

Summaries

Adi Amsterdam

Of Sheep and Trees: אילי הצדק (Isa 61:3) Revisited

Modern translations of the Bible and studies of biblical lexicography commonly render the phrase אילי הצדק as 'trees of righteousness' or 'trees of salvation'. In the context of the verse, however, this metaphorical interpretation remains unclear for medieval Jewish commentators and modern scholars alike.

The botanical interpretation of the phrase was not the result of linguistic research, but rather followed an exegetical interpretation first documented in Ben-Saruq's *Maḥberet Menaḥem*. From that time, this became the generally accepted interpretation, even though the classical translations suggested other reasonable alternatives.

The lexicographic survey here is followed by a new interpretation of the form אילי, not in the botanical sense, as oaks or trees, but rather as leaders or champions, in line with אילי מואב (Exod 15:15), אילי הארץ (Ezek 17:13).

Uri Mor

Sifre Zuta on Numbers in Genizah Fragments: Orthography and Phonology

This paper offers a comprehensive description and analysis of the orthographic conventions and phonological features found in the two known Genizah fragments of the halakhic midrash *Sifre Zuta on Numbers*: MS St. Petersburg (Firkovich) and MS Oxford.

Orthographically, the two fragments are comparable with the best manuscripts of rabbinic literature, and contain an abundance of typical

rabbinic orthographic forms. This affirms, on the one hand, the reliability of the text in the fragments and the high quality of its transmission; on the other hand, it may suggest that some of its unique features were modified in order to resemble ordinary rabbinic manuscripts.

The phonological data similarly reveals close resemblance to reliable manuscripts of rabbinic literature, significantly to Palestinian witnesses. However, in several details, for example *h-h* interchanges, the Genizah fragments are in alignment with extra-rabbinic sources from southern Palestine.

Leon Shor and Anna Inbar

The Interjectional Uses of the Syntactic Negators *lo* ‘not’ and *ejn* ‘there is/are not’ in Informal Israeli Hebrew

This paper focuses on an interjectional use of the syntactic negators *lo* ‘not’ and *ejn* ‘there is/are not’ in informal Israeli Hebrew. In this use, *lo* and *ejn* neither negate an explicit component of the immediately prior turn, nor convey disagreement with a prior statement, but are rather used as intensifying interjections that signal the speaker’s high degree of epistemic-affective stance in relation to an upcoming or previous claim. This use is unique for two aspects rarely discussed in the existing literature – its reflection of a grammaticalization path from a function word to an intensifier and its attestation to a conceptual affinity between the domains of intensification and negation.

Mordechay Mishor

‘Be with me *b’gwl*’

The word בעגול (*b’gwl*), which appears on an ancient amulet – Smithsonian Institution, Freer Collection 24 – may be understood either literally (a) as ‘circle’, as ‘in a (magic) circle’, or (b) as ‘swiftly’, inspired by Aramaic *ba’āgal(a)*. In lemmatizing the amulet for the Historical Dictionary, both

possibilities were raised, but no definitive conclusion was reached. This led to a discussion of the expression בריגול (*brygl*) found in Numbers Rabbah, which was appended to the article.

English summaries edited by Dena Ordan