

ENGLISH SUMMARIES

The variety of topics in which the fifteenth issue of 'Al 'Atar deals reflects the variegated nature of the journal. The first two articles deal with Biblical *realia*.

The opening article by Prof. Zohar Amar offers new identifications of the *ayal*, the *zvi* and the *yahmur*, mentioned in the Bible, based on textual analysis and archeological evidence.

Dr. Yitzchak Meitliss suggests that the altar discovered in the 1970s in Tel Sheva was a pagan ritual center on the road between Hebron and Beer Sheva, and suspects that it was the object of one of the castigations by the prophet Amos. However, unlike Yohanan Aharoni, who excavated the site and claimed that the stones of the altar were disassembled in an orderly fashion, Meitliss asserts on the basis of the findings that the altar was destroyed and abolished towards the end of the First Temple period.

The article by Dr. Danny Syon also deals with archeology, but from a numismatic point of view. He suggests that the coins discovered at Gamla are testimony to the antiquity of the Jewish settlement in the Galilee from the earliest days of the Hasmonean state, and perhaps even earlier.

The article by Yigal Tepper and Yotam Tepper concerns Talmudic reality in relation to the Jewish settlement in the Galilee after the Bar Kochba revolt. The writers examine the penetration of mustard cultivation to the Galilee, finding a connection between references to its cultivation in rabbinic literature and equipment found near Huquq west of the Sea of Galilee.

Rabbi Dr. Dror Fixler's article deals with halakhic issues related to the cultivation and harvesting of grains and the way the Rambam interpreted these issues. The author compares the Rambam's explanation on the issue of "*megalgin betofeah*" with other references to *tofeah* in the Mishna, explicating the Rambam's interpretation of the controversy in tractate Peah 5:3.

Itzhak Hamitovsky analyzes the polemic tradition of the sages against the Samaritans and Mt. Gerizim preserved in the Jerusalem Talmud and in *Bereshit Rabba*. He finds in this *midrash* a rabbinic polemic against Mt. Gerizim and the pilgrimage to it, in the context of increased Christian and

Samaritan pilgrimage and the painful reality of the destruction of the Temple and the weakening of Jewish pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

Rabbi Dr. Avraham Ofir Shemesh suggests the identification of “*hagnaba distar*” in a responsum of Rabbi Hai Gaon with a therapeutic substance derived from beaver or otter testicles. This material was a medication in demand for more than a millennium, but produced from impure animals and consequently the question of its *kashrut* or whether it could be consumed on Passover was discussed in halakhic literature.

The concluding article by Reuven Gafni discusses the unusual tombs of the Gerer Rebbe, the “Imrei Emes” and his son in the courtyard of the yeshiva near the Mahane Yehuda market. The article sheds light on the considerations that led to the Rebbe’s burial during the War of Independence in the courtyard of the yeshiva that he established after his flight from Poland in the heart of New Jerusalem. It also discusses the surprising decision to bury his son in the same place 48 years later.

At the end of the issue we provide the style sheet for ‘*Al 'Atar* and for publications of *Tevunot* Press in general.

The Editorial Board