


# Combating the Sun – From Shamash to Helios and Sol Invictus

התנגדות לפולחן השמש מימי התנ"ך עד התקופה הביזנטית  
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Sepphoris Synagogue Mosaic (late 5th-early 6th century CE)

## 1) Shuls and Rabbis

A) Sepphoris Synagogue Mosaic (ca. late 5th century CE)	B) Numbers 28.4-7 (ca. 1250 BCE)
	<p>ד אֶת-הַכֶּבֶשׂ אֶחָד, תַּעֲשֶׂה בַבֶּקָר; וְאֶת הַכֶּבֶשׂ הַשֵּׁנִי, תַּעֲשֶׂה בֵּין הָעֶרְבָיִם. ה וַעֲשִׂירִית הָאֵיפָה סֶלֶת, לְמִנְחָה, בְּלוּלָה בְּשֶׁמֶן כֶּתִית, רְבִיעֵת הַהֵיזֵן. ו עֵלֶת, תְּמִיד תַּעֲשִׂיָהּ, בְּהַר סִינַי, לְרִיחַ נִיחֹחַ, אֲשֶׁה לִיקְנוֹק. ז וְנִסְכּוֹ רְבִיעֵת הַהֵיזֵן, לְכֶבֶשׂ הָאֶחָד; בַּקֹּדֶשׁ, הַסֹּדֵף נִסְדֵף שֶׁכֶר לִיקְנוֹק</p>
C) Numbers 10:10	4 The one lamb you shall offer in the morning, and the other lamb you shall offer at dusk; 5 and the tenth part of an ephah of fine flour for a meal-offering, mingled with the fourth part of a hin of beaten oil. 6 It is a continual burnt-offering, which was offered in mount Sinai, for a sweet savour, an offering made by fire to the Lord. 7 And the drink-offering thereof shall be the fourth part of a hin for the one lamb; in the holy place you shall pour out a drink-offering of strong drink unto the Lord.
<p>י וּבְיוֹם שְׂמֹחַתְכֶם וּבְמוֹעֲדֵיכֶם, וּבְרָאשֵׁי חֲדָשֵׁיכֶם וּתְקַעְתֶּם בַּחֲצֹצְרוֹת עַל עֲלֹתֵיכֶם, וְעַל זִבְחֵי שְׁלָמֵיכֶם; וְהָיוּ לָכֶם לְזִכְרוֹן לְפָנַי אֱלֹקֵיכֶם, אֲנִי יְקֹנֵק אֱלֹקֵיכֶם</p> <p>10 Also in the day of your gladness, and in your appointed seasons, and in your new moons, you shall blow with the trumpets over your burnt-offerings, and over the sacrifices of your peace-offerings; and they shall be to you for a memorial before your God: I am the Lord your God.'</p>	
D) Sifre Zuta 10.10 (ca. 3rd century CE)	
מועדיכם אלו התמידים	"In your appointed seasons:" These are the daily offerings.

## 2) Biblical Evidence

Kuntlilet 'Ajrud, <i>pithos</i> B (late 9th-mid 8th c. BCE)	Job 31.26-8 (uncertain date)
	<p>כּו אִם-אֶרְאֶה אֹר, כִּי יִהְיֶה; וְיָרַח, יִקָּר הַלָּיִל. כז וַיִּפְתֵּן בְּסִטְרִי לְבִי; וַתִּשָּׁק יָדַי לְפִי. כח גַּם-הוּא, עָוֹן פְּלִילִי: כִּי-כַחֲשִׁיתִי לְאֵל מִמַּעַל</p> <p>26 If I beheld the sun when it shined, or the moon walking in brightness; 27 And my heart has been secretly enticed, and my mouth has kissed my hand; 28 This also were a judicial offense; for I would have lied to God that is above.</p>

Ezekiel 8.16 (592 BCE)	
<p>טז וַיְבִיֵא אֹתִי, אֶל-הַחֲצַר בֵּית-יְקֹנָק הַפְּנִימִית, וְהִנֵּה-פְתַח הַיֵּכָל יְקֹנָק בֵּין הָאֹיִלָם וּבֵין הַמִּזְבֵּחַ, כְּעֶשְׂרִים וַחֲמִשָּׁה אִישׁ; אַחֲרֵיהֶם אֶל-הַיֵּכָל יְקֹנָק, וּפְנֵיהֶם קִדְמָה, וְהֵמָּה מְשַׁתְּחִוּתָם קִדְמָה, לְשֶׁמֶשׁ</p>	<p>16 And He brought me into the inner court of the Lord's house, and, behold, at the door of the Temple of the Lord, between the porch and the altar, were about twenty five men, with their backs toward the Temple of the Lord, and their faces toward the east; and they worshipped the sun toward the east.</p>

