

## Curriculum Vitae

Sivan Nir PH.D.

Email: [sivan.nir@univie.ac.at](mailto:sivan.nir@univie.ac.at)

Cell Phone: 436-767280658.

Mail: 7 Yafa Yarkoni, Apt. 10, Afula, Israel, 1808930.

Nationality: Israeli, American.

### Education

**PH.D. 2019;** Rosenberg School of Jewish Studies and Archaeology, Tel Aviv University. Dissertation Title: “The Development of the Literary Character from Midrash Literature to Medieval Exegesis, as Exemplified in the Characters of Balaam, Jeremiah and Esther”. Supervisors: Prof. Meira Polliack (Bible department) and Prof. Ishay Rosen-Zvi (Jewish Philosophy-Talmud department).

**M.A. 2014;** Bible Department, Tel Aviv University (*summa cum laude*). Thesis title: “The Character of Ruth in Medieval Jewish Exegesis.”

**B.A. 2012;** Bible and Jewish Philosophy-Talmud Departments, Tel Aviv University (*summa cum laude*).

### Appointments

**2025–2026; Postdoctoral Research Associate,** Institute for Jewish Studies, University of Vienna. Project: “Enduring Job: The Book of Job in Early Medieval Jewish Literature.”

**2025; Research Fellow,** “Intertwined Worlds” Project, The Haifa Laboratory for Religious Studies, University of Haifa. Project titled: “You Cannot Even Look at One of His Suns: Allah In Tanchuma-Yellamdenu Literature?”

**2024–2025; Postdoctoral Scholar,** Bible Department, Tel Aviv University. Project titled: “Hagar in Midrash: Character Transformation and Interfaith Dialogue.”

**2021–2022; Harry Starr Fellow in Judaica,** CJS Harvard (The medieval period). Project: “The Tales of the Sages in Late Midrash.”

**2020–2021; Research Assistant,** Department of Jewish Philosophy and Talmud, Tel Aviv University, the ISF funded project: “The Hermeneutic of Halakhic Midrashim: Halakha vs. Aggada.” *Compiled databases and extensively studied Tannaitic sources.*

**2015–2019; Instructor,** Bible Department, Tel Aviv University. *Composed and taught courses on close reading primary sources, highlighting varied*

*questions to intimate groups of undergraduates*—“Reading Medieval Jewish Bible Exegetes”: Esther (diaspora), Jonah-Lamentations (figural language), 1Kings (realpolitik), Ruth (gender) and The Pentateuch (characterization).

**2013–2017; Graduate Research Fellow** in the international DIP funded project: “[Biblia Arabica: The Bible in Arabic among Jews, Christians and Muslims](#)”. *Papers and cooperations on medieval Jewish and Muslim intellectual dialogue. Built and maintained the project website.*

## Publications

### Books

- 1) **The Tales of the Sages in Late Midrash: A Curtain Set with Jewels.** The Brill Reference Library of Judaism 79, eds. Alan J. Avery-Peck and William Scott Green (Leiden: Brill, 26.6.2025).
- 2) **Characterization in Midrash and Medieval Jewish Bible Commentaries.** Bible and Its Reception 8, ed. Robert Paul Seesengood (Atlanta: SBL Press, December 2024).

### Book Chapters

- 1) “David in Rabbinic Literature (TJ, Talmud, Midrash),” in **The Oxford Handbook on King David** (forthcoming).
- 2) “The Ten Plagues,” in **Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception**, EBR 23, ed. Joachim Yeshaya (De Gruyter, online: 24.7.2025).
- 3) “Pharaoh (Exodus Traditions: Medieval Judaism),” in **Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception**, Vol. 24 Peshar, Pesharim – Popper, Julius\*, ed. Joachim Yeshaya (De Gruyter, online: 24.7.2025).
- 4) “Psalm 18.35: Giving David Odysseus’ Bow,” in **The Psalms: My Psalm My Context**, eds. A. Brenner-Idan and G. A. Yee, Texts @ Contexts (Bloomsbury, 2024).
- 5) “David the Pious Musician in Midrashic Literature and Medieval Muslim Sources,” in **Warrior, Poet, Prophet and King: The Character of David in Judaism, Christianity and Islam**, Themes in Biblical Narrative Volume 29, eds. M. Zawanowska and M. Wilk (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2021), 43–66.
- 6) “The True Order of the Psalms’: Midrash Psalms, Sa’adiah Gaon and the Impact of Muslim Concepts of Scripture on the Medieval Jewish Reception of the Psalms,” in **“By My God I Can Leap over a Wall”: Interreligious Horizons in Psalms and Psalms Studies**, Herders Biblische Studien 96, ed. C. Frevel (Freiburg: Herder Verlag, 2020), 326–51.
- 7) “A Prophet Warning Himself’: Yefet Ben Eli’s Dialogical Reading of Numbers 23–24,” in **Jewish Biblical Exegesis from Islamic Lands: The Medieval Period**, Bible and Its Reception 1, eds. M. Polliack and A. Brenner-Idden (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2019), 149–64.
- 8) (with Amir Ashur and Meira Polliack) “Three Fragments of Sa’adiah Gaon’s Arabic Translation of Isaiah Copied by the Court Scribe Joseph ben

Samuel (c. 1181–1209),” in **Senses of Scripture, Treasures of Tradition**, Biblia Arabica Volume 5, ed. Miriam L. Hjälml, (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2017), 485–508.

