



GROUPE DE RECHERCHE EN ÉTUDES JUIVES DU LEM UMR 8584

# Fire Rituals in Persia and Israel from the Bible to the Babylonian Talmud

The cult of fire is one of the more iconic aspects of Zoroastrian religious practice and belongs to the earliest stratum of Persian religions as attested in the earliest Zoroastrian texts tradition [e.g. Yasna Haptaŋhāiti (Y. 36)] and in the testimony of outside observers, such as Herodotus (1, 131). Fire temples became an important part of Persian religious practice, By the Sasanian period, it had undoubtedly become the foremost icon of Zoroastrian religious practice, Zoroastrians typically were dubbed “fire worshippers” by outsiders, including in the Babylonian Talmud, itself.

During two major formative periods in Jewish history, the Achaemenid and the Sasanian eras, a large proportion of the Israelite/Jewish people found themselves as a minority within a Zoroastrian empire. This workshop aims to explore the impact of Zoroastrian religious notions relating to the fire cult, the foremost icon of Zoroastrianism, on the contemporary religious development within Judaism.

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Mercredi 11 décembre 2024 9h-19h

Campus Condorcet,  
Bâtiment de Recherche Nord, 14 cours des humanités,  
1<sup>er</sup> étage,  
salle 1.003

- 9h15 Geoffrey HERMAN  
**Introduction**
- 9h30 Michael SHENKAR  
« Fire Worship in Sogdiana (5-8 centuries CE). » [zoom]
- 10h15 Itamar KISLEV  
« Eschatology in the Book of Malachi and the Avesta. »
- Coffee Break

**Chair : Itamar KISLEV**

- 11h15 Gad BARNEA  
« *ahyh 'ašr 'ahyh* : The God Who Is and the Achaemenid-Zoroastrian Background of the Burning Bush Pericope. »
- 12h Dan SHAPIRA  
« Deuteronomy 33.2:Lax of Fire. » [zoom]
- Lunch

**Chair : Judith KOGEL**

- 14h15 Moshe BLIDSTEIN  
« Temple Fires: A Comparative Mediterranean Perspective. »

- 15h Chagai EMANUEL  
« It is Permitted for a Tzurba m'Rabanan to Say: "I am a Servant of the Fire" (b. Ned 62b). Reevaluating Rabbinic Disciples through the Sasanian Context. »
- 15h45 GEOFFREY HERMAN  
« The Zoroastrian Fire Cult and the Babylonian Talmud's Scriptural Exegesis on Sacrifice. »
- 16h30 Coffee Break

**Chair : Gavin MCDOWELL**

- 16h45 Reuven KIPERWASSER  
« The Fire Branch - Symbolism and Mythical Knowledge in the Tales of the Babylonian Talmud. »
- 17h30 Bahram Roshan ZAMIR  
« Zoroastrian Fire Rituals in the Syriac Persian Martyr Acts. »
- 18h15 General Discussion and conclusions.