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***Shai le-Sara Japhet: Studies in the Bible, Its Exegesis
and Its Language* [Hebrew]**

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The present volume is dedicated in honor of the distinguished scholar Sara Japhet and her scholarly work. This Festschrift is equipped with a fitting introduction about the scholarly achievements of Japhet and with a more detailed essay by T. C. Eskenazi dedicated solely to Japhet's contribution to the studies of Ezra-Nehemiah. Many other essays encapsulate extensive allusions to her influential scholarly works.

The essays encapsulated in this volume are grouped into a Hebrew and an English section. Each section is further divided into three parts that are concerned with historiography and historical conceptions; medieval exegesis; and studies in language and literature.

In addition to the essays discussed more fully below, the first part features the following essays: "Saul in the Book of Chronicles" (Y. Amit); "The Lie and Rumor: The Two Accounts of the Meeting of Jeremiah and Zedekiah—Modes of Coping with Competing Versions in the Ancient World" (R. Goldstein); "Natives or Immigrants: The Perception of the Origins of Israel and Other Peoples in the Bible" (N. Wazana); "What Is Considered Historical Writing in Chronicles?" (J. Weinberg); "Who Financed and Who Arranged the Building of Jerusalem's Walls? The Sources of the List of the Builders of the Wall (Nehemiah 3:1–32) and the Purposes of Its Literary Placement within Nehemiah's

Memoirs” (O. Lipschits); “Political Bi-polarity Disguised as Sexual Relationship in Prophetic Historiography” (A. Malamat); “Sources and Composition in the Book of Kings: The Introductory and Final Verses of the Kings of Judah and Israel” (N. Na’aman); “Exiles and Those Who Remained: Strategies of Exclusivity in the Early Sixth Century BCE” (D. Rom-Shiloni); “The Flood Narratives in the Torah and the Question of Where History Begins” (B. J. Schwartz); “The Economic Role of the Jerusalem Temple in Achaemenid Judah: Comparative Perspectives” (P. R. Bedford); “Sara Japhet’s Contribution to Ezra-Nehemiah Studies” (T. C. Eskenazi); “Names and Narratives: The Meaning of Their Combination in 1 Chronicles 1–9” (M. Kartveit); “The Last Words of David” (R. W. Klein); “Changing History: Nathan’s Oracle and the Structure of the Davidic Monarchy in Chronicles” (G. Knoppers); “And They Found It Written in the Law: Exegetical Procedures Reflected in Nehemiah 8:13–18” (K. W. Weyde); “Israel’s Holiness: Some Observations on the Clerical Nature of 1 Chronicles 6” (Th. Willi); “Problems of Intermarriage in Postexilic Times” (I. Willi-Plein). Reviewing all fifty essays found in this volume one by one is impossible, so I will focus on only a couple.

One of the essays that I want to draw attention to from the first section is that of A. Berlin, who in “Psalms in the Book of Chronicles” postulates that Chronicles should be made a constituent part of the discussion about the growth of the psalter. However, she does acknowledge the fact that the amount of evidence gained from it is exiguous and may not be easily interpreted. Chronicles apparently accepted the notion of an authoritative body of psalms ascribed to David, although what that corpus of psalms encapsulated exactly cannot be ascertained. Berlin challenges her readers with the assumption that it was the growing authority of psalms that promoted the David-as-psalmist tradition, allowing the Chronicler to develop his idea about the origin of the temple liturgy.

In “Wisdom as a Central Category in the Book of the Chronicler: The Significance of the *Talio* Principle in a Sapiential Construction of History,” M. Oeming makes the important claim that on the basis of his interpretation of the *talio* one is faced with three consequences. First, the entire Chronistic historiography is grounded on the sapiential principle of the *talio*. Since Chronicles encapsulates a large number of legal principles, it is possible to postulate the existence of a subtle relationship between Chronistic historiography and legal traditions. For Chronicles, history is a collection of case studies of God’s great legal decisions. Second, as opposed to law, history knows both a positive and a negative side of the *talio*; that is, evil deeds bring about punishment, whereas good deeds are rewarded with divine gifts. Third, the comprehension of history in Chronicles is an illustration of basic assumptions of wisdom. I think it is important to signal the admonition of the wise person in Prov 24:29, an example adduced by Oeming, which underscores that, despite the fact that Chronicles functions within the framework of

retribitional thinking, it also acknowledges the relevance of the warning to abstain from the usage of the *talio* within the personal sphere, as in 2 Chr 28:9–11. This advances our understanding not just of Chronicles but of Proverbs as well.

