



# The Orion Newsletter

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

מרכז אוריון לחקר מגילות מדבר יהודה והספרות הקרובה להן

November 2024

Twenty-Ninth Issue

## Letter from the Director

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

This past academic year—overshadowed and shaped by the horrific events of Simchat Torah/October 7, 2023 and their aftermath—has posed challenges unprecedented in the history of the Orion Center. Our own calendar had to be reshuffled due to the drastic changes introduced into the academic calendar—classes commenced nearly three months after the original date; terms were shortened; and classes and exams extended deep into the summer. On a more technical level, the dramatic increase in threats of cyber-violence and concomitant security measures led to the temporary suspension of the Orion Bibliography, which is now undergoing complete renovation and will soon be relaunched in an improved form. But more importantly, the lives of many local members of the Orion community have been directly affected by the reserve duty to which they—or their family members—were called, while overseas colleagues and students struggled to find their way back into the country. I would like to pay special tribute to our devoted research assistant, Shlomo Brand, for his continual reserve service since October 2023. We also mark the loss suffered by Prof. Michael Segal, Chair of the Orion Academic Committee, whose nephew was killed during the war.

Despite these difficulties, and although the war is—our distress—still ongoing, the Orion Center remains committed to its core mission of fostering innovative research on the Dead Sea Scrolls and associated literature. Although we were unable to send out last year's newsletter—which could not be produced under the circumstances—the Center reasserted its status as a vibrant hub of scholarship dealing with all aspects of Second Temple Judaism, including early Christianity. Among other things, we hosted leading international scholars, who were not deterred by the situation and shared with us their expertise. Similarly, we were enriched by the presence of several postdoctoral fellows, who worked in Jerusalem on their groundbreaking research projects. In addition to our online Greenfield Research Seminar, every term we had in-person meetings, in which both graduate students and senior scholars presented their work.

Despite the unceasing attacks on the north of the country, the Orion Center and the University of Haifa managed to hold another successful meeting of the annual Haifa Workshop on the Dead Sea Scrolls and Second Temple Literature, which enables Israeli scrolls scholars to get together and exchange new ideas. In addition, the Center was an important partner in the organization of the international conference, “The Bible and its World,” co-sponsored by all Israeli departments of biblical studies in both universities and colleges, with the support of institutional and private partners, which was held in Jerusalem in early July 2024. Over one hundred and fifty scholars, about a third of whom were from abroad, attended this three-day celebration of contemporary biblical scholarship, which included special sessions on the Dead Sea Scrolls and Second Temple literature.

All this could not have been achieved without the enormous labors, far beyond the call of duty, invested by the devoted staff of the Orion Center: Dr. Ruth Clements, Ruchama Roth, Shlomo Brand, and the truly remarkable

team of interns from the Rothberg International School: Matias Bascunan, Miguel Correa, EunJoo Lee, Daniele Soares, Dimitra Tongkelidou, Nikki Yat Ning Wang, Michael David Williams, and Bruce Woolverton.

The extension of the war into the present academic year will obviously pose challenges, both predictable and unpredictable. Nonetheless, I have full confidence in the resilience of the Orion community, which has already surmounted so much. In the Greenfield Seminar, we will learn about works seldom or never discussed in our fora; the in-person meetings will allow us to integrate newer members into our scholarly company; and international workshops will enable us to engage with cutting-edge research on various topics. In addition, we are looking forward to again hosting an in-person international symposium tentatively scheduled for the Spring of 2026, in cooperation with Rice University and the University of Oxford.

The upcoming year is also expected to be a period of transition for the Center. Most notably, our beloved Dr. Ruth Clements, whose formal title as “Head of English Publications” does not exhaust all her real capacities—including being the living organizational memory of the Center—will retire at the beginning of 2025, meaning that this is the last newsletter that she will edit. Those of us who were fortunate enough to have our papers edited by Ruth will know that the published product was not simply improved but profoundly enhanced by her learned review, meticulous care for details, and inspiring feedback. Ruth has dedicated the last three years to a painstaking, continuous effort to finalize no less than three volumes—the proceedings of Orion's fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth symposia, held in 2016, 2018, and 2022, respectively. It is thanks to her incredible work, in cooperation with our copy-editor Ben Frankel, that this project has been successful, with the publication of the first two volumes in 2023 and 2024; the third and final volume is now in the final stages of preparation, and will be submitted to Brill within the next couple of months. I would like to thank Ruth, both personally and on behalf of the Center, for sharing with us so many years of productive work, scholarly inspiration, and collegial friendship.

And finally, we are grateful to the various institutional partners who have supported our programming over this challenging time, on so many levels: The World Union of Jewish Studies; the Mandel Institute of Jewish Studies at the Hebrew University; the University itself; and of course, the Orion Foundation.

