TABLE OF CONTENTS

SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

Rav Yehudah Shaviv analyzes the structure of Tractate Shevi'it, critically examining the common understanding that the laws of this tractate are arranged in chronological order. He demonstrates that the chronological order is not utilized consistently throughout the tractate and suggests other organizing principles which may explain the arrangement of mishnayot within Tractate Shevi'it.

Rav Dr. Aryeh Strikovsky also deals with matters of structure and organization in his discussion of Tractate Ta'anit, with an eye to their conceptual ramifications. He presents and explains a layout of the four chapters of Tractate Ta'anit, based upon a method of graphic arrangement suggested by Moshe Klein, which helps to highlight linguistic and topical parallels within a Mishnah chapter. Use of these tools leads the author to an analysis of the conceptual flow of the tractate, including ideas such as the centrality of the land of Israel and forms of dialogue between God and His people Israel.

Rav Avraham Walfish continues his discussion of "literary" techniques within the Mishnah and their editorial and conceptual ramifications. In this article he deals with

the phenomenon of "paranomasia" (wordplays). He cites several examples of the phenomenon, suggesting interpretations of the thematic and conceptual associations which they produce. In an appendix to the article, the author lists many further examples of mishnaic wordplays.

Dr. Yisrael Rosenson investigates the role of aggadah within the Mishnah. After clarifying the meaning of the term "aggadah" and identifying its central characteristics, the author examines aggadic mishnayot of Tractate Berakhot, analyzing their theological and socio-historical significance.

Yehezkel Cohen draws upon his extensive experience as a Mishnah teacher, suggesting an approach to teaching a series of Mishnayot in Tractate Eruvin. His method is based upon judicious use of graphic illustrations, which serve to clarify the situations and basic concepts of the Mishnah, as well as to render the learning process more attractive and interactive. The text of the article explains how these illustrations may be utilized as a basis for clear, systematic, and enjoyable Mishnah instruction.

Our regular column, "Recent Developments in the Field of Mishnah", surveys recent articles and books which deal with diverse aspects of Mishnah study and scholarship.

We are pleased to note that our first issue of Netuim has elicited responses from our readers, two of which are brought in our current issue. Rav Shalom Carmy comments upon the "envelope structure" of Tractate Nazir, cited and interpreted by Rev Avraham Walfish in our first issue. In the view of Rav Carmy, the key to understanding this literary trait of Tractate Nazir is rooted in the dual character of the biblical Nazir as a military and as an ascetic figure. Gilad Strauss responds to Ehud Kosset's article in Netuim I, which suggested several ways of understanding the difference between the benedictions in Berakhot 9:2, "Whose power and might fill the earth" and "Who created the works of creation". Strauss suggests a new understanding of this division, based on a different interpretation of some of the authorities cited by Rosset.