

Date: Sun, 16 Aug 1998 00:44:38 +0300
From: Zion <zionsacs@netvision.net.il>
To: daroskies@JTSA.EDU
Subject: Re: Nightwords

dear david,

i spent a lovely shabbat morning reading nightwords revised. kol hakavod. here are a few comments - constructive and limited - but maybe still assimilable at this stage.

1. the introduction is wonderful. i liked every part of it. the examples from the body of the work go a long way to providing a piecemeal commentary to the texts. still i think a half page addition should review the chapter headings like akedah or amidah to explain the idea of taking a classical liturgical form AND GIVING IT NEW CONTENT and to say a word about the specific kinds of material you integrated LIKE ABE/ISAAC OPPOSITE MOTHER/DAUGHTER IN PONAR WHILE NOTING THE WAY CRUSADERS VICTIMS USED THE SAME model and gave it there content.

2. incidentally is there any reason you did not use amichai's katuv bkaron chatum about cain's mother or you did not use any of yoselle rakover piece?

3. the pieces from schendlin's job are very strong

4. the use of footnotes at bottom of each page is excellent

5. section 1 - kavannah is outstanding and the title is wonderful

section 2- akedah is excellent but the introductory piece on scapegoat is dangling there. its connection to akedah is obscure and even its connection to j people who become hitler's scape goat sacrifice is not made explicit enough. the problem is the ambiguity of akedah as olah sacrifice and scapegoat as a wholly different kind of sacrifice. i would save scapegoat for a different place and put in a dictionary definition about the origin of word holocaust explaining its connection to olah and then bring gen 22 command to sacrifice your beloved isaac as an olah

section 3- matan torah is most problematic section because it conflates matan torah, revelation of god like moshe with God trying to kill him, and temple . now we know that these three are deeply related but the reader does not. i would break into two sections: 3a. sinai:meeting god face to face(the torah title belongs with your wonderful kriyat hatorah section) and section 3b. mishkan and temple/building god a tabernacle

in any case the dreamer part is not a good opening for this section . the dreamer fits perfectly in section 9 with the birkat hatavat chalom on page 53

i would start the section 3 a.the temple or mishkan :building god's dwelling with the mystic(p.19) that connects the new section with previous akedah and then go to philosopher - sinai/sina (p.20)that makes the connection to section title clear. then to parallel of investigator and magician about terrifying encounters of moshe with god . section 3b. would start with the carpenter on page 21

section 4 , 5, 6 are wonderful

section 7- amidah is much better than it was but i would start with something that directly connects to the traditional amidah so the parody is clear from the start.. i think p. 44 with the clown on the lord of lords might be better at the beginning of amidah. by the way i find no 18 th or 19 th blessing.

section 8 - great

section 9 - the connection of birkat kohanim and dreams is unclear to me. i would drop the birkat kohaim and rename it hatavat chalom - dreams and nightmares and begin with the hazan on p. 53 and move chadesh yamenu to the end on p. 56. that makes it must stronger.

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section 10 -11 just fine.

take these for what they are worth. it is not a lot of work to chage if you agree with the comments. thanks for asking for my advice.

i still want you to keep the door open to a hebrew edition of the new version even if claL WILL NOT SUPPORT IT NOW PLEASE LET ME DO IT IF I CAN FIND SOME MONEY. i spoke with steve greenberg and he agrees that we must make the creativity of north america available to israelis as well.
laila tov, noam

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At 09:18 17/03/98 -0400, you wrote:

>Yesterday i mailed you the revised version of NIGHTWORDS. Much improved,
>I think. It comes with the first draft of an introduction that will need
>a lot of work. If you have the kheyshek to critique it, i would be
>greatly in your debt. After all, you were the one who made me do it!

>
>Shana, Aryeh and I are planning to be in Israel over pesah. I hope to see
>you in shul.

>Dovid

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>

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