

Orion Center News Update

The Orion Center for the Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Associated Literature
מרכז אוריון לחקר מגילות מדבר יהודה והספרות הקרובה לה

May 2008

Orion Center to Co-Sponsor *Meghillot*

The Orion Center has been invited by the Publication Project of the Qumran Scrolls at Haifa University and the Bialik Institute to join forces in the publication of the highly esteemed Hebrew annual, *Meghillot: Studies in the Dead Sea Scrolls*. *Meghillot* was initiated by Prof. Devorah Dimant from the Departments of Bible and Jewish History, Haifa University, and Prof. Moshe Bar-Asher from the Department of the Hebrew Language, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, in order to provide the scholarly community and the educated Israeli public with a forum for Dead Sea Scrolls' research conducted in Hebrew. In just a few short years, the annual has become an active and important international Hebrew-language journal, to which both Israeli and foreign scholars contribute. The first volume appeared in 2003 and volume seven is due to appear this year. Scores of articles have been published to date on many aspects of Scrolls studies, including texts, history, language, and literature.

Beginning with volume eight, the Orion Center will become a co-sponsor of the journal. Professors Dimant and Bar-Asher will co-edit the upcoming volume. The printing and distribution of the annual will continue to be carried out by the Bialik Institute. The Orion Center is pleased to become an active partner in this important scholarly project.

12th Orion International Symposium

The next Orion International Symposium, "Hebrew in the Second Temple Period: The Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls and of Other Contemporary Sources," will take place December 29–31, 2008, at the Hebrew University, Mount Scopus. The symposium is jointly sponsored by the Orion Center and the Hebrew University's Eliezer Ben-Yehuda Center for the Study of the History of the Hebrew Language. This will be the first Orion Center symposium to focus on the language of the Dead Sea Scrolls and associated literature. It will also be the fifth international gathering of scholars who study the Hebrew of the Second Temple Period.

Please check the Orion website after October 1 for the symposium schedule.

The Orion Center for the Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Associated Literature

Director: Steven E. Fassberg
Institute of Jewish Studies
Rabin World Center of Jewish Studies
Mt. Scopus, The Hebrew University
Jerusalem, Israel 91905
Tel: 972-2-588-1966
Fax: 972-2-588-3584
E-mail: msdss@mscc.huji.ac.il
Web site: <http://orion.mscc.huji.ac.il>

International Conference at the Israel Museum

The Israel Museum has organized a three-day academic conference from July 6–8, 2008: "The Dead Sea Scrolls and Contemporary Culture: Celebrating 60 Years of Discovery." Scholars from Israel and abroad will convene to mark 60 years of Scrolls research, addressing recent developments in our understanding of the significance of the scrolls and the archaeology of Qumran. Among the many topics to be covered will be several sessions on the origins, nature, and use of the various genres (broadly conceived) found in the Qumran library: biblical, sectarian, and non-sectarian texts. Several sessions will consider the use of scientific and cultural analytical frameworks for deciphering the material remains (scrolls and more) from Qumran. Scholars will also consider the significance of the Scrolls for our conceptions of early rabbinic Judaism and Christianity, and both an academic session and a special public program will address the issue of women and Qumran. The public session, "*Cherchez la Femme—The Presence of Women at Qumran*," will be held on the Edmund J. Safra Campus of the Hebrew University at Givat Ram, under the joint auspices of the Museum and the Orion Center.

More information on the program may be found on the Orion website: <http://orion.mscc.huji.ac.il/resources/boardConferences.shtml>. The conference will be webcast live on the internet: www.imj.org.il/DSS_conference_2008/index.html. Thanks go to the Dorot Foundation and the Nussia and Andre Aisenstadt Foundation for their sponsorship.

* * * * *

Swords into Plowshares: A New Exhibit of the Great Isaiah Scroll

As a part of the festivities marking the 60th anniversaries of both the discovery of the Scrolls and the founding of the State of Israel, the Israel Museum has mounted a new exhibit of the Great Isaiah Scroll (1QIsa^a), to run from May 19–August 30. The Isaiah scroll, the most complete biblical manuscript among the Dead Sea Scrolls, was last exhibited at the Museum in its entirety in 1967, when concerns about conservation prompted curators to exhibit the scroll in sections. The current exhibit features the two longest sections of the scroll, which comprise chapters 1–28 and 44–66. Isaiah 2:4, "They shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning-hooks," provides the theme for the exhibit, which also features a number of ancient agricultural tools and other artifacts from the Land of Israel.