My best wishes for a year of safety, health, and peace,  
Noam Mizrahi

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

Mandel Institute of Jewish Studies  
Rabin World Center of Jewish Studies  
The Hebrew University, Mt. Scopus || Jerusalem 91905 Israel  
Tel: 972-2-588-1966 || Fax: 972-2-588-3584  
E-mail: [orioncenter@mail.huji.ac.il](mailto:orioncenter@mail.huji.ac.il)  
Website: <http://orion.mssc.huji.ac.il>

## Orion Center Highlights, 2023–2024

Notwithstanding the uncertainties and tensions of wartime, it was a busy year at Orion. We appreciate the special efforts made by our distinguished visitors to be here in person, enriching our lives while pursuing their research, even under less-than-optimal conditions. Here are some highlights of the past year plus.

◆ *Orion Visiting Scholars*: Prof. Matthias Henze, Rice University, conducted research for his forthcoming commentary on 2 Baruch. He will be returning in May and June, and while here will lead a special seminar (multiple sessions) on the work. Prof. Olivier Munnich, Paris-Sorbonne University, once again spent a fruitful semester with us, continuing his research on the Septuagint of Daniel, and will likewise be returning in the present academic year. Dr. Vladimir Olivero, University of Oxford, was based at the Center as an Azrieli Postdoctoral Fellow. While here, Dr. Olivero transformed his thesis into a forthcoming monograph and completed a manuscript for another new book, an annotated edition of the Ethiopic text of 1 Enoch (forthcoming with SBL Press). Dr. Jeffrey Cross, University of Minnesota, was based with us as a Fulbright Scholar. While here, Dr. Cross studied the relationship between some Qumran scrolls and Greco-Roman writings of the Stoic school; he is continuing his research into this academic year.

◆ *Orion Research Scholars*: Six younger scholars were awarded Orion Research Scholarships for 2023–2024: Rebekah Jean Haigh, Princeton University, PhD candidate, for her project, “Identity: (En)Gendering Violence in the War Scroll and Revelation”; Itai Kagan, The Hebrew University, PhD candidate, for “The Levantine Background of Post-Biblical Divine Epithets”; Hak Seo Kim, University of Oxford, PhD candidate, for “Manasseh, the Innocent Sinner of the Day: Revealing Collective Memory from the Martyrdom of Isaiah, the Greek Prayer of Manasseh, and 4Q381 (4Q Non-Canonical Psalms B)”; Fantahun Melaku/Sisay, The Hebrew University, MA student, for “The Influence of Daniel on the View of the Eschaton in Second Temple Palestinian Jewry”; Dr. Rotem Avneri Meir, University of Helsinki and Harvard University, Postdoctoral Research Fellow, for “A King in Qumran: 4Q448 and Hasmonean Court Literature”; and Noam Eisenstein, Tel Aviv University, MA student, for “The Reception of the Scriptural Commandment to Assemble (Deut 31:10-12) in Second Temple and Rabbinic Literature.” Due to complications of the ongoing war, some of the researchers have postponed all or part of their research till the coming year.

◆ *Greenfield Scholars’ Seminars*: Once again, the Greenfield series was mainly delivered on Zoom and in English, a plan that allows for a truly international audience. The spring semester of 2023 featured seminars led by Prof. Dennis Mizzi, University of Malta, “The Burial of Sealed Jars in the Qumran Cemetery: Disposal of Consecrated Property?”; Prof. Reinhard Kratz, University of Göttingen, “[The Dead Sea Scrolls in Historical Perspective](#)”; Prof. Arjen Bakker, University of Groningen, “Reflections on Time in Jewish Wisdom of the Hellenistic Period”; and Dr. Shlomo Zuckier, Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton, “[Was there ‘Halakhah’ at Qumran? The Historiography of an Anachronism](#).” The semester finished up with a hybrid (in person and online) seminar led by Prof. Hindy Najman, Oxford University, and Prof. Eibert Tigchelaar KU L Leuven, on “[The Hodayot and its Readings: Collections and Poetic Cycles](#).”

◆ The 2023–2024 academic year began with a presentation by Dr. Anna Shirav, University of Birmingham, on “[4QWords of Ezekiel from Qumran: Ezekiel’s Visions in an Apocalyptic Temporality](#).” Prof. Menachem Kister, The Hebrew University, led a seminar in person and in Hebrew on “The Dark Side of the Torah: Studies in Second Temple Literature, Literature of the Sages, and Paul’s Epistles.” Next up was Dr. Rotem

Avneri Meir, Orion Postdoctoral Fellow, University of Helsinki, speaking on “[Prayer, Poetry, Politics: The King Jonathan Text from Qumran](#).” Prof. Joseph Sievers, of the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome and the Studium Biblicum Franciscanum in Jerusalem, finished the series with his talk, “[Being Fair to the Pharisees: Beyond Negative or Positive Stereotypes](#).” Thanks to the scholars for their presentations, and to the online and in-person attendees for rich critical discussions of their work! For a partial schedule of this year’s lineup, see the **Calendar**, page 3.

