

זרמים
Zeramim

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Dear readers,

The evolving meaning we make of revelation lies at the core of this latest issue of *Zeremim*. From reliving the mystery of encountering divinity to rethinking the origins of religious doctrines, the pages that follow invite the reader to uncover Judaism's Biblical roots and offshoots anew.

Rereading the Israelites' first collective near-death experience in "Love as Strong as Death: Eros and Thanatos in the Sinai Theophany," Rachel Adelman depicts one critical intersection of the ecstatic with the fatal as clearly witnessed through the lens of rabbinic interpretation. In her article, Adelman supplements Rosenzweig's summoning of Alcestis to convince others of death's transcendence in moments of heightened passion; Adelman turns to rabbinic narratives themselves that paint a similar image.

Love and death quietly merged as Reform Jewish leaders in the 1980s argued as to how their communities should determine the religious identity of the children of intermarriage—an act that some leaders espoused as a commitment to love and others pronounced as a death sentence to American Jewry. Zev Eleff's "Patrilineal Descent & the Shaping of Intermarriage Discourse in American Judaism" documents the debates rabbis held when responding to both the shifting demographics in American Judaism and the Reform mandate to embrace the sanctity of tradition and simultaneously to advance viable visions of a Jewish people with new needs in every generation.

The developments and stages of the many iterations of Judaism may in fact mirror the ever-transforming realm that process theologians consider the morphing quiddities of their God. Bar Guzi, in "Jewish Process Theology and the Problem of Evil: The Cases of Hans Jonas and Bradley Shavit Artson," compares and contrasts the theological writings of two Jews tackling theodicy and provides his own analysis of what it is that this shared outlook—even in its own various forms—offers seekers today.

For those who search the universe for meaning—spiritual and otherwise—Michael Wasserman suggests that religion and science do far more than contradict or complement the findings of the other. In his essay "Overlapping Magesteria: What Science and Religion Have In Common," Wasserman purports that religion and science both constitute utterly empiricist endeavors of making sense of observed

data – one set of observations focusing on a public external world, and the other concentrating on our private internal lives.

The meaning embedded in religious texts has never been confined solely to a superficial reading of these corpuses, and scholars' efforts to determine the most appropriate path to coherence have rarely been a simple, straightforward undertaking. In highlighting the complexities of interpretation that result from diverse theorizations of Biblical history, Richard Claman's "A Biblical Challenge: Can an Academic Approach Aimed at 'Best Explanation' of the Biblical Text Be Imported Into the Synagogue-Sermon World of 'Interpretation?'" asks how religious and ritual engagement with the Hebrew Bible can attempt to preach religious truths that can be affirmed by modern critical scholars' often-conflicting interpretations of ancient passages.

Not merely a single supernatural act that took place in a mythos set upon a mountaintop in some wilderness several millennia ago – revelation continuously finds itself reinterpreted and the contents attributed to it reread and reevaluated as those who engage with Scriptures encounter old and new questions that demand answers that feel both truthful and compelling. Rooted in such explorations, our issue concludes with a call for submissions for our upcoming special issue dedicated to the ways that modern Biblical scholarship can offer tools for advancing forms of Jewish thought and life best suited for the 21st century.

With the release of this issue coming on the heels of the tragic loss of lives of Jews at prayer at the Tree of Life*Or L'Simcha synagogue in Pittsburgh, PA, just a few weeks earlier, to be able to begin our third year of publishing our journal bespeaks Jewish longevity – a commitment to breathing Jewish life into study and Jewish study into life. A free online journal – catalogued by ISSN, indexed by RAMBI (The Index of Articles on Jewish Studies), and archived on our website – *Zeramim*, in this issue (as always), is blessed to present to a wide readership some of the most relevant conversations taking place in Jewish Studies today.

With gratitude,

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The editors of Zeramim receive and solicit submissions from a range of authors diverse in age, gender, and denominational identity. For information on how to submit original works to Zeramim, please see the back of this issue.