
This revision of the author’s doctoral dissertation contributes to the growing scholarly literature—and debates—about the historical reality behind the biblical representation of David and the Davidic monarchy. The focus of the work is on the meaning of the term “house of David,” which is generally understood in the Bible and by scholars to refer to the tribe and kingdom of Judah. The author pushes against this assumption, arguing that the term refers to a smaller political unit associated with David before he became ruler of Judah. This is a work of technical scholarship that is not intended for non-specialists. The author, now assistant professor at the University of Scranton, draws on a significant amount of comparative ancient Near Eastern literary and archaeological evidence as well as a detailed analysis of the relevant biblical texts to support her thesis. Scholars of the history of early Israel will want to investigate this latest addition to the debates surrounding David and his kingdom.


This introduction is designed to be a textbook for undergraduate students. The approach it takes to the Old Testament is, first of all, a careful reading of the biblical text, paying particular attention to the main literary and theological themes. Standard historical, cultural, and literary background information is brought in when useful for understanding the text. The overall intention of the textbook is to help students not only to understand the biblical story but also to help them see how the Old Testament consistently and persistently draws a portrait of God who is “urgently and passionately in love.” Each chapter features a number of elements that are well suited to the classroom: biblical reading assignments, key terms, discussion questions, a study guide, research topics, and short bibliographies for further readings, most of which are standards in the discipline. Pemberton, who is chair of the Department of Bible, Mission, and Ministry at Abilene Christian University, has written a book that is highly readable, with an accessible prose style and occasional light touches of humor. It may also be suitable for parish Bible study groups who wish to establish a basic background before diving more deeply into particular texts. Readers should be aware that this book discusses only the books in the Protestant canon; Wisdom, Tobit, and other books included in the Catholic Old Testament are not represented.


The history of biblical interpretation has garnered much interest of late, and this volume is a welcome addition to the growing scholarship concerning the social role of the Bible in particular times and places. Powery (Messiah College) and