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”Dass jede einzelne Sache, für die Israel sein Leben gab, in seinen Händen Bestand haben sollte ...” : individuelle und regional unabhängige Religiosität in der Mekhilta des Rabbi Jischmael

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This paper argues that Mekhilta de-Rabbi Yishmael (MekhY) is distinguishing between local realities of Jewish religion (like the Temple, the Davidic kingdom, full jurisdiction, and even the land of Israel) and a local independent religiosity based on individual responsibility. MekhY pursues the interest to strengthen a regional independent Judaism of individual religious practice and deduces this concept from the Exodus-Sinai narrative. Shabbat is mentioned time and again as a paradigm of this perception of Jewish religiosity. The exegetical interest of MekhY can be shown already by its selection of Biblical texts, this will furthermore be demonstrated by means of four passages of this Midrash.

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