

Themes in Biblical Narrative:

Samson: Hero or Fool?

A Joint-Venture Symposium
planned by the Faculty of Religious Studies, Nijmegen, The Netherlands,
in cooperation with the Catholic Theological Faculty of Regensburg, Germany

Organised by Profs Erik Eynikel and Tobias Nicklas

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Place: Radboud University of Nijmegen, The Netherlands

1. Main Background

Themes in Biblical Narrative (TBN); the congress proceedings are published by Brill
Text is partly from the editorial statement at www.xs4all.nl/~fvds/tbn/editorial.html

The series 'Themes in Biblical Narrative' (Brill: Leiden – Boston; Editorial Board: G.H. van Kooten, Groningen; R. Kugler, Lewis & Clark College, USA, L. Stuckenbruck, Durham, UK) publishes the papers of international conferences, in which each time a specific biblical narrative is the centre of attention.

Purpose of the TBN series is to publish studies dealing with **early interpretations** of Biblical **narrative** materials, in the broader sense.

- Publications are usually the revised versions of papers presented during a TBN-conference on a **particular narrative**, e.g. the Balaam story, or a **specific theme**, for instance: 'clean and unclean' in the Hebrew Bible, or: 'the ru'ah adonai and anthropological models of humanity'.
- Contributions comprise of studies on the basic texts for this narrative or theme, follow by their earliest interpretations and receptions throughout the subsequent phases of **ancient Judaism, early Christianity**, and if appropriate **Islam**. Also studies which illuminate the successive inculturations into the various **Umwelts** – the Ancient Near East, the Graeco-Roman World – are included. Extensions to **modern Bible receptions** and discussions of **hermeneutical** questions are welcomed, if they are related explicitly to the study of early receptions of Biblical texts and traditions.
- Contributions to the series are written by specialists in the relevant literary corpora. The series aims on a broad audience of scholars and advanced students of theology, linguistics and literature. Planned are two to three publications each year.

2. Samson: Hero or Fool

The April 2008-conference in Nijmegen will focus on the Samson cycle (Judges 13-16). Our course of action will fit in with the formerly published volumes in the TBN Series.

Starting with specific interpretations of the particular text, which will be examined from different methodological perspectives, we will proceed to search for lines of interpretation within different contexts.

In this light the following questions will be asked:

1. How may we interpret central passages of the Samson cycle in their historical, but also in their biblical-canonical context?
2. Which major Jewish, Christian (and possibly Islamic) receptions of the text (and some of its central motives) can we observe in Antiquity, Middle Ages, modern and even post-modern times? Which hermeneutical and methodological principles can be observed behind these receptions?

3. Themes:

- 3.1 The Hebrew Text of the Old Testament (Judges 13-16) – approached from different methodical perspectives
- 3.2 The Septuagint of Judges 13-16
- 3.3 The Peshitto of Judges 13-16
- 3.4 Rabbinic Interpretations
- 3.5 Early Jewish Interpretations (Ps-Philo, LAB, Josephus)
- 3.6 Interpretations in the early Church
- 3.7 Islamic Interpretations?
- 3.8 Medieval Receptions
- 3.9 Modern Interpretations
 - 3.9.1 History of Art
 - 3.9.2 History of Music
 - 3.9.3 History of Film