



Readings from the Ancient Near East: Primary Sources for Old Testament Study (Encountering Biblical Studies)

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Essential to a proper understanding of the Old Testament is a knowledge of the political, historical, and theological environment of the ancient Near East. While there is an abundance of material explaining this environment, primary source texts are often unavailable or inaccessible to the beginning Old Testament student. This volume in the Encountering Biblical Studies series fills that void. Readings from the Ancient Near East takes the student through a wide variety of primary source texts from the ancient Near East that illuminate every book of the Old Testament. It is the companion volume to Encountering the Old Testament, coauthored by Bill Arnold and Bryan Beyer. The editors have compiled this volume with the beginning Old Testament student in mind. The selections are intended to move a learner with little or no knowledge of the ancient Near East to a basic understanding of its significant texts and authors. Texts spanning more than two thousand years include Sumerian creation accounts, epic literature from Mesopotamia, cultic ritual texts from Egypt, and prophetic references from Syria. Readings from the Ancient Near East will surely become a standard text for professors, students, pastors, Sunday school teachers, and serious lay readers.

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Editorial Review

From Library Journal

Considering these works, it seems fair to say that the publisher's "Encountering Biblical Studies" series will make a useful contribution to a reader's biblical knowledge. The series, designed for undergraduate college courses in religion but useful for educated lay readers as well, is written from a very conservative or evangelical perspective and provides good examples of that approach. Aside from expository volumes like Hagner's, which address individual books of the Bible, the series consists of two surveys treating the Old and New Testaments plus two collateral volumes of readings aimed at placing the Testaments in historical context. With *Readings from the Ancient Near East: Primary Sources for Old Testament Study*, Arnold and Beyer (coauthors, *Encountering the Old Testament*) provide a selection of 91 documents from other cultures surrounding Israel and thus inform the reader of the wider cultural, religious, and social context in which the Old Testament documents were composed. Each selection is preceded by brief comments that make clear the background and content of the text. They are arranged in the same order as the books of the Old Testament and are collected under headings such as "Creation and the Flood" and "Law Codes." An excellent selection by the editors helps the reader compare and contrast biblical material with other readings from the same region. The book by Hagner (George Eldon Ladd Professor of New Testament, Fuller Theological Seminary) is not a verse-by-verse exposition but a chapter-by-chapter summary of the major themes of the New Testament Book of Hebrews. Hagner also includes commentary on how this applies to the Christian life. Each chapter is preceded by an outline, a list of supplemental reading from other biblical books, and suggested objectives for student learning. At the end of each chapter is a list of study questions, key terms, and a bibliography for further reading. A select bibliography, glossary, Scripture index, and subject index add to the usefulness of the volume. Both books are recommended for libraries looking to supplement their collection of evangelical books related to the study of the Bible.

David Bourquin, California State Univ., San Bernardino

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From the Back Cover

It is paramount that students of the Bible learn the rich textual heritage of the ancient Near East, and this great resource helps them do just that. This is probably the best small single-volume work of its type to appear in over thirty years. — Mark W. Chavalas, University of Wisconsin-Lacrosse

A well-selected and well-introduced anthology. It is a natural and obvious choice as a textbook for introductory courses and is without doubt the most comprehensive, up-to-date, and affordable volume of its kind on the market. — Brent A. Strawn, Candler School of Theology, Emory University

Our understanding of the Hebrew Bible is enhanced when we are familiar with similar texts from the ancient world. Until now it has been difficult to introduce students to these ancient texts because only two types of translations existed: too large (and expensive!) or too small (and superficial!). With this volume, Arnold and Beyer bring us a step closer to becoming competent readers of Scripture. — Kenton L. Sparks, Eastern University

There are a number of new volumes of translated ancient texts that might be of interest to students of the Bible, but most are either far too long or too narrowly focused. This new volume promises a convenient, affordable reference for some of the most important writings that help us understand the world of the Old

Testament.î óDaniel E. Fleming, New York University îThis wonderful treasury of key ancient Near Eastern writings provides the essential background for interpreting the Bible in its original context. As an affordable and well-chosen selection of so many important literary works, it fills a need for a modern version of older anthologies that can be used in college survey courses on the Old Testament and its world.î óRichard S. Hess, Denver Seminary

îThe editorsí familiarity with the primary sources has resulted in a careful selection of material judiciously arranged to be of maximum benefit to the student seeking acquaintance with the vast literature of the ancient Near East relating to the Old Testament.î óJohn H. Walton, Wheaton College

Bill T. Arnold (Ph.D., Hebrew Union College) is professor of Old Testament and Semitic languages at Asbury Theological Seminary, and Bryan E. Beyer (Ph.D., Hebrew Union College) is dean of students at Columbia International University. They are the coauthors of *Encountering the Old Testament: A Christian Survey*.

About the Author

Bill T. Arnold (Ph.D., Hebrew Union College) is professor of Old Testament and Semitic languages at Asbury Theological Seminary.

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Raymond Bailey:

The reason why? Because this *Readings from the Ancient Near East: Primary Sources for Old Testament Study* (*Encountering Biblical Studies*) is an unordinary book that the inside of the e-book waiting for you to snap the item but latter it will jolt you with the secret that inside. Reading this book next to it was fantastic author who else write the book in such awesome way makes the content within easier to understand, entertaining method but still convey the meaning fully. So , it is good for you because of not hesitating having this anymore or you going to regret it. This amazing book will give you a lot of gains than the other book have got such as help improving your ability and your critical thinking approach. So , still want to hold up having that book? If I were you I will go to the book store hurriedly.

Diane Russel:

Is it a person who having spare time and then spend it whole day by simply watching television programs or just telling lies on the bed? Do you need something new? This *Readings from the Ancient Near East: Primary Sources for Old Testament Study* (*Encountering Biblical Studies*) can be the reply, oh how comes? The new book you know. You are therefore out of date, spending your time by reading in this brand new era is common not a nerd activity. So what these publications have than the others?

Sandra McLean:

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Daniel Love:

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