**3) Biblical Antidote**

Psalm 19.2-8 (uncertain date; possibly 7 <sup>th</sup> century BCE?)	
<p>ב השָׁמַיִם, מְסַפְּרִים כְּבוֹד-אֱלֹהִים; וּמַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵיו, מְגִיד הָרְקִיעַ. ג יוֹם לְיוֹם, יִבְרַע אֱמֶר; וְלַיְלָה לְלַיְלָה, יִתְנוּה-דַעַת. ד אִיו-אֱמֶר, וְאִיו דְּבָרִים: בְּלִי, נִשְׁמָע קוֹלָם. ה בְּכָל-הָאָרֶץ, יֵצֵא קוֹל, וּבְקִצָּה תְּבַל, מְלִיָּהֶם; לְשֶׁמֶשׁ, שָׁם-אֵהָל בָּהֶם. ו וְהוּא--כְּתָנָן, יֵצֵא מִחַפְּתוֹ; יִשְׂרָאֵל כְּגִבּוֹר, לְרוּחַ אֲרָח. ז מְקַצֵּה הַשָּׁמַיִם, מוֹצֵאוֹ וּתְקוּפָתוֹ עַל-קַצּוֹתָם; וְאִיו נִסְתָּר, מִחַפְּתוֹ. ח תּוֹרַת יְהוָה תְּמִימָה, מְשִׁיבַת נֶפֶשׁ; עֲדוּת יְהוָה נְאֻמָּה, מִחֻכְמַת פִּתִּי</p>	<p>2 The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. 3 Day to day pours forth speech; night to night reveals knowledge. 4 It is not speech and they are not words; their voice is unheard. 5 Yet their sound goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world. Among them God has pitched a tent for the sun. 6 It is like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, like a champion rejoicing to run his course. 7 It emerges from the edge of the heavens and its circuit is across its boundaries; and nothing is concealed from its heat. 8 The law of the Lord is perfect, refreshing the soul. The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple.</p>

*Shamash Hymn* (final form, late 2<sup>nd</sup> millenium BCE)

Regularly and without cease you traverse the heavens Every day you pass over the broad earth. . . .

**4) Rabbinic Evidence**

Yerushalmi, <i>Berakhot</i> 9.2 (late 4th-early 5 <sup>th</sup> c. CE)	
<p>הַרוֹאֵה אֶת הַחֲמָה בְּתִקּוּפָתָהּ וְאֶת הַלְּבָנָה בְּתִקּוּפָתָהּ וְאֶת הָרְקִיעַ בְּטִיהָרוֹ אֹמֵר בְּרוּךְ עוֹשֵׂה בְּרָאשִׁית</p>	<p>One who sees the sun in its <i>tekufah</i>, the moon in its <i>tekufah</i> and the sky in its purity says, "Blessed is the one who brings about creation."</p>

Genesis Rabbah 6.17 (ca. 5 <sup>th</sup> century CE)	
<p>גַּלְגַּל חֲמָה יֵשׁ לוֹ נוֹשֶׁתָק מֵה טַעְמִיָּה יִשְׁמַשׁ שָׁם אֵהָל בְּהֶם, וּבְרִיכָה שְׁלָמַיִם לַפְּנִי, בְּשַׁעָה שִׁוּצָא הַקַּב"ה מְתִישׁ אֶת כּוּחוֹ בְּמִים שְׁלֵא יֵצֵא וּיִשְׁרוּף אֶת הָעוֹלָם, אֲבָל לַעֲתִיד [לְבוֹא] הַקַּב"ה מְעַרְטֵלוּ מְנוֹשֶׁתָקוֹ וּמְלַהֲטוּ, מֵה טַע' וְלִיהִט אֹתָם הַיּוֹם הַבֹּא, ר' יֵנְאִי וְר' שְׁמַעוֹן בֶּן לִקְיָשׁ אִמְרֵי גִיְהֵנָם אֵלֵא יוֹם שְׁמַלְהֵט אֶת הָרִשְׁעִים</p>	

The globe of the sun has a sheath. What is the proof? In them hath He set a tent [protective covering] for the sun; and a lake of water stands before it, 4 and when it goes forth, the Holy One, blessed be He, tempers its strength in the water, lest it go forth and burn up the world. But in the future the Lord will bare it from its sheath and burn it up. What is the proof? And the day that comes shall set them ablaze. R. Jannai and R. Simeon b. Lakish said: There is no other Gehenna [in the future] save a day which will burn up the wicked.

Pirke de-R. Eliezer 5 (ca. 8 <sup>th</sup> -9 <sup>th</sup> c. CE)	
<p>שְׁנֵי הוֹלֵךְ אֶל דְּרוֹם וְסוֹבֵב אֶל צְפוֹן, הוֹלֵךְ אֶל דְּרוֹם בְּתִקּוּפַת תְּשֵׁרֵי וּבְתִקּוּפַת טֵבֵת, וְסוֹבֵב אֶל צְפוֹן בְּתִקּוּפַת נִיסָן וּבְתִקּוּפַת תַּמּוּז, סוֹבֵב שְׁשֵׁה חֳדָשִׁים בְּקֶרֶן דְּרוּמִית, שְׁשֵׁה חֳדָשִׁים בְּקֶרֶן צְפוּנִית...שְׁלֹשׁ אוֹתִיּוֹת שֶׁל הַשֶּׁם כְּתוּב עַל לְבוֹ, וְהַמְּלָאכִים מְנַהֲגִין אוֹתוֹ...וְהַחֲמָה רוֹכֵב בְּמַרְכָּבָה וְעוֹלָה מְעוֹטֵר כְּחַתָּן, שְׁנֵי הוּא כְּחַתָּן יֹצֵא מִחּוּפּוֹתוֹ</p>	<p>As it says, "It goes towards the South and turns towards the North" (Ecc 1:6). It [the sun] goes towards the South at the epoch of Tishrei and at the epoch of Tevet, and it turns towards the North at the epoch of Nisan and at the epoch of Tammuz. It stays on its course for six months in the southern corner and for six months in the northern corner...The sun has three letters of the name [of God] on its heart and the angels lead it....And the sun rides in its chariot and rises crowned like a groom and "like a hero, eager to run his course." As it says (Ps 19:6), "It is like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, like a champion rejoicing to run his course"</p>