**20 Feb, 2020**

To the selections committee:

My name is Rachel Borovsky and I am presently completing my Ph.D. in the Department of Bible at Tel Aviv University, under the supervision of Prof. Dalit Ron Shiloni. My dissertation is due to be submitted in June 2020. (A detailed abstract of the dissertation is attached.)

My Ph.D. dissertation examines the role, status and genealogy of Levitical priests and Levites in prophetic literature, comparing the findings in these texts with various sources in the Torah literature, historiographical literature, and Chronic literature from the Persian period. The purpose of the study is to examine what the authors, editors, and composers of prophetic literature knew about the identities of the priests and Levites, as well as to examine how they shaped those identities, and what kind of worldviews and historical circumstances informed them. These occupational identities are discovered by uncovering different layers of text, which were edited, reshaped, and reworked numerous times over the years, by different writers intending to adapt the old prophetic texts to new and changing worldviews.

My post-doctoral research will deal with another dimension of worship. Whereas my doctoral research examined the occupational dimension, this new study will deal with the dimension of ritual action – namely, sacrifices. My intention is to examine the types of sacrifices that appear in the prophetic literature, and to compare them with the sacrifice systems that appear in the Torah literature, and especially in the priestly literature. My research hypothesis is that a complex alternative worldview emerges from the prophetic literature with respect to the sacrifice system in ancient Israel, distinct from the priestly conception of sacrifice.

A few words are in order about my academic background. I developed my academic skills during B.A. and M.A. studies in the Bible Department at the Hebrew University, and further honed them over the course of my doctoral work at Tel Aviv University, where I gained the philological tools necessary for conducting diachronic analyses of the biblical texts—text criticism, literary criticism, redaction-historical criticism, and so on. These methodologies uncover the diverse layers of the biblical text, which reflect and reveal the historical-theological developments that unfolded in ancient Israelite society. For the past four years, I have also participated in a Septuagint reading course, under the guidance of Dr. Guy Darshan, in which participants compare passages from the Masoretic Text, Septuagint, Dead Sea Scrolls, and Samaritan Pentateuch. My studies at these two institutions have equipped me with the skills and tools necessary for advanced research, which I hope and believe will enable me to make a significant contribution to the field of biblical scholarship.

I also have significant experience in teaching and lecturing, acquired during my doctoral studies at Tel Aviv University. Over the past five years, I have taught in the Department of Bible, focusing primarily on textual reading for undergraduates (for details of these courses, see my CV). In this framework, I have developed the ability to present complex material clearly and succinctly, for the academic community and the general public alike. This has also been reflected in the conference presentations I have delivered, both in Israel and abroad (see my CV). In addition, I have recently adapted some of my research findings into an article for submission to *Vetus Testmentum*.

In addition to my scholarly background in biblical studies, I obtained an advanced education in the broader field of academic Jewish studies as a participant in the prestigious ‘Revivim’ program at the Hebrew University, and as a doctoral fellow at the Shalom Hartman Institute. With thanks to the opportunities these institutions afforded me, along with my inner intellectual drive to expand my educational horizons, I am also well-oriented in the disciplines of Mishna and Talmud, Jewish philosophy, ancient and modern Hebrew literature, culture, and folklore.

Also of note is my work as Content Development Manager at the Center for Educational Technology (CET). In this position, I have developed expertise in product characterization (principally websites) containing complex biblical content, combining knowledge of digital tools with market surveys relating to consumer needs (see my CV). This experience has sharpened my management skills and taught me how to work in a team as part of a collaborative environment that produces excellent results in making the Bible accessible to the public.

My complex and broad-ranging dissertation relating to a wide array of texts, teaching experience, content-development management expertise, and broad Jewish studies education have helped me cultivate skills such as fast learning, good interpersonal relations, and a constant pursuit of professional growth. All of these qualities, I believe, will enrich and contribute to my visit as a post-doctoral scholar at the Allen and Joan Bildner Center for the Study of Jewish Life at Rutgers University.

I thank you in advance for your consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Rachel Borovsky