

It is my pleasure to distribute the ICI REPORT for January 2011.

(a) TEACHING COOPERATION

One of the ways to collaborate in teaching involves the use of video-conferencing (now easily available to many through SKYPE and similar programs). Please read about the experience of Prof. Kelley N. Coblentz-Bautch in bringing international scholars into her classroom at

[http://www.sbl-site.org/assets/pdfs/KCB\\_ICIvideoconferencing.pdf](http://www.sbl-site.org/assets/pdfs/KCB_ICIvideoconferencing.pdf)

We hope these successful experiences will multiply in the near future. A list of scholars willing to participate in the International Teaching Cooperation Initiative is at

<http://www.sbl-site.org/educational/ICIscholarList.aspx>

(b) PUBLICATIONS: Online Books – New books added

[http://www.sbl-site.org/publications/Books\\_ICIbooks.aspx](http://www.sbl-site.org/publications/Books_ICIbooks.aspx)

The following books were added since the last report:

- (1) Davies, Margaret. *Matthew. Readings: A New Biblical Commentary*. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2009.

Margaret Davies takes up the insights of reader-response criticism to explore how the conventions and strategies of the Gospel of Matthew draw the reader into the world that the text creates. There is a recognition also of the text's significance as authoritative scripture for modern Christians, and the bias that this gives to any interpretative strategy. This is a reprint of the 1993 edition.

- (2) Fitzgerald, John T., Fika J. van Rensburg, and Herrie F. van Rooy, eds. *Animosity, the Bible, and Us: Some European, North American, and South African Perspectives*. Global Perspectives on Biblical Scholarship, 12. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2009.

Animosity in its various forms, including enmity, war, homicide, domestic violence, religious hostility, and retaliation, is a perennial problem that has plagued every form of interpersonal and international relationship since the dawn of human existence. The essays in this volume, offering perspectives from three continents, examine how animosity is understood and presented in the biblical text and its historical and literary contexts. The authors recognize at the same time that the Bible itself and how it has been used have sometimes contributed to

the problem of animosity and thus seek to glean any insights that might address this problem in the contemporary world, which today is a pressing global concern. The contributors are Henk Bakker, Paul B. Decock, John T. Fitzgerald, J. J. Fritz Krüger, Outi Leppä, Dirk G. van der Merwe, Marius Nel, Eric Peels, Jeremy Punt, Fika J. van Rensburg, Rainer G. H. Reuter, Herrie F. van Rooy, Eben Scheffler, and Eveline van Staaldoune-Sulman.

- (3) Holmstedt, Robert D. *Ruth: A Handbook on the Hebrew Text*. Baylor Handbook on the Hebrew Bible. Waco: Baylor University Press, 2010.

“Holmstedt has created an excellent linguistic pathway through Ruth in this latest addition to the Baylor Handbook on the Hebrew Bible series. Students will find his systematic approach and his inclusion of pedagogic aids very helpful and scholars will appreciate the breath of his textual comments that make this much more than just a syntactical handbook or guide to grammatical forms.” Victor H. Matthews, *Interim Dean, College of Humanities and Public Affairs, Missouri State University*

“An up-to-date technical resource valuable for intermediate students. Holmstedt addresses a wide range of questions, with a strong focus on the connection between syntax and nuance of meaning.” Katharine Doob Sakenfeld, *William Albright Eisenberger Professor of Old Testament, Princeton Theological Seminary*

“Designed for the immediate student to the advanced researcher, Holmstedt’s *The Book of Ruth* is a wonderful paragon of an informed merging of traditional Hebrew grammatical analysis with insights from the modern linguistic analysis of Hebrew. With conciseness and clarity, Holmstedt demonstrates the great value of a linguistically-informed analysis of Biblical Hebrew, not only for the book of Ruth, but for biblical texts in general. This volume in the Baylor Handbook on the Hebrew Bible series will serve significantly in enhancing the study of the Bible for the next generation of students and scholars.” K. Lawson Younger, Jr., *Professor of Old Testament, Semitic Languages, and Ancient Near Eastern History Trinity International University Divinity School*

- (4) Larkin, William J. *Ephesians: A Handbook on the Greek Text*. Baylor Handbook on the Greek New Testament. Waco: Baylor University Press, 2009.

"An excellent work, fully informed by semantic, grammatical, and commentary discussion of Ephesians that continues the high quality of this series." Peter H. Davids, Professor of Biblical Theology, St. Stephen's University

“This volume on Ephesians is a welcome addition to Baylor’s fine series of handbooks on the Greek text. Linguistically informed and exegetically oriented, Larkin has provided an excellent resource for readers of the Greek text of Ephesians, whether student, professor, or exegete.” Karen H. Jobes, *Gerald F. Hawthorne Professor of New Testament Greek and Exegesis, Wheaton College and Graduate School*

- (5) Miscall, Peter. *Isaiah*. Readings: A New Biblical Commentary. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2006.