9) (with Meira Polliack) “Many Beautiful Meanings can be Drawn from such a Comparison”: On the Medieval Interaction View of Biblical Metaphor,” in **Exegesis and Poetry in Medieval Karaite and Rabbanite Texts**, Karaite Texts and Studies Volume 9, eds. J. Yeshaya and E. Hollender (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2016), 51–100.

### **In Preparation**

“Veiled Conversions: Biblical Heroines in Byzantine Jewish Midrashic Tradition.”

“Red Sea/Sea of Reeds (Medieval Judaism),” in **Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception**.

### **Presentations**

- June 2025: "Christianity and Anti-Christianity of the Women of the Destruction in Midrash Lamentations Zuta." **Intertwined Worlds 2025**, the Haifa Laboratory for Religious Studies.
- July 2024: “Desert Wanderings”: The Character of Hagar in Late Midrash as a Response to Islamic Sources. **EABS 2024**, Sofia.
- July 2024: The Subversive Image of the Sick King in Biblical Historiography. **The Bible and its World**, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.
- August 2022: “A Bad Dog’s Good Pup” (Lev. Rab. 19:6): Jehoiakin’s Characterization as Amoraic Rhetoric in Leviticus Rabbah. **18<sup>th</sup> World Congress of Jewish Studies**, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.
- June 2021: “Even Though I Die, They Are My People”: Esther in the Context of Female Ascetic Saints in Midrash Panim Aherim B. **Dynamics of Religious Discourse 2021**, Cambridge, UK (Remotely).
- July 2019: “The True Order of the Psalms”: The Impact of Muslim Prophetic Biography on Medieval Jewish Exegesis of the Psalms. “By my God I can leap over a wall”: **Interreligious Horizons in Psalms and Psalms Studies**, Dormition Abbey, Jerusalem.
- June 2019: “The Fruit of the Story Tree”: Characterization of Biblical Figures in the Schools of Rashi and St. Victor in the 12th Century. **Dynamics of Religious Discourse 2019**, Cambridge, UK.
- May 2019: “The Torah of a Sage, the Torah of a Character”: Towards a Concept of Character in Amoraic Midrashim. **The Notre Dame Workshop on Ancient Philosophy**, Interpretive Cultures in Late Antiquity: Hellenistic, Roman, Jewish and Christian Perspectives, Notre Dame University, Indiana.
- November 2017: “Indeed a Moabite? Medieval Arabic Translations of Ruth- Translation as Indirect Characterization.” **The Bible in**

**Arabic: Jewish and Christian Translations, Muslim Interpretations. State of the Art and Future Prospects**, Tel Aviv University.

- August 2017: “The Seduction of Jeremiah”: Jeremiah’s Unwitting Part in the Destruction of Jerusalem in Medieval Jewish and Muslim Sources. **EABS 2017 Annual Meeting**, Humboldt University of Berlin.
- July 2017: “And Esther found Favor in the eyes of all who saw her”: ‘Self’ and ‘Other’ in Medieval Jewish Commentaries on the Character of Esther. **The International Medieval Congress**, University of Leeds.
- February 2017: David’s Character in Radak’s Commentary on the Psalms. **The joint TAU and MLU Bible Exegesis Workshop**, Tel Aviv University.
- October 2016: “Midnight Lyres and Demon Flutes”: David’s Music in Medieval Jewish and Muslim Exegesis. **Warrior, Poet, Prophet and King: The Character of David in Judaism, Christianity and Islam**, University of Warsaw.
- July 2016: “Bending Bronze and Changing Characters”: David between Jewish and Muslim Medieval Exegesis. **EABS 2016 Annual Meeting**, KU Leuven.

**Awards**

2018; Yaniv Foundation Scholarship.

2012; “Bimat Hachoker” prize.

Various Yearly Awards for outstanding undergraduates, Department of Bible, Tel Aviv University.

2009; Dean’s Honors List.

**Workshops**

September 2013; German-Israeli Einstein Summer School: “Muslim Perceptions and Receptions of the Bible”, IIAS, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

**Research Interests**

Characterization and Reception of biblical figures; Medieval Bible Commentaries as Literature; Medieval Jewish sources in an Interreligious Philosophical and Literary context; Poetics of Late Midrash Diasporas.

**Languages**

Hebrew (Native)

English (Nera Native)

Judeo-Arabic (Academic)