

Professor Moss, dear Yonatan, Professor Ruzer, dear Serge, and Professor Kister, dear Menahem, thank you for inviting me to speak this evening at the launch of *the Jerusalem Consortium for New Testament Studies*. It is both an honor and a pleasure to be here with you.

In these difficult times, marked by ultra-violence and moral ambiguity, our commitment to advancing New Testament research in Jerusalem is a symbol of hope and light. It reflects our common goal of defending the dignity of every human being, whatever their convictions, a principle that lies at the heart of the Scriptures.

Tonight, we want to continue our quest for truth, a journey that has been woven in friendship since the founding of the *École Biblique*. Scholars like Eliezer Ben Yehuda found their way to its library even before the Hebrew University was founded. Let us commemorate all those who contributed to this network of lasting friendship, and I apologize in advance for any I may have forgotten.

Intellectual camaraderie flourished when Dominicans played a central role at the *Maison Saint-Isaïe*. My brother, Marcel Jacques Dubois, was warmly welcomed to the university in the 1960s by Professors Shlomo Pinès and Penven Guilad. Marcel also enjoyed his friendship and conversations with Professor David Flusser, a founding figure in our field of research.

Several members of the *École Biblique* were trained at the Hebrew University, notably the late François Langlamet for Scripture and Étienne Nodet for Talmud. Others collaborated with several departments, such as Marcel Sigrist in Assyriology. Eminent university researchers, including Guy Gedaliahu Stroumsa, Meir Bar Asher and David Satran, forged vital links with the *École*.

From 1986 onwards, our collaboration took the form of seminars led by our late brother Étienne Nodet and Professor Shemaryahu Talmon. In the mid-1990s, they were joined by Marcel Sigrist and Justin Taylor of the *École*. Together, they participated in various meetings organized by different institutions in Jerusalem, including the Hebrew University's Orion Center (launched in 1995) and Sir Sternberg lecture series in 1998, as well as the *Centre de recherche français à Jérusalem*, the Latin Patriarchate and the Shalom Hartmann Institute.

In 1998, a symposium organized by Sarah Israelit-Groll, Shalom Paul and Professors Marcel Sigrist and Krzysztof Modras honored the memory of Bernard Courroyer, OP, and Hans Jacob Polotsky - two pioneers in the field of Egyptology, one from the *École Biblique* and the other from the Hebrew University.

As the new millennium approached, in 2001, the Roman Curia of the Dominican Order stressed the importance of “establishing strong links with the Hebrew University”. This initiative corresponded perfectly with the creation of the Center for the Study of

Christianity in 1999, thanks to the generosity of Hubert and Aldegonde Brenninkmeijer-Werhahn.

As soon as I arrived in Jerusalem, I co-organized two conferences involving colleagues from the Hebrew University: “The Authority of Scripture” with Méir Bar Asher and “The Literal Meaning of Scripture” with Uri Gabbay. We were fortunate to hear Uri pay tribute to Brother Marcel Sigrist at our recent *Dies academicus* alongside our Franciscan brothers. I also had the opportunity to collaborate with Avital Wohlman and Michael Roubach in the Philosophy Department.

On November 3, 2005, Justin Taylor inaugurated the Cal O'Connor Chair at the Hebrew University. In the following academic year, he and our friend Serge Ruzer launched a master's seminar on the New Testament. We were the first to title this seminar “The New Testament as Second Temple Jewish Literature,” a title that has since become the name of a section of the Society of Biblical Literature. In the years that followed, Justin introduced his colleagues from the École Biblique —Nodet, Sigrist, Tatum and Venard— to this seminar. Dear Serge, it was a joy to co-organize this seminar with you, where we discussed such topics as “About the Spirit” in 2012, “Hebrews and the Temple” in 2013, “The Use of Jewish Scripture in the New Testament” in 2014, “Cultic Imagery and Temple-Related Motifs in the Gospels of John and Paul” in 2015, and “A Critical Assessment of the Jewish-Annotated New Testament” in 2016. We earned a lot during these seminars, where we invited many other colleagues.

In recent years, the younger generation has made significant contributions, including our brother Anthony Giambrone, who organized a noteworthy conference titled "Rethinking Jewish Warfare," bringing together several colleagues from Israeli universities in 2018. As the director of our doctoral program, he regularly invites university colleagues to serve on our thesis defense juries.

Additionally, our brother Olivier Catel is diligently pursuing his PhD in Talmud here at the Hebrew University.

Their initiatives have fostered new connections, particularly with Professor Yonatan Moss, who has been instrumental in uniting us here tonight to renew and invigorate our long-standing tradition of collaboration. Thank you, and *Ad multos annos!*

O.-Th. Venard

pour le lancement du *Jerusalem Consortium for New Testament Studies*

le 2 décembre 2024, Université Hébraïque