tradition, have been long recognized by modern biblical scholars and cannot be underestimated. The book of Haggai represents one of the finest examples of prophetic literature where the interrelationship between space and cult is thoroughly addressed. Previous studies which dealt with this topic usually emphasized the importance of the reconstruction of the temple space as a requirement for ritual practices and neglected the significance of rituals in the production of space. This paper addresses the topic of the interrelationship between ritual and space in the book of Haggai by having a specific focus on the question of the role of ritual in the construction of space. Using an approach based in ritual studies (Roland L. Grimes) and critical spatiality (Henri Lefebvre), this paper demonstrates that Haggai purposefully delineates the role of ritual in the construction of God’s, humanity’s, and nature’s space. On one hand felicitous rituals have a purpose to create physical space and establish its ideological function, while on the other hand, infelicitous rituals produce space which is opposed to that ideological portrayal. The present paper contributes to scholarship in at least two ways: first, the study employs a contemporary ritual theory by Roland L. Grimes and critical spatiality theory as defined by Henri Lefebvre which produces some overlooked insights. Secondly, while scholars emphasize the importance of space in the production of cult, this study argues that Haggai primarily focuses on the importance of rituals in the production of space.

3:15-3:45

Daniel Sarlo

Yahweh and his Cherubs—An Ancient Israelite Triad: A Solution to the Problem of אֱלֹהִים?

In the Hebrew Bible, Yahweh's closest companions are the cherubs—they dwell with him, guard his royal garden, and carry him across the skies. This relationship is reflected in the art and architecture of the Temple, wherein large cherub statues guard the inner sanctum and, upon the Ark of the Covenant, two cherub statuettes flank Yahweh's presence. This dyad is equated with "the gods who struck the Egyptians with every affliction" (1 Sam 4:8), the divine emissaries (מְלַאֲכִים) who sent plagues (Ps 78:48–50). These are likely the same gods who led the Israelites out of Egypt, represented by two golden calves (1 Kgs 12:28). Yahweh appears to have two helper deities in other contexts as well (Gen 19; Deut 32:23; Hab 3:5). I propose that this triad was authentic to Yahwism, which could explain the use of אֱלֹהִים as a plural for Yahweh (e.g., Gen 20:13; 35:7), and why אֱלֹהִים became a singular (artificially) after Josiah's monolatrous reform.

3:45-4:00

Break

4:00-4:30

Mark Boda (McMaster Divinity College)

Just Sour Grapes? Generational Dynamics in Hebrew Bible Hamartiology

This paper provides an overview of generational dynamics in the doctrine of sin presented throughout the Hebrew Bible. I will highlight the presence of a familial and intergenerational hamartiology throughout the Hebrew Bible, but alongside it a distinct stream of theology that appears to challenge this communal approach. An attempt will be made to bring these two streams together even though there are enduring contrasts between these two approaches.

Tuesday 2:45-4:35 p.m. (Eastern)

**EARLY CHRISTIANITY, EARLY JUDAISM, AND THE
STUDY OF RELIGION SEMINAR:
CROSS-CULTURAL PATTERNS, IDEAL TYPES, & HUMAN
UNIVERSALS IN THE STUDY OF ANCIENT RELIGION**

Presided by: William Arnal (University of Regina)

The Seminar on Early Christianity, Early Judaism and the Study of Religion explores ways in which early Christianity and Judaism and the wider study of religion might fruitfully interact. This year, the seminar's final year, focuses on the issue of human universals, durable cross-cultural patterns of behavior and/or thought, and the viability of ideal types. Papers will address this topic directly in a broad way ("there are/are not human universals and this is how this affects the study of religion in antiquity"); in a more focused way ("this is one human universal I'm interested in and here's how this impinges on our field"); and in very precise ways ("this very specific topic/text/passage interests me, and this is how it bears on or reflects my understanding of human universals").

2:45-3:00

Emma Wasserman (Rutgers University)

3:00-3:15

Giovanni Bazzana (Harvard Divinity School)

- 3:15-3:30 Colleen Shantz (St. Michael's College)
- 3:30-3:40 Break
- 3:40-3:55 Kimberly Stratton (Carleton University)
- 3:55-4:15 Respondent: Zeba Crook (Carleton University)
- 4:15-4:35 Discussion

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