◆ *Orion Center Workshops*: During 2023 and 2024, we have been experimenting with a new venue, that of workshops on specific topics, designed to allow for in-depth treatment of or learning on the topic in question. The first such workshop, “Material Reconstruction of the DSS using Digital Tools: A Hands-On Workshop” (February 2023) was a two-day, in-person seminar led by Drs. Asaf Gayer and Hila Dayfani, meant to introduce scholars to the tools for conducting digital research on scroll fragments. Given the limited number of participants, we were unable to accommodate all who were interested, and Dr. Dayfani will offer the workshop again in the spring of 2025. The second workshop (March 2023) was a half-day, hybrid colloquium on “[Reading and Interpreting the Book of Daniel](#).” It featured presentations by Michael Segal (Hebrew University) and Olivier Munnich (Paris-Sorbonne University) on various issues connected with the Greek and Aramaic versions of Daniel, with responses by several scholars. The third workshop was held in July 2024: “Dynamics of Midrashic Traditions in Second Temple and Rabbinic Literature.” This afternoon workshop, in person and in Hebrew, co-sponsored by the Hebrew University Departments of Bible and Talmud and with the cooperation of the Institute for Advanced Studies, focused on innovative work by Prof. Menahem Kister, featured in his new volume. The workshop brought together five experts in Bible, Dead Sea Scrolls, and related literature—Profs. Michael Segal, Cana Werman, Ishay Rosen-Zvi, Joseph Witztum, and Menahem Kister, for an in-depth discussion of the issues raised by Prof. Kister’s book.

◆ *International Conference: “The Bible & Its World”*: This three-day conference (July 1–3, 2024), held at the Hebrew University, was organized cooperatively by the World Union of Jewish Studies and the Mandel Institute of Jewish Studies, the Hebrew University with the partnership of the Orion Center. Over one hundred and fifty scholars from Israel and abroad presented papers. The first day’s lectures were held at the new Israel National Library; the rest of the conference took place in Hebrew University’s Rabin Building. The tremendously positive feedback from participants and co-organizers alike encourages us to think about another such venture in the future.

◆ *Interns Update*: 2023–2024 has been an unusual intern year. Because of the war, the academic year started only at the end of December 2023—and so did the intern program. The interns were: Matias Bascunan (Chile), a second-year MA student in Bible (Rothberg); Miguel Correa (Peru), an MA student in Archaeology and the Ancient Near East (Hebrew University), returning for a third intern year; EunJoo Lee (Korea), a first-year MA student in Bible (Hebrew University); Daniele Soares (Brazil), a second-year MA student in Bible and the Ancient Near East (Rothberg), returning for a second intern year; Dimitra Tongkelidou (Greece), a third-year MA student in Bible and the Ancient Near East (Hebrew University), returning for a third intern year (she will be joining us again in the coming year); Nikki Yat Ning Wang (London), a third-year MA student in Archaeology and the Ancient Near East (Rothberg); Michael David Williams (USA), a second-year MA student in Bible and the Ancient Near East (Rothberg); Bruce Woolverton (USA), a second-year MA (*cont. p. 3*)

## Orion Center Calendar 2024/2025\*

**December 2:** Jerusalem Consortium for New Testament Research

17:00–19:00, Mandel Building, Room 530, The Hebrew University, Mt. Scopus

**Prof. Menahem Kister**, Departments of Bible and Talmud, The Hebrew University: “Reading Galatians 3 against the Foil of Ancient Jewish Literature”

**December 3:** Orion Center Scholars’ Gathering

12:30–14:00, Room 3106, Rabin Building

**December 18:** Jonas C. Greenfield Scholars’ Seminar

18:15 Israel time; 11:15 a.m. EST

**Dr. Camilla Recalcati**, Golda Meir Postdoctoral Fellow: “Echoes of Egypt: Uncovering Lexical Traces in the Septuagint”

**January 15, 2024:** Book Launch

16:30–18:30, Mandel Building, Room 530, The Hebrew University, Mt. Scopus

**Prof. Hindy Najman:** *Scriptural Vitality: Rethinking Philology and Hermeneutics*

**March 30–31:** International Workshop: Wisdom in the Bible and Second Temple Literature

In cooperation with Bar-Ilan University and the World Union of Jewish Studies

Location: The Hebrew University; program TBA.

**April 9:** Jonas C. Greenfield Scholars’ Seminar

18:15 Israel time; 11:15 a.m. EDT

**Dr. Jeffrey Cross**, Fulbright Israel Postdoctoral Fellow: Title TBA

**June 26:** Workshop: Manuscript Studies in the Digital Age  
Schedule and room TBA, The Hebrew University

**Dr. Hila Dayfani**, The Hebrew University

Stay tuned to the Orion website for additions and updates.