The second part of this volume, concerned with medieval exegesis, offers the following essays: “Outlines of the Newly Published Byzantine Biblical Exegesis 157” (G. Brin); “Hizkuni’s Commentary as a Textual Witness for Rashbam’s Torah Commentary” (I. Kislev); “R. Abraham Ibn Ezra’s Response to the Grammatical Commentary of R. Samuel ben Meir (Rashbam)” (R. Merdler); “The Ear Tests Arguments: The Exegetical Independence of Later Generations in the Worldview of R. Abraham Ibn Ezra” (U. Shimon); “Two Scholars Mentioned in the Manuscripts of Rashi’s Bible Commentary: R. Judah and R. Judah HaDarshan” (J. S. Penkower); “Rashi’s Introductions to His Biblical Commentaries” (Robert A. Harris); and “The Byzantine Biblical Commentaries from Steinerthe Genizah: Rabbanite vs. Karaite” (R. C. Steiner).

The essay I would highlight from this section is that of M. Z. Cohen, entitled “Rashbam vs. Moses Ibn Ezra: Two Perspectives on Biblical Poetics.” Cohen, building on Japhet’s documentation on Rashbam’s remarkable sense of poetics in his analysis of biblical figurative language and verse structures, compares Rashbam’s results with the aesthetic exegesis of Ibn Ezra. Ibn Ezra turned to Arabic poetics to define the elegance of Scripture. Cohen’s comparison proves that, in spite of the fact that Ibn Ezra’s aesthetic exegesis “eluded” Rashbam, his treatment seems to be limited by his projection of a foreign poetics onto Scripture. While Ibn Ezra followed the proclivity of Arabic poetics to focus on embellishments within a single poetic line, which apparently hampered him from addressing stylistic matters, Rashbam rose to prominence in this latter matter. Rashbam in his Job commentary signals such techniques as *inclusio* and *chiasmus*. In his Qoheleth commentary he recognized an editorial frame that binds the book together as a literary composition. Moreover, in his Torah commentary he employed such tools as the *הקדמה*, “introduction,” that is, prolepsis. All these literary aspects were part of Rashbam’s poetic horizon.

The third part focuses on questions of language and literature: “The Qal Passive Participle of Geminate Verbs in Biblical Hebrew” (M. Bar-Asher); “God’s Trial of Job” (E. Greenstein); “What Is ‘The Book of the Divisions of Times?’” (D. Dimant); “‘Micah the Morashite Was Propheying in the Days of Hezekiah...’: Jeremiah 26:18 and Micah 3:12” (Y. Hoffman); “Isaiah ben Amoz as a Miracle Worker” (M. Haran); “Inner-Biblical Allusions and Textual Criticism” (Y. Zakovitch); “The Spelling and Language of the Qumran Scrolls: New Findings” (E. Tov); “Daily Prayers (4Q503) and the Solar Calendar” (Sh. Talmon); “The Chronological Redaction of the Book of Jubilees” (M. Segal); “Two Cosmographic Terms in Amos 9:6” (Sh. M. Paul); “Spontaneous Spoken Language and

Formal Discourse in the Book of Chronicles” (F. Polak); “Descriptions of A Woman in Labour in the Bible and in the Ancient Near East: The Motif of Not Seeing and Not Hearing” (T. Philip); “The Overlap in Use Between the Infinitive Construct and the Infinitive Absolute in Biblical Hebrew” (S. E. Fassberg); “Psalms 151, 132, 114, and the Question of the Literary Genres in Biblical Poetry” (A. Rofé); “Haggai among the Prophets: An Example of Prophetic Continuity in the Hebrew Bible” (H. Barstad); “Was There a בַּרַח II ‘Vex’, or בַּרַח III ‘Wound, Bruise, Pierce’, or בַּרַח IV ‘Bar’ in Classical Hebrew?” (D. J. A. Clines); “On the Unity and Structure of the Song of Songs” (J. Ch. Exum); “The Desecration of YHWH’s Name: Its Parameters and Significance” (J. Milgrom); “Text and Exegesis in Lamentations 4:21–22” (R. B. Salters); “The Priestly Reminder Stones and Ancient Near Eastern Votive Practices” (J. H. Tigay); “New Light on God’s Opacity” (S. Weitzman); and “A Poetical Etiology of Israel: Psalm 114 against the Background of the Kingship-of-YHWH Psalms 29 and 96–98” (E. Zenger).

From this section I focus on H. G. M. Williamson’s essay, which bears the concise and suggestive title “On Getting Carried Away with the Infinitive Construct of נִשָּׂא.” Williamson asserts that the infinitive construct נִשָּׂא appears so rarely by comparison with the more common form שִׂיאָת that its employment is unlikely to have been the consequence of random chance. The first two of the four examples marshaled prove that the two forms are united by a similar concern in order to shun confusion. The third instance is the outcome of a deliberate choice to achieve alliteration. The fourth example may be the result of an intention to make a significant comparison visible. The conclusion is that it was utilized only for specific and conscious reasons on the part of the biblical authors.

It is more than feasible to assert that with its fifty essays this Festschrift is an all-embracing representation of modern scholarship on the Bible, medieval Jewish biblical exegesis, and the linguistic and literary disciplines in the study of the Book of Books. I also think that in the forthcoming years it will certainly become one of the most frequently consulted reference works in the field.