

***Zeramim: An Online Journal of
Applied Jewish Thought***

presents

**a call for papers
for our Spring 2019 issue
on**

**BIBLICAL SCHOLARSHIP AS A
MODERN JEWISH HERMENEUTIC**

Although Bible scholars continue to ask new questions regarding the historicity, origins, and implied subtexts of the Hebrew Bible's contents, something of a Jewish “folk religion” that espouses a nearly fundamentalist understanding of Jewish sacred texts still permeates many Jewish communities. But, when Jews seek to engage with tradition through a critical lens, the veritable challenges academicians have posed demand coherent responses that are intellectually honest and religiously sensitive. In the Spring 2019 issue of *Zeramim*, we would like to highlight problems and proposals, and questions and answers that work towards the formation of a 21st century Judaism that has embraced (or otherwise attempted to respond adequately to) the complexities highlighted by biblical scholarship.

For this upcoming special issue, we invite submissions that relate to any of the following themes:

- To what extent has biblical source criticism constituted a Jewish enterprise? (Whereas, nearly a millennium ago,

Abraham ibn Ezra hinted at late interpolations into Biblical texts, many rabbinic dicta preceding and following him have confidently asserted that “one shepherd” gave the entirety of the Torah. In recent years, James Kugel has written of the compartmentalization of his religious identity and his scholarship, and Benjamin Sommer has written of his integration of his theology with his scholarship. Can reconstructing original texts help Jews encounter preferable, coherent, and compelling lessons learned from textual layers – and, if so – how?)

- What lessons can the Jewish community learn from, or in spite of, the Hebrew Bible’s exclusion or underrepresentation of certain contemporary (and presumably ancient) phenomena (miscarriages, gender-non-conforming persons, conversations between non-male humans, the domestication of animals, disabilities, pacifism, and adoption, to name a few)?
- How can Jews today reconcile their modern moral compasses with the sanctification of biblical passages that, in text or subtext, may condone actions commonly perceived as unethical (for example, genocides, physical abuse of partners or children, or capital punishment as a response to certain transgressions that do not physically harm others)?
- What outcomes do anthropology, philology, and cultural studies provide Jews today when exploring the myths, narratives, and peoples described in the Hebrew Bible? (What folk practices, linguistic tendencies, and societal norms ought Jews today, as the heirs of an ancient culture, accept or reject?)

Please send your submissions to submissions@zeramim.org by **February 12, 2019** in accordance with the following guidelines:

GENERAL SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Content

Zeramim welcomes the submission of essays in any subject of applied Jewish studies – articles analyzing subjects of Jewish inquiry that offer a unique lens on any aspect of Jewish life or thought that affects the present and/or future of how Jewish culture, religion, and/or people operate in the modern world.

Style

Submissions should be intellectually informed by and informative of current understandings in Jewish academia, referencing recent studies. Any terminology or abbreviations likely to be unfamiliar to non-specialists should be succinctly clarified in the article itself. Submissions should be accessible to a lay readership and helpful to professional academics and/or Jewish professionals; an ideal submission should be able to bring a nuanced exploration of a subject to a diversity of readers.

Gendered Terminology

Gendered pronouns for entities that might be either without gender (e.g., “God Himself”) or not necessarily restricted to one gender (e.g., “a scholar should doubt himself”) should only be used if the author intends to convey a point about gender by identifying a gender in such situations. Likewise, gender-neutral nouns (e.g., “humanity”) are encouraged instead of gender-exclusive nouns (e.g., “mankind”) unless a point about gender is intended to be conveyed by using gender-exclusive terminology. *Zeramim* encourages gender-neutral language (e.g., “God’s self”) and gender-inclusive language (e.g., “a scholar should doubt himself or herself”); we ask our authors to be sensitive to the assumptions involved in such usages and how our readers will perceive those assumptions.

Length

Submissions may be no longer than 10,000 words.

Citation

All articles should include their notes in the form of footnotes (*i.e.*, not endnotes). *Zeramim* does not publish appendices of cited sources. Authors may base their style of citation in any recognized methodology of citation (MLA, Chicago, Manual of Style, *etc.*) so long as the (not comprehensive) guidelines below are met:

- All citations of published works should include the full names of the referenced works along with the works’ authors and dates of publication.

- **BOOKS:** Citations from books should include the names of the books' publishers.
- **ANTHOLOGIES:** Citations of works from anthologies should indicate the names of the anthologies' editors.
- **JOURNALS:** Citations from journals should include the journals' volume and issue numbers.
- **WEB:** Web citations should include a URL and date of access.

Languages

Submissions should be in English but may integrate terms and passages from non-English languages as long as the foreign language text is translated into English. Key characters, terms or phrases in languages written with characters other than those of the Latin alphabet (*e.g.*, Hebrew, Greek, Arabic, *etc.*) should appear in transliteration (and – if able to assist a reader – their native spellings). Authors may follow any system of transliteration (*e.g.*, SBL, Library of Congress, *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, *etc.*) but should be consistent within a single submission.

Biography

Every submission should include a 2–5-sentence biography of any and all of its authors.

Submitting

All submissions must be submitted to submissions@zeramim.org as .docx files, and all appendices to articles must be part of the same document submitted for consideration.

SPECIAL GUIDELINES FOR SUBMISSIONS TO *MIDRASH ZERAMIM*

Midrash Zeramim is a designated venue for publication of creative works that make use of artistic forms to illuminate ideas relevant to thoughtful Jewish lives – whether in the form of visual arts, creative writing or music.

Submissions for *Midrash Zeramim*, though artistic in nature, should include an introductory statement that addresses the point that the submission seeks to make and refers the reader/listener/observer to relevant sources that inspired the contribution and may provide further thought.

For all other matters related to style and format, please see the General Submission Guidelines above.

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