◆We ask our colleagues to **keep checking** the *On-Line Bibliography* for your own relevant publications and to **send us additions and corrections**. *Thank you!*

February 27: Jonas C. Greenfield Scholars' Seminar

12:15–14:00 p.m. Prof. Elisha Qimron (Department of the Hebrew Language, Ben Gurion University of the Negev): “Concerning a General Edition of the Dead Sea Scrolls” (in Hebrew)

March 18: Jonas C. Greenfield Scholars' Seminar

12:15–14:00 p.m. Dr. Guy Stiebel (Department of Archaeology, The Hebrew University; Orion Center Post-Doctoral Fellow): “Between Matter and Spirit: Topics in the *War Scroll* in the Light of Archaeological Discoveries” (in Hebrew)

April 8: Jonas C. Greenfield Scholars' Seminar

12:15–14:00 p.m. Dr. Hanan Birenboim (Department of Hebrew Literature, The Hebrew University; Orion Center Post-Doctoral Fellow): “The Halakhic Standing of Jerusalem in the Dead Sea Scrolls” (in Hebrew)

May 14: Jonas C. Greenfield Scholars' Seminar

12:15–14:00 p.m. Dr. Rafael Zer (Department of Bible, The Hebrew University; Orion Center Post-Doctoral Fellow): “A Very Narrow Bridge: The Biblical Text between the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Masoretes” (in Hebrew)

June 3: Coffee Hour Presentation

12:15–13:30 p.m. Noam Mizrahi (Department of Bible, The Hebrew University; Jean Matlow Orion Scholarship recipient): “Concerning the *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice* and Biblical Priestly Literature: Linguistic and Stylistic Aspects” (in Hebrew)

*All events are held in the Mandel World Center for Jewish Studies (the Rabin Building), Room 2001.

Orion Scholars Garner Rothschild Fellowships

Orion Matlow Scholars Noam Mizrahi and Yehoshua Granat have both been granted prestigious Rothschild Fellowships, for a year of postdoctoral study outside of Israel. Granat, whose doctoral research concentrated on creation themes in postbiblical Jewish literature, will spend a year at Oxford University, in England. Mizrahi, whose M.A. thesis on the *Son of God* text from Qumran received the first Orion Masters' Thesis Award, and who has since focused on the *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifices*, will be at Harvard University, in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations. Our congratulations to them both, and we wish them success during their upcoming year abroad.

Michael Segal Receives Polonsky Prize

Dr. Michael Segal, a former Orion Research Grant recipient and long-time participant in the life of the Center, has been awarded a Polonsky Prize for Originality and Creativity in the Humanistic Disciplines. The prizes are awarded annually to selected senior and junior researchers whose scholarship is judged to make significant contributions to the climate of research and learning in Israel. Segal, currently a lecturer in the Hebrew University Department of Bible, recently published a groundbreaking study of the book of Jubilees: *The Book of Jubilees: Rewritten Bible, Redaction, Ideology and Theology* (Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism; Leiden: Brill, 2007). We are happy to celebrate with Dr. Segal this recognition by the University of his scholarly achievement.

60 and Counting: The Work Continues

In the Fall newsletter, we noted a few of many scholarly gatherings planned with a focus on 60 years of Scrolls scholarship, among them the Orion Center's own 11th International Symposium in June (“New Approaches to the Study of Biblical Interpretation in Judaism of the Second Temple Period and in Early Christianity”); the July meeting of the International Organization for Qumran Studies (“Qumran Cave 1 Revisited: Reconsidering the Cave 1 Texts Sixty Years after Their Discovery”); the Birmingham conference in October (“The Dead Sea Scrolls: Texts and Context”); and the special sessions at November's Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature.

The breathtaking pace continues. Throughout the year and on into this summer, the significance of the scrolls continues to be assessed through a range of institutional settings and academic disciplines. “Symposium 2007,” held at Trinity Western University in October, highlighted Canadian scholarship on the scrolls and contributions to international Scrolls studies. New York University's “Dead Sea Scrolls at Sixty” conference, held this past March, similarly showcased the “scholarly contributions [of] NYU faculty and alumni.” Quite recently (April), the Groningen Qumran Institute hosted a two-day conference, “The Authoritativeness of Scriptures in Ancient Judaism: The Contribution of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Literature,” to honor the work of its long-time colleague Prof. Florentino García Martínez and to inaugurate its own new series of biennial symposia.

Issues of language and the Scrolls are being addressed from different points of view as well. A February conference in Vienna, cosponsored by the Hebrew University and the University of Vienna, was styled, “The Dead Sea Scrolls in Context: Integrating the Dead Sea Scrolls in the Study of Ancient Texts, Languages, and Cultures.” An “International Conference on the Aramaic Texts from Qumran,” to be held in July at Aix-en-Provence, will tackle interpretive and linguistic issues specific to that corpus; while the Orion Center's own upcoming 12th International Symposium (see p. 1) will focus on the linguistics of the Hebrew Dead Sea Scrolls texts.

And finally, the Qumran site and its wealth of material findings is being reassessed from an increasingly interdisciplinary scientific point of view. The conference “Qumran and Archaeology,” held in November in Schwerte, Germany, highlighted the ongoing debates on such issues as the relationship between the scrolls caves and the Qumran site and the significance of recent findings on the Qumran burials. An April conference at Leiden University, “Holistic Qumran and the Scrolls,” focused on various venues of scientific analysis of the material remains from Qumran, closing with the question of what science has to offer to exegesis. And, on a different but related front, the Israel Museum convened an international consultation in November on digitization of the Scrolls, as curators anticipate preserving the wealth of the Qumran manuscripts for the next generations.

All in all, this anniversary year has proved a stimulus both to fresh ways of thinking about Qumran and the scrolls and to innovative ways of mining their riches for the future. Stay tuned to the Orion website for breaking news of additional programs.