### Haifa Scrolls Workshop

**May 11, 2025**

University of Haifa (in Hebrew)—check their website for updates—<http://megillot.haifa.ac.il/index.php/en/events>

*\*Please note: All Greenfield Seminars will be hosted on Zoom, in English. Registration information will be posted on the website and links sent out to the Orion mailing list in advance of each event. Unless otherwise specified, other events will be held in person. Check the website for details. Stay tuned!*

### Orion Research Scholarships

The Orion Center annually awards scholarships to graduate students and postdoctoral researchers for research to be conducted at the Center. Priority is given to projects that integrate the information gleaned from the Dead Sea Scrolls into the broader picture of Second Temple Judaism. Applications for the 2025–2026 academic year will be due in January and are available on the Orion website: <http://orion.mscc.huji.ac.il/educate/fellowships.shtml>. See the link for information, exact deadlines, and forms.

### Orion Center Academic Committee

Prof. Steven Fassberg, Chair; Prof. Noam Mizrahi;  
Prof. Noah Hacham; Prof. Esther Chazon;  
Prof. Paula Fredriksen; Prof. Menahem Kister;  
Prof. Michael Segal; Prof. Emanuel Tov

## Orion Publications

*The Textual History of the Bible from the Dead Sea Scrolls to the Biblical Manuscripts of the Vienna Papyrus Collection: Papers from the Fifteenth International Symposium of the Orion Center for the Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Associated Literature, Cosponsored by The University of Vienna Institute for Jewish Studies and The Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies, 10–13 April, 2016*. Edited by Ruth A. Clements, Russell E. Fuller, Armin Lange, Paul D. Mandel. Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah 137. Leiden: Brill, 2023.

*The Dead Sea Scrolls at Seventy: “Clear a Path in the Wilderness”: Proceedings of the Sixteenth International Symposium of the Orion Center for the Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls, Cosponsored by the University of Vienna, New York University, the Israel Antiquities Authority, and the Israel Museum, 29 April–2 May, 2018*. Edited by Esther G. Chazon, Ruth A. Clements, Armin Lange, Adolfo Roitman, Lawrence H. Schiffman, and Pnina Shor. Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah 148. Leiden: Brill, 2024.

*Meghillot: Studies in the Dead Sea Scrolls 16*. Edited by Devorah Dimant, Noam Mizrahi, and Liora Goldman. Haifa: The University of Haifa; Jerusalem: The Hebrew University Mandel Institute of Jewish Studies and the Bialik Institute, 2023. For Hebrew Table of Contents click here: [CONTENTS](#). For English Abstracts [click here](#).

### In Preparation

*(Con)textual Perspectives on the Dead Sea Scrolls: The Seventeenth International Orion Symposium, February 28–March 3, 2022*. Edited by Esther G. Chazon, Ruth A. Clements, Noam Mizrahi, and Michael Segal. Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah. Leiden: Brill. Forthcoming 2025.

*Meghillot: Studies in the Dead Sea Scrolls 17*. Edited by Devorah Dimant, Noam Mizrahi, and Liora Goldman. Haifa: The University of Haifa; Jerusalem: The Hebrew University Mandel Institute of Jewish Studies and the Bialik Institute. Forthcoming 2025.

### Orion books online:

All Orion volumes published by [Brill Academic Publishers](#) are now available as E-books (as well as through the inexpensive MyBook softcovers program). Volumes published in 2007 and later are available as full-access downloads, with institutional or individual subscription; individual chapters from these volumes may now be accessed online through the Brill site. Check it out!

### (Center Highlights, continued)

student in Jewish Studies (Rothberg) (he will also be joining us again this year). In addition to their work on the Online Bibliography, the interns took part in a tour of the Israel Museum’s Shrine of the Book, where the scrolls are displayed to the public, and the scrolls lab of the Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA), where preservation work on the scrolls is carried out. This year’s tour was guided by Prof. Stefan Schorch of the Bible Department, in conjunction with IAA and Museum staff. Thanks to all!

### Dead Sea Scrolls Online

#### Israel Museum Scrolls Online

<http://dss.collections.imj.org.il/>

#### The Leon Levy Dead Sea Scrolls Digital Library

<http://www.deadseascrolls.org.il/home>

#### Cambridge University Digital Library (Damascus Document)

[Cairo Genizah : Halaka \(cam.ac.uk\)](#); [Cairo Genizah : Halaka \(cam.ac.uk\)](#)

*The Orion Center Newsletter*, ed. Ruth A. Clements

© 2024, Orion Center

To receive the newsletter, please email: [orioncenter@mail.huji.ac.il](mailto:orioncenter@mail.huji.ac.il).