

Stefan C. Reif and Renate Egger-Wentzel, eds., *Ancient Jewish Prayers and Emotions: Emotions Associated with Jewish Prayer in and around the Second Temple Period*. Deuterocanonical and Cognate Literature Studies 26; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2015. Pp. VIII+409+9 b/w images. ISBN 9783110374292. Hardcover, € 119.95/\$ 168.-/£ 89.99.

- [1] The papers published in this volume were delivered at an international conference in Haifa 2014, sponsored by Deuterocanonical and Cognate Literature (=ISDL), Salzburg, Austria and the University of Haifa, Israel. The collection addresses a neglected theme, namely, how specific emotions are expressed through prayer in literature from the Second Temple period. The experiential aspects of religion have received a renewed interest, and this collection follows in the wake of that interest. A model to be mentioned here is, for example, David Konstan, *The Emotions of the Ancient Greeks* (2006). While Konstan's work is devoted to ancient philosophical literature, the present volume concentrates on Jewish sources. The papers thus serve as a reminder of the significance of this context for biblical studies. Twenty papers, covering a range of sources, spanning from Hebrew Bible to the New Testament and rabbinic, as well as varied languages, genres, and approaches, are found in this volume. It is really a treasure to be mined for important information on several subjects pertaining to prayer in this literature. Every article provides extensive lists of relevant and updated literature on its topic. Here follows a presentation of the papers.
- [2] Stefan C. Reif, "The Place of Prayer in Early Judaism" (pp. 3–17) gives an overview of scholarship and methodologies on Jewish prayer before Christianity and rabbinic Judaism. This is a helpful and necessary introduction, but it fails to bind together the volume since the topic of emotions is hardly addressed.
- [3] Christine Abart, "Moments of Joy and Lasting Happiness: Examples from the Psalms" (pp. 19–40) distinguishes, in accordance with present-day psychological research, between moments of joy and happiness and a permanent state of happiness and applies this to the psalms. She demonstrates how joy finds physical expressions, as, for example, the kidney and liver are linked to emotions. Lasting joy is associated with YHWH and the Torah. Permanent joy is often connected with the heart and eyes.
- [4] Kristin De Troyer, "'Sounding Trumpets with Loud Shouts': Emotional Responses to Temple Building; Ezra and Esdras" (pp. 41–57) finds and compares how emotions are expressed during the building of the temple according to the Hebrew-Aramaic Ezra and the apocryphal 1 Esdras (Greek).
- [5] Simone M. Paganini, "Adjusting the Narrative Emotions and the Prayer of Moses (Jub 1:19–21)" (pp. 59–69) investigates Moses's only prayer in the first chapter of Jubilees, an intercessory prayer. Moses's prayer evokes emotions on the part of God, and these emotions inspire the adjustments of Genesis and Exodus which take place in Jubilees.
- [6] Thomas R. Elssner, "Emotions in Jerusalem's Prayer: Baruch and Lamentations" (pp. 71–81) investigates the emotional speech of Jerusalem for her exiled children. The lamentation of a mother over her children ends with the prospect of their eternal joy and salvation.
- [7] Beate Ego, "Prayer and Emotion in the Septuagint of Esther" (pp. 83–93) demonstrates that the Greek version, in contrast to the Hebrew book of Esther, emphasizes the emotions of the characters. This is a result of the intersection between Greek and Jewish culture. Greek Esther brings to mind the Greek novel, albeit the values celebrated dissociate it from the Greek world.
- [8] Michael W. Duggan, "1 Maccabees: Emotions of Life and Death in Narrative and Lament" (pp. 95–116) shows that the author of 1 Maccabees is at pains to distinguish Jews from gentiles. One of the narrative means by which this happens is the role assigned to emotions. While torah-observant Jews have joy, gladness, and courage, their adversaries are portrayed as timid and fearful, cowards and full of shame. But here is also grief and sadness caused by the temple and torah being threatened: "First Maccabees is a narration of emotional alchemy among Jews who love Jerusalem, defend the Temple and adhere to the law" (p. 114).
- [9] Friedrich V. Reiterer, "Praying to God Passionately: Notes on the Emotions in 2 Maccabees" (pp. 117–44) demonstrates that the prayers in Second Maccabees in most cases are emotional in nature and that the prayers are formulated with a view to the epithets given to God.
- [10] Núria Calduch-Benages, "Emotions in the Prayer of Sir 22:27–23:6" (pp. 145–59) point out that Ben Sira has a particular interest in prayer. The emotions expressed in the individual prayer of Sir 23:4–6 serve a pedagogical aim, namely to convey wisdom; in this prayer, to bring the unruly passions under control.
- [11] Markus Witte, "Emotions in the Prayers of the Wisdom of Solomon" (pp. 161–76) gives an overview of the role of prayer in this wisdom text, distinguishing between the divine and human

