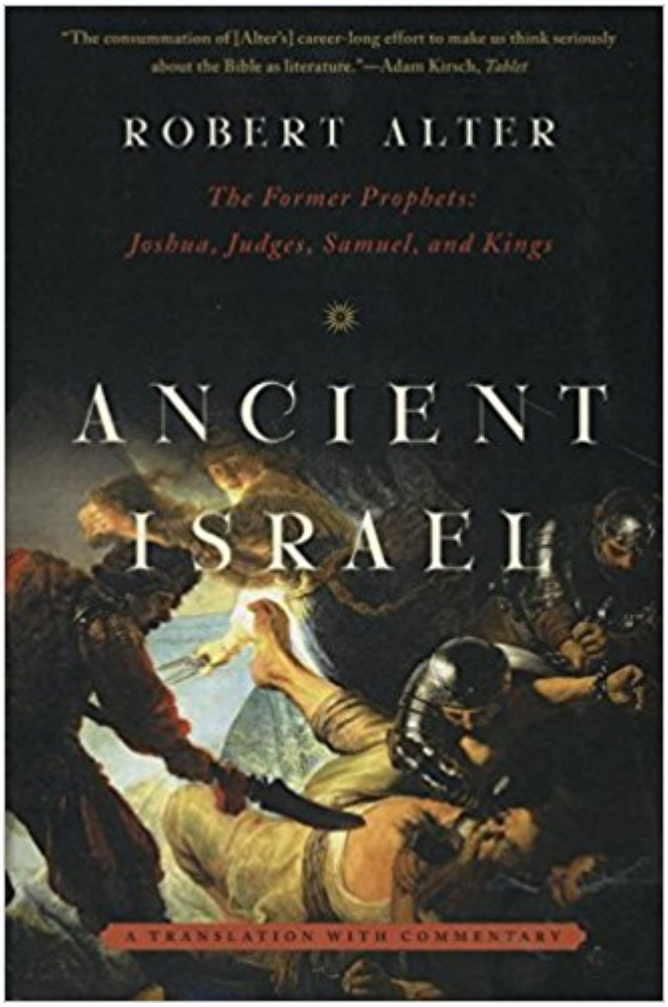
Ebook Directory
the best source of ebook

The book was found

Ancient Israel: The Former Prophets: Joshua, Judges, Samuel, And Kings: A Translation With Commentary



PDF
Adobe
DOWNLOAD EBOOK

Synopsis

Robert Alterâ ™s award-winning translation of the Hebrew Bible continues with the stirring narrative of Israelâ ™s ancient history. To read the books of the Former Prophets in this riveting Robert Alter translation is to discover an entertaining amalgam of hair-raising action and high literary achievement. Samson, the vigilante superhero of Judges, slaughters thousands of Philistines with the jawbone of a donkey. David, the Machiavellian prince of Samuel and Kings, is one of the great literary figures of antiquity. A ruthless monarch, David embodies a life in full dimension as it moves from brilliant youth through vigorous prime to failing old age. Samson and David play emblematic roles in the rise and fall of ancient Israel, a nation beset by internal divisions and external threats. A scattering of contentious desert tribes joined by faith in a special covenant with God, Israel emerges through the bloody massacres of Canaanite populations recounted in Joshua and the anarchic violence of Judges. The resourceful David consolidates national power, but it is power rooted in conspiracy, and David dies bitterly isolated in his court, surrounded by enemies. His successor, Solomon, maintains national unity through his legendary wisdom, wealth, and grand public vision, but after his death Israel succumbs to internal discord and foreign conquest. Near its end, the saga of ancient Israel returns to the supernatural. In Elijahâ ™s fiery ascent to heaven many would find the harbinger of a messiah coming to save his people in their time of need. map

Book Information

Paperback: 880 pages

Publisher: W. W. Norton & Company; 1 edition (April 14, 2014)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0393348768

ISBN-13: 978-0393348767

Product Dimensions: 6.2 x 1.5 x 9.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 2.3 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 47 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #181,878 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #39 inÂ Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Bible Study & Reference > Prophets #197 inÂ Books > History > Middle East > Israel & Palestine #557 inÂ Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Bible Study & Reference > Bible Study > Old Testament

Customer Reviews

Alter’s translation can be fairly described as a godsend...Immediately readable, immensely learned,

an education and a restitution. --Seamus HeaneyThe poets will rejoice. Alter's language ascends to a rare purity through a plainness that equals the plainness of the Hebrew. --Cynthia OzickAlter takes us back to the essence of the meaning...Everything is clearer, seeming to have been rinsed not in the baptismal waters of the New Testament but in the life-giving water of the desert. --James WoodA considerable achievement...Alter holds me to his darkly economical texts. --Harold BloomOne of the most ambitious literary projects of this or any age. --Adam Kirsch"Alter s translation can be fairly described as a godsend Immediately readable, immensely learned, an education and a restitution. --Seamus Heaney"The poets will rejoice. Alter s language ascends to a rare purity through a plainness that equals the plainness of the Hebrew. --Cynthia Ozick"Alter takes us back to the essence of the meaning Everything is clearer, seeming to have been rinsed not in the baptismal waters of the New Testament but in the life-giving water of the desert. --James Wood"A considerable achievement Alter holds me to his darkly economical texts. --Harold Bloom"You think you know these texts, or you do until you read Alter, who reignites their beauty in bracing and unexpected ways. --Malcolm Jones"Thrilling and constantly illuminating. After the still, small voices of so many tepid modern translations, here is a whirlwind. --Michael Dirda"Alter has achieved the significant feat of refreshing English by taking it back to one of its sources of strength. --Peter Ackroyd"

