Ancient Near Eastern Setting of the Bible Bibliography
Gary E. Schnittjer
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For bibliography on related matters see http://ScriptureWorkshop.com/bibliography/.

Ackerman, Susan. “Sacred Sex, Sacrifice, and Death.” Bible Review 6 (Feb 1990): 8-44.
Ackroyd, Peter R. Exile and Restoration: A Study of Hebrew Thought of the Sixth Century B.C.
Albertz, Rainer and Rüdiger Schmitt, Family and Household Religion in Ancient Israel in the
Levant (Eisenbrauns, 2012).
Ancient Israel’s History: An Introduction to Issues and Sources (eds. Bill T. Arnold and Richard
S. Hess; Baker Academic, 2014).
ANE see Pritchard.
ANET see Pritchard.
ARI see Grayson.
Arnold, Bill T. and Bryan E. Beyer, eds. Readings from the Ancient Near East: Primary Sources
Ashmon, Scott A. Birth Annunciations in the Hebrew Bible and Ancient Near East: A Literary
Analysis of Forms and Functions of Heavenly Foretelling and of the Destiny of the
Assyrian Reliefs from the Palace of Ashurnasirpal II: A Cultural Biography (eds. Ada Cohen,
Steven E. Kangas; University Press of New England, 2010)
Averbeck, Richard E. “Sumer, the Bible, and Comparative Method: Historiography and Temple
Building,” 88-125, in Mark W. Chavalas and K. Lawson Younger, Jr., eds. Mesopotamia
out by Talmon as a framework for his investigation, namely, “proximity on time and
place, the priority of inner biblical parallels, correspondence in social function, and the
holistic approach to texts and comparisons”; see esp. pp. 88-89.)
____________, Mark W. Chavalas, and David B. Weisberg, eds. Life and Culture in the Ancient
Ordinariness of the Peculiar Institution”; (2) Richard E. Averbeck, “Daily Life and Culture
in Enki and the World Order” and Other Sumerian Literary Compositions”; (3) Samuel
Weisberg, “Everyday Life in the Neo-Babylonian Period: The Integration of Material and
G. E. Watson, “Daily Life in Ancient Ugarit (Syria)” ; (7) Mark W. Chavalas, “Puzurum,
A Homeowner from Khana-Period Terqa”; (8) Jan Gallagher, “An Extraordinary
Everyday for Emar’s Diviner”; (9) Carol Meyers, “Everyday Life in Biblical Israel:
Women’s Social Networks”; (10) Beverly Bow, “Sisterhood? Women’s Relationships
with Women in the Hebrew Bible”; (11) Peter Feinman, “Boy Meets Girl: Stories of
Eligibility and Encounter in Ancient Israel”; (12) Anson Rainey, “Aspects of Life in
Ancient Israel”; (13) K. Lawson Younger, Jr., “‘Give Us Our Daily Bread’ Everyday Life
for the Israelite Deportees”; (14) Robert D. Miller, II, “Modeling the Farm Community in
Iron I Israel”; (15) Jennie R. Ebeling, “Archaeological Remains of Everyday Activities:
Ground Stone Tools in Bronze and Iron Age Palestine”; (16) James K. Hoffmeier,


Block, Daniel I., ed., Israel: Ancient Kingdom or Late Invention? (B&H Publishing, 2008).


CML (see note on CTA below)


*COS* see Hallo.


Crouch, C. L. *War and Ethics in the Ancient Near East: Military Violence in Light of Cosmology and History* (Beihcfe zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 407; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2009).

CTA1


__________. *What Did the Biblical Writers Know & When Did They Know It?* Eerdmans, 2001.

(Dever’s text is entertaining and informative, even while it promotes an idiosyncratic critique of “minimalism” and Biblicalism, promoting a reliable historical core to the Hebrew kingdom. Definitions: “minimalist” is “one who accepts the biblical text only when it can be confirmed from other sources” and “maximalist” is “one who accepts the biblical text unless it can be proved wrong” (23) [Dever draws a distinction between fundamentalists who believe in inerrancy and conservative evangelicals who fit ‘maximal conservative’ approach, pp. 22-24]. The short answer to the question asked in the book’s title is: “They knew a lot, and they knew it early” [295]. One of the more sensible themes is seeing the biblical writers as being part of the religious establishment which, often times, was a minority in the face of polytheistic synchronistic mass folk religion [see,

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1 CTA is the common abbreviation of the Ugaritic texts used in *COS* (Hallo), *CML* (Gibson), and so on, and refers to *Corpus des tablettes an cunéiforms alphabétiques découvertes à Ra Shamra-Ugarit de 1929 à 1939*. Ed. A. Herdner. Mission de Ras Shamra 10. Paris, 1963. (ANET [Pritchard] and many older works use different reference systems; see ANET, 129. For table comparing reference systems, see Segert, 168-74; CML, xi-xii.)
e.g., 270]. Dever often refers to the outlook of the biblical writings as propaganda and the like. Dever’s presentation of ancient Israel’s religion according to archaeology is presented on pages 175-202, which includes his view of biblical monotheism emerging out of Canaanite-like religions [see the titles of his other writings above].


Grabbe, Lester L. Ancient Israel: What Do We Know and How Do We Know It? T&T Clark, 2007.


Bibliography for Ancient Near Eastern Context of the Bible


Porter, Barbara Nevling, “Ancient Writers, Modern Readers, and King Ashurnasirpal’s Political Problems: An Exploration of the Possibility of Reading Ancient Texts,” 103-120, in Hanna Liss and Manfred Oeming, eds. Literary Construction of Identity in the Ancient World. Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2010. (Porter offers a counter-point to standard interpretations of violence in ancient Assyrian inscriptions and reliefs. I find Porter’s explanations unconvincing. For a different innovative approach see Bahrani’s titles above.)


Schneider, Tammi J. *An Introduction to Ancient Mesopotamian Religion*. Eerdmans, 2011. (The merits of this book include its brevity and accessibility. With little investment of time a student could gain a well-researched overview of ancient Mesopotamian religion. It is not the last word, but is a good start.)


Sparks, Kenton L. *Ancient Texts for the Study of the Hebrew Bible: A Guide to the Background Literature.* Hendrickson, 2005. (This guide is organized around genres, one per chapter, and each genre treated ancient society by society [e.g., Mesopotamia]. The conclusion of each chapter offers a discussion of how the ancient literature relates to the Hebrew Bible, which is followed by a bibliography noting translations and key secondary literature. The book is based upon Sparks’ course on the Hebrew Bible and ancient Near Eastern literature at Eastern University, each chapter/week focusing on another genre. This would be a helpful resource to check out or use in the library for a student who is doing work on ancient Near Eastern writings and the Hebrew scriptures. This book would likely gather dust on the shelf of the busy preacher unless sermon preparation sometimes included rereading ancient Near Eastern texts, in which case this volume would save much time.)


__________. “With my many chariots I have gone up the heights of mountains”: *Historical and Literary Studies on Ancient Mesopotamia and Israel,* ed. Mordechai Cogan (Israel Exploration Society, 2011).
Tadmor, Hayim and Shigeo Yamada, *The Royal Inscriptions of Tiglath-Pileser (+III (744-727 BC) and Shalmaneser V (726-22 BC), Kings of Assyria* (Royal Inscriptions of the Neo-Assyrian Period; Eisenbrauns, 2011)


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Walton, John H. Ancient Kingdom or Late Invention? Nashville: B&H Publishing, 2008. Walton offers criteria and guidelines for comparative studies (evangelical studies of the scriptures and ancient Near Eastern context), and illustrates these with reference to the first four of the Ten Commandments.