- emotions involved. The most extensive reflection on human emotions is found in the way the author conceives of idolatry.
- [12] Barbara Schmitz, “Judith and Holofernes: An Analysis of the Emotions in the Killing Scene (Jdt 12:10–13:9)” (pp. 177–91) starts with considering both terminologically and phenomenologically the fundamental question of “what an emotion really is.” Schmitz makes reference to Aaron Ben-Ze’ev’s article in *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Emotion* (2010) and gives this a bearing upon her text. Schmitz notes that the killing scene reports intense emotions on the part of Holofernes, but not so with Judith. The highly emotional Holofernes and the unemotional Judith serve to portray who is in control of their emotions.
- [13] Renate Egger-Wentzel, “Sarah’s Grief to Death (Tob 3:7–17)” (pp. 193–219) deals with the emotions involved in Sarah’s despair that her grooms pass away one after the other, her prayer and the view on suicide in ancient literature.
- [14] Dalia Marx, “The Prayer of Susanna (Daniel 13)” (pp. 221–37) addresses the prayer of Susanna in an apocryphal addition to the book of Daniel. By comparing the version found in Septuagint and in Theodotion, Marx has found a text very much relevant for ancient Jewish prayers. The article also deals with how Susanna’s story has been interpreted in western culture.
- [15] Jonathan Ben-Dov, “Language, Prayer and Prophecy: 1 Enoch, the Dead Sea Scrolls and 1 Corinthians” (pp. 239–58) puts Paul’s text, which is usually seen against the backdrop of Hellenistic Roman thought, within a Jewish setting on prayer and prophecy. The potential of language as a medium in prophecy and prayer, that is, in communicating with the Divine, is addressed.
- [16] Moshe Lavee, “From Emotions to Legislation: Asenath’s Prayer and Rabbinic Literature” (pp. 259–72) discusses the self-perception of a convert as it is found in the prayers of Asenath and shows how this was taken up and developed in Rabbinic literature.
- [17] Ursula Schattner-Rieser, “Emotions and Expressions of Emotion as a Didactic Guide as to How to Pray: *Berakhot* in the Aramaic Prayers at Qumran” (pp. 273–96) demonstrates how individual prayers easily developed into standardized and liturgical prayers in Qumran and thus take on didactic function.
- [18] Angela Kim Harkins, “A Phenomenological Study of Penitential Elements and Their Strategic Arousal of Emotion in the Qumran Hodayat (1QH^a Cols. 1[?]-8)” (pp. 297–316) focuses on the experiential aspects of Qumran prayer. Penitential elements of the prayers aroused emotions, visible in bodily ways.
- [19] Asaf Gayer, “The Centrality of Prayer and Stability of Trust. An Analysis of the Hymn of the Maskil in 1QS IX, 25b–XI,15a” (pp. 317–33) demonstrates the central role of prayer for a leading figure of the Yahad.
- [20] Oda Wishmeyer, “Prayer and Emotion in Mark 14:32–42 and Related Texts” (pp. 335–49) deals with the combination of prayer and emotions in the Gethsemane scene of Mark’s Gospel.
- [21] Eve-Marie Becker, “Κράζειν and the Concept of ‘Emotional Prayer’ in Earliest Christianity: Rom 8:15 and Acts 7:60 in Their Context(s)” (pp. 351–66) investigates this Greek term in detail, and finds important nuances between the different bodies of literature investigated.
- [22] The volume includes short biographies of the contributors; readers will find indices of subjects, references and persons helpful means to make use of this volume. Exegetes have not paid sufficiently attention to the emotional aspects of the texts they have scrutinized. Thus, this volume is an important reminder. Particularly, when it comes to the phenomenon of prayer, this is crucial. The volume is, therefore, to be lauded for its focus on emotions and prayer.
- [23] The volume hardly makes any attempt to summarize or synthesize its findings. In a volume like this, some kind of synthesis is a desideratum. Furthermore, there is a need for definitions which this volume in no way meets. Both key notions, prayer and emotions, call out for reflections on what they really are, and how they are conceived of in the present volume.
- [24] Beate Ego argues with reference to E. Auerbach (mimesis) that Hebrew narration was more reserved in portraying emotions and inner perspectives than the Greek world. The present volume confirms Auerbach’s thesis in the fact that it seems to be primarily in literature reflecting cultural intersection that emotions run high, but on the other hand, this picture is also to some extent nuanced by some of the articles in this study. This tension, which probably reflects the nature of the sources, should have been addressed more pointedly by the relevant contributions in this volume. In spite of these shortcomings, I find this a most helpful volume from which many, primarily scholars, will benefit.

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