Peter Miscall's commentary on Isaiah was among the first volumes in the series Readings published by JSOT Press in 1993. Sheffield Phoenix Press is now relaunching the series, under the editorship of John Jarick, with a revised reprint of Miscall's work (including a new preface), and an entirely new volume on Haggai by Tim Meadowcroft.

The aim of the series remains to present compact literary readings of the biblical books, unencumbered by the paraphernalia of traditional criticism and alert to the impact of literary studies on biblical interpretation. Each contributor to the series approaches their text from their own personal literary position.

In this fine and characteristic study, Miscall concentrates especially on the play of images in the prophetic book, their interweaving and constant intertextuality.

- (6) Ryan, Roger. *Judges*. Readings: A New Biblical Commentary. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2007.

In this new contribution to the Readings series of commentaries, Roger Ryan offers a challenge to the fashionable disdain for the heroes of the Book of Judges. As against the current consensus majoring on the supposed flaws in the characters of the judges, and denigrating them as participants in Israel’s moral and religious decline, he paints a positive portrait of each of the book’s judge-deliverers.

The key element in all the stories of the judges is that each of them wins independence for oppressed Israelites against great odds—an element that should predispose readers to a favourable evaluation of the heroes. Ehud slaughters an enemy king when the only weapon he has is a homemade dagger. Barak resolutely charges downhill against enemy chariots reinforced with iron. Jael slaughters an enemy commander by improvising with a hammer and a tent peg. Gideon defeats hordes of nomadic invaders with a small token army. The lone hero Samson

slaughters the Philistine foe in great numbers.

The Book of Judges presents in this reading a dark story-world in which its characters take heroic risks as they resolve conflicts by violent means. Their stories are jubilantly told and readers are expected to be neither squeamish nor censorious.

- (7) Tucker, W. Dennis, Jr. *Jonah: A Handbook on the Hebrew Text*. Baylor Handbook on the Hebrew Bible. Waco: Baylor University Press, 2006.

“In the crowded genre of biblical commentaries, this series will surely find a niche among students and pastors, who need more lexical, morphological, and syntactical help than most commentaries today offer. Tucker's volume reflects a remarkable amount of erudition and hard work, and the appearance of his volume bodes well for the series generally.” Bill T. Arnold, Asbury Theological Seminary

(c) PUBLICATIONS – IVBS and ANEM/MACO

Please consider submitting your manuscripts to the two publications series that emerged out of ICI, namely IVBS and ANEM. For information about IVBS please visit [http://www.sbl-site.org/Publications/Books\\_IVBS.aspx](http://www.sbl-site.org/Publications/Books_IVBS.aspx); for information about ANEM/MACO, please go to [http://www.sbl-site.org/publications/Books\\_ANEmonographs.aspx](http://www.sbl-site.org/publications/Books_ANEmonographs.aspx)

(d) EVENTS

The SBL maintains a significant list of events taking place anywhere in the globe.

For the full list please go to <http://www.sbl-site.org/meetings/events.aspx>. Events that may be of interest to you include:

**June 21-24/2010**

**Melanesian Association of Theological Schools (MATS) Inaugural Conference**

Offers of papers are now invited. Abstracts of 250 words should be sent by post, fax, or email (as Word attachments) to: Ms. Sandra Iga, Secretary - School of Theology, Pacific Adventist University, Private Mail Bag, Boroko NCD, Papua New Guinea. Tel: (675) 328 0324/328 0342 Fax: (675) 328 1257 Email: [sandra.iga@pau.ac.pg](mailto:sandra.iga@pau.ac.pg) Papers will be accepted in four broad areas of theological enquiry – OLD TESTAMENT, NEW TESTAMENT, THEOLOGY (SYSTEMATIC AND HISTORICAL), and APPLIED THEOLOGY (MINISTRY, ETHICS, MISSIOLOGY) – and presenters will be encouraged to submit expanded versions of their papers for publication in the *Melanesian Journal of Theology*.

It is envisaged that the MATS conference will become an annual gathering of

educators and postgraduate students from the theological schools of Melanesia and the wider South Pacific. A meeting to reconstitute the association will be held on the last day of MATS 2011. From 2012 the conference will be hosted by other theological schools in Papua New Guinea and the South Pacific islands. For details and further information please contact Scott Charlesworth at [sdchar@gmail.com](mailto:sdchar@gmail.com)

Please submit basic information about events to Sharon Johnson at [sharon.johnson@sbl-site.org](mailto:sharon.johnson@sbl-site.org).

(e) PLEASE PASS THE INFORMATION

Feel free to distribute this report among all those you think might find it helpful. If you are a member of other professional organizations related to biblical studies, we urge you to send our newsletters to those responsible for communication within those groups as well.

With best wishes,

Ehud

Ehud Ben Zvi, SBL - International Cooperation Initiative