The Helene and Paul Shulman
School for Basic
Jewish Studies
Faculty of Jewish Studies
Bar-Ilan University

Prof. Tova Ganzel
Head of the School for
Basic Jewish Studies

Temple Life in Judah under the Persian Empire

Call for Applications: PhD Fellowship

Project Description

This research project, funded by an ISF grant, examines the administrative, social, and religious aspects of temple life in Judah during the Persian Empire, with a comparative focus on similar institutions in Mesopotamia. The study integrates biblical texts, administrative archives from Mesopotamia, ritual texts, and archaeological data to provide a comprehensive understanding of the role and function of the Jerusalem Temple during this period. Particular emphasis is placed on the Book of Ezra-Nehemiah, exploring leadership structures, the organization of temple officials, and the relationship between the Jerusalem Temple and the Persian imperial administration.

Fellowship Details

Two PhD fellowships are available for doctoral students whose dissertation will be conducted within the framework of this project. The research will be conducted at Bar-Ilan University under the supervision of Prof. Tova Ganzel as part of an active research group.

The fellowship includes a monthly stipend of 5,000 NIS, and participation in academic activities such as seminars, conferences, and workshops. Funding may also be available for field research and conference travel.

- The fellowship may commence as early as the second semester of 2025, provided that the candidate has completed their Master's degree requirements.
- International students must complete the university's admission process via the International School. For details, see: biuinternational.com/admissions/how-to-apply/doctoral-degree-ph-d

Eligibility Criteria

The ideal candidate will have:

• A Master's degree (MA or equivalent) in Biblical Studies, Ancient Near Eastern History, Archaeology, Jewish Studies, or related fields.

• Proven academic excellence.

• Proficiency in Hebrew and English; knowledge of additional languages is an advantage.

• Experience working with primary historical sources, including biblical and Mesopotamian texts.

• A strong interest in comparative research on the Jerusalem Temple within the broader Near Eastern context.

Application Process

Applicants should submit a single PDF file containing the following documents:

1. Curriculum vitae (including language proficiency) and academic transcripts.
2. A preliminary PhD research proposal (up to 500 words).
3. A writing sample (e.g., a chapter from the MA thesis, a published article, or an outstanding seminar paper).

Please contact Prof. Tova Ganzel at ganzelct@yahoo.com