

GUIDELINES FOR AUTHORS

(Version 2.0, December 2018)

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Mission. Making academic biblical scholarship accessible and engaging to readers from all backgrounds.

Our articles aim to offer academic material that is comprehensible and engaging for all readers; while serving as a wide-ranging resource for ongoing academic discussion.

Disclaimer. We focus on illuminating Jewish texts in their historical context rather than making normative claims for any particular Jewish movement or for Judaism as a whole.

Audience. TheTorah.com is read by a diverse Jewish and non-Jewish professional and lay audience, and our material is often used by, and assigned to, college students. Our articles should thus appeal to anyone looking for serious but accessible engagement with the text or subject. Given that the familiarity and comfort of our readers with biblical and rabbinic texts, methods, and terms varies widely, be sure to explain or gloss technical terms, including Hebrew or Jewish concepts or critical/academic concepts, the first time you use them.

Style. The article should have one main thesis and a clear flow, taking the reader through an argument step by step, avoiding tangents as much as possible. In some cases, you may put material that relates to your key point, but is not part of it, in an appendix. Relevant verses or commentaries should be quoted rather than just cited. We do not expect our readers to have a Bible or other literature at their side as they read your article.

2. EDITORIAL PROCESS

Approach. We strive to publish articles that are academically sound, while engaging and comprehensible to a lay audience. To achieve this balance, our editorial process is more extensive than professional peer-reviewed journals. Revisions and give-and-take are a fundamental part of the editorial process. When you initially submit a piece, even before we edit it extensively, we may suggest restructuring it, tightening its wording, expanding the argument with further avenues of exploration to strengthen the argument or, conversely, cutting sections.

Submission. Please submit your article at least 2 months before its scheduled publication date. We are happy to receive an article earlier. Late submissions may have to be postponed for up to a year, until they can be slotted into a relevant date.

Review. Our initial response to authors will typically be within two weeks of submission.

Editing Process. We engage in three different stages of editing: Structural design, revision, and copy-editing. Articles may be sent back to the author for revisions at each stage, and we ask the authors to respond to our edits and queries within four business days.

Publish. Once an article is final, we send a link to the author for a preview and final approval at least 48 hours before it is meant to go online.

3. SPECIFICS, A-Z

Abbreviations. We follow the second edition of the *SBL Handbook of Style*.

Bibliography. We do not include bibliographies.

Footnotes. Full references should be included in footnotes, not endnotes. Please avoid lengthy discussion of secondary scholarship; include only the most recent or the most important or relevant secondary sources.

Format. Continuous text: 12 points, 1.5 spacing, spacing after paragraph setting. Footnotes: 10 points, 1.5 spacing, no line spacing between footnotes, no indentation.

Images. Your article will be published with images. Feel free to suggest copyright free images that will make your article clearer, easier to follow, or more interesting. If maps are needed, please supply them. The editors will also work to enhance your article with relevant images.

Italics. Italics should be used for foreign-language expressions; titles of books, published documents, newspapers, and periodicals. Otherwise, use italics (and scare quotes) sparingly, to draw attention to significant terms at first mention only.

Language. Our articles are written in English (American orthography and punctuation).

Layout. To make our articles engaging to our readers, each article includes:

- *Title* – We welcome your suggestion for an engaging but clear title. The final version is determined by our editors.
- *Abstract/ Teaser* – The title is followed by several sentences that either explain the main idea of the piece (abstract) or raise a question / address an issue that will be discussed in more detail in the article (teaser). The final version is determined by our editors.
- *Subtitles* – We use these extensively to aid our readers. These should be centered and bolded.
- *Author's Signature and Bio* – At the end of the article, the author's name appears, followed by a short biography.

Length. Each article should be approximately 2000-2500 words long, not including block quotes and footnotes. Significantly longer articles may be rejected, pruned, or divided into two; if you need more space, please be in touch with us before you submit. Each article should focus on one key point, which is typically feasible within this word-count.

References. We follow a modified form of the second edition of the *SBL Handbook of Style*. See the following examples:

a) Books

i. **Monograph:** Richard S. Hess, *Israelite Religions: An Archaeological and Biblical Survey* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007).

ii. **Edited Volume:** Francesca Stavrakopoulou and John Barton, eds., *Religious Diversity in Ancient Israel and Judah* (London: T&T Clark, 2010).

iii. **Non-English Titles** (The translated title follows the original title in brackets):

Vered Noam, *מקומראן למהפכה התנאית: היבטים בתפיסת הטומאה* [From Qumran to the Rabbinic Revolution: Conceptions of Impurity], *ספרי מחקר על העת העתיקה* [Studies on the Ancient Period] (Jerusalem: Yad Ben-Zvi, 2010).

