

RBL 01/2018

Marcel Sigrist and Kevin Stephens, eds.

In Memoriam John Strugnell: Four Studies

Cahiers de la Revue Bibliques 84

Paris: Gabalda, 2015. Pp. 83. Paper. €50.00. ISBN
9782850212376.

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This short book collects four studies held in English during the interment of John Strugnell's ashes on March 2009 at the cemetery of the Ecole Biblique. On this occasion, Marcel Sigrist organized a symposium divided in two sessions. During a morning session, J.-B. Humbert, É. Puech, É. Nodet, and K. Berthelot gave lectures in French; during the afternoon session the four papers published here were given.

After a short introduction (3–4), the book presents the brief eulogy given by J. Murphy-O'Connor (4–6), in which he remembers that John Strugnell became a member of the team responsible for the publication of the Judean Desert fragments. He was only twenty-four when he began, and he worked on the Scrolls until 1960. Then he moved to Duke University and, in 1966, to Harvard University as Professor of Christian Origins. His name was closely linked to the École Biblique, as from 1968 on he spent his sabbaticals and the summer and first semester each year there. Murphy-O'Connor remembers the critical editions published by Strugnell's students (C. Newsom, E. Schuller, D. Harrington) and his review of John Allegro's *Qumran Cave 4.1* in which he reedited Allegro's texts. Strugnell was the first Scrolls editor-in-chief who involved Israeli scholars. He died in Boston on 30 November 2007.

Steven E. Fassberg, in “לְהוֹיָא and Related Verbal Forms in Biblical and Qumran Aramaic in the Light of Aramaic Dialectology” (3–18), deals with the linguistic phenomenon of the third-person imperfect forms of the verb הוֹי “to be” with prefixed *lamed* instead of the expected *yod*, attested in Aramaic Qumran scrolls as well as in Biblical Aramaic and in Old Aramaic texts on all jussive verbs, both strong and weak. Fassberg analyzes the data and concludes that, “with the exception of the Dead Sea Scrolls, all other Aramaic corpora and dialects in Palestine use only the *yodh* prefix” (11). Also, he summarizes the history of research and suggests that *lamed* was used in the earliest stage of some Aramaic dialects to express modality on the basis of common Semitic. Fassberg proposes this innovative development in the case of *lamed* prefixes (16): “they first attached themselves to forms of the verb הוֹי, then to all verbs III-y, and finally to all verb classes, including strong verbs,” thus reflecting an initial stage in development that later spread to other III-*yod* verbs.

Devorah Dimant, in “The Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls: Past Achievements and Future Perspectives” (19–33), presents a brief but exhaustive history of research on the Dead Sea Scrolls from their discovery until now. She briefly covers different areas of research, such as historical information, ideological elements, the identification with the Essene community, and the interpretation of the library of Qumran. About the identification with the Essenes, Dimant summarizes the different scholarly suggestions, affirming that “some implications of this identification [the Qumran community as Essene] leave problems unsolved” (24). I underline the six points that Dimant indicates as “suggestions for the future trajectories of investigation” (30): the need for fresh commentaries on the major sectarian works, a systematic study of the particular style characteristic of the sectarian works, the investigation of the relationship between the fluid biblical text and the various exegetical methods employed by the parabiblical texts, a thorough revision of the history of the Qumran community, the Iranian influence on the Dead Sea Scrolls, and the Scrolls’ relationship with the New Testament and early Christian writings.

Hanan Eshel and Shlomit Kendi-Harel’s “Psalm 155: An Acrostic Poem on Repentance from the Second Temple Period” (34–65) was originally published in Hebrew in 2009. The authors offer here a new edition of the acrostic Ps 155, attested in a small number of Syriac manuscripts and in 11QPs^a at Qumran. They argue that their proposal for the arrangement of the stichs provides a better understanding of the acrostic nature of the psalm and permits one to divide the psalm into five stanzas—from the *aleph*-verse to the *ayin*-verse—and a conclusion, beginning with the letter *pe*, that “attests to the favorable response granted to the request presented in the initial stanza” (60). They point out the antithesis of the psalm, in particular the antithesis between the individual and God at the center of the stanzas, and the verbs “designating the actions that are being requested of God in the penitent’s plea for help in returning to God” (63). The psalm testifies to the

crisis of the psalmist's anticipation of retribution for his sins of the past and his request that God help him understand Lord's teaching.

Esther Eshel, in "The Proper Marriage according to the Genesis Apocryphon" (67–83), deals with the anonymous women in the Genesis Apocryphon, in particular the women from Noah's family, by a comparison with texts such as Tob 4:12, 4Q197, and Jubilees, focusing on the subject of intermarriage. According to the authors of the Genesis Apocryphon and of the book of Tobit, the right spouse is a son or daughter of one's father's brother, thus showing the importance of endogamy that preserves family purity, which has an effect on the quality of the offspring and on other actions. The mention of Noah in Tob 4:12 among the ancestors who "took wives from their kindred" can be based on the author's familiarity with the tradition in the Genesis Apocryphon.

The book is short, containing only four studies, but these four undoubtedly enhance scholarship about the topic considered. Unfortunately, there are several typographical errors left. However, the quality of authors' investigation and their thorough analysis make the volume a timely contribution to the scholarship on Qumran and related literature.