Robert Alter's ongoing translation of the Hebrew Bible, the magnificent capstone to a lifetime of distinguished scholarly work, has won the PEN Center Literary Award for Translation. His immense achievements in scholarship ranging from the eighteenth-century European novel to contemporary Hebrew and American literature earned Alter the Robert Kirsch Award for Lifetime Achievement from the Los Angeles Times. A member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the American Philosophical Society, Alter is the Class of 1937 Professor of Hebrew and Comparative Literature at the University of California, Berkeley.

By and large, Alter's work is a milestone in the art of translation and is in and of itself an instructive resource for students of the Bible in general, and students of Hebrew in particular. Typically, the practice of translation is viewed through the lens of a false dichotomy: either translations are mechanical, wooden, and "literal" or they are dynamic, thought-for-thought, or otherwise paraphrastic. Alter demonstrates cogently and forcefully that translation is not a game of viewing words as equations to be solved, nor is it the practice of grabbing what the author was trying to say and rendering it in an "abridged" kind of way (see his article in his "Five Books of Moses" entitled,

"On the Heresy of Explanation").As a Hebraist I was immediately gripped by Alter's command of the Hebrew, and stunned by his grasp of the subtle distinctions between literary expressions in the Hebrew text. It goes without saying that what the author has done in this volume and the others of his series is to demonstrate that translation is as much of an art as it is a science; biblical literature often makes sudden and abrupt changes from prose to poetry, and not to mention careful and calculating choices in vocabulary and diction. Translation is just as much about translating art as it is about saying, "this word means this, and that word means that..." Unfortunately the artistry of the text is usually compromised in many English translations because of false assumptions about "literal" versus "dynamic" and paraphrastic translations of the text.In so many ways, Robert Alter is changing the way that scholars and layman alike are viewing the art of translation, especially among those that know Hebrew and Aramaic. If you have never picked up Alter's translations before, perhaps now would be a good time. His commentary alone is provocative enough, but his translation alone is worth the price of this volume.My ONLY complaint about this volume has to do with the absence of the section that is typically at the end of his works entitled, "For Further Reading." I contacted him about this and he insists that the bibliography would have been too cumbersome and not particularly helpful for readers. In his volume, "The David Story," there is a run-down of the characters in the narrative of 1 and 2 Samuel as well as a brief list of some of the resources that he consulted in the production of that translation that are absent in this one. While I wish that those appendices would have been included in the present volume, I understand his decision, and I am not deterred in recommending his work in the slightest.Hebrew Bible translation is moving into a new age in a BIG and GREAT way. Check out this volume and others of his translations to see some of where Bible translation is heading and you might just find some insightful surprises along the way; passages that were once obscure are now clear, passages that translators flattened into clarity by way of the heresy of explanation stand ambiguous as they were in the Hebrew. Altogether, this work is extremely readable, powerfully insightful, and a sober challenge to the excuses of translators past.Happy reading!

Robert Alter, an award winning author, has many skills including knowing Hebrew, understanding the Bible, and writing well. He translated and commented on many biblical books. He translates and comments upon "The Former Prophets: Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings" in this volume. Ancient Judaism divided the Hebrew Bible into three parts: Torah (the Five Books of Moses), Neviim (the prophetical books - books derived by prophecy), and Ketuvim (writings - inspired books). The entire collection is called Tanach, which is an acronym made up of the names of the three parts.

Later scholars divided the second section Neviim into two parts, the former and later prophets. Actually, the "former Prophets" are not books of prophecy, but historical books.Alter does not attempt to give his readers an extensive commentary on the four books. However he does introduce each with about a half dozen pages in which he explains the history and contents of the book. He also places about half a page of commentary on each page of each book.Alter's translation is much clearer than many others. For example, just a simple sentence in the Art Scroll edition of I Samuel 11:1 translates: "Then Nahash the Ammonite sent up and besieged Jabesh-gilead, and all the people of Jabesh said to Nahash, `Seal a covenant with us, and we will serve you.'" Alter has: "And Nahash the Ammonite came up and encamped against Jabesh-Gilead. And all the men of Jabesh said to Nahash, `Make a pact with us, and we shall be subject to you.'" In more than half a page under this sentence, Alter explains what the Ammonite kingdom is, its relationship to King Saul and King David, what is the settlement of Jabesh-Gilead, its relationship to Saul, what was found in Cave 4 of Qumran in the twentieth