iv. **Reprinted Titles:** James L. Kugel, *The Idea of Biblical Poetry: Parallelism and Its History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1998; repr. of, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981).

v. **Translated Volumes:** Nili Wazana, *All the Boundaries of the Land: The Promised Land in Biblical Thought in Light of the Ancient Near East*, trans. Liat Qeren (Winona

Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2013); trans. of כל גבולות ארץ: גבולות הארץ המובטחת במחשבת המקרא על רקע המזרח הקדום [ספריית האנציקלופדיה המקראית] 24 (Jerusalem: Bialik, 2007).

b) Articles

i. **Journal Article:** J. Robin King, “The Joseph Story and Divine Politics: A Comparative Study of a Biographic Formula from the Ancient Near East,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 106.4 (1987): 577–594.

ii. **Article in Edited Volume:** Edward L. Greenstein, “The Fugitive Hero Narrative Pattern in Mesopotamia,” in *Worship, Women, and War: A Festschrift for Susan Niditch*, ed. John J. Collins, Tracy M. Lemos, and Saul M. Olyan, *Brown Judaica Studies* 357 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2015), 17–35.

iii. **Non-English Titles:** Ruth Walfish, "הגלוי והסמוי בפרשת הגבעונים" [The Revealed and the Hidden in the Story of the Gibeonites], *Megadim* 45 (2007): 49–59.

c) Repeated References

For all repeated references in books or articles, we only include the last name, title (abbreviated if it is two-part), and page range, if relevant. Examples:

Hess, *Israelite Religions*, 217.

Walfish, “The Revealed and the Hidden in the Story of the Gibeonites,” 53.

d) Page Ranges and Footnotes

When an article is quoted for the first time, but a specific page range is being highlighted in the text above, we place the relevant pages in brackets: 236–338 [240]; 12–28 [14–17]. If a specific footnote is being quoted from the page of a book or an article, put the footnote number in brackets following the letter “n”: 40 [n3].

Tetragrammaton. Feel free to use the tetragrammaton; in the final version, we will insert a *maqaf* between the first *yod* and first *hey* so that it appears as יהוה־י. In English, please use YHWH, in all caps.

Transliteration and Translation. When using Hebrew, Greek, and other original source languages in the running text, we transliterate. We prefer non-academic transliteration, but if an author strongly prefers an academic transliteration, we can accommodate this in the main text, but not in the title or teaser. For non-academic transliteration, *tzadi* is *tz* (not *ts*), *chaf* can be either *ch* or *kh*, and *chet* is *ch*, not *h* except in standard spellings, such as Beer-lahai-roi, or Korah. Transliterated words, other than proper names, should be in italics.

We do not have a required translation for Bible, though we do have a set of default translations that should be used if you have no other preference:

- Hebrew Bible –NJPS with the adjustment that we change “the Lord” into YHWH.
- Second Temple literature – *Outside the Bible* translation;
- LXX (when not included in *Outside the Bible*) – *NETS*;
- ANE Texts – *The Context of Scripture* or Carta’s *The Raging Torrent/Bound for Exile*;
- New Testament- NRSV.

Authors are free to use other translations, including their own. Whatever translation is being used should be indicated in a footnote or parentheses after the first quote.

Textbox. When the original language is Hebrew or Aramaic, the text should be put in a textbox. For Hebrew Bible texts, we prefer without cantillation marks or *maqafim*, but are open to the alternative if the author has a preference or if such marks are important for the argument.

In the textbox, the original language should be on the left and English translation on the right. At the beginning of the box, we include both the Hebrew (full) and English (abbreviated) name of the book, the chapter number and verse number, all in superscript. For Hebrew we use Hebrew letters, like traditional nomenclature does, and for English we use numbers. For the rest of the verses we use chapter and verse, but do not repeat the name of the book.

Example:

<p>בראשית לב:ב וַיַּעֲקֹב הָלַךְ לְדֶרֶכּוֹ וַיִּפְגְּעוּ בּוֹ מִלְאֲכֵי אֱלֹהִים. לַבִּיג וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב כְּאֲשֶׁר רָאָם מַחֲנֵה אֱלֹהִים זֶה וַיִּקְרָא שֵׁם הַמָּקוֹם הַהוּא מַחֲנַיִם.</p>	<p>Gen 32:2 Jacob went on his way, and angels of God encountered him. 32:3 When he saw them, Jacob said, “This is God's camp.” So he named that place Mahanaim.</p>
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If you are unable to create text-boxes, we will do this for you; include the Hebrew (right justified), followed by a skipped line and then the English translation.

Thank you for your submission. We look forward to working with you throughout the editing process to make your article as clear and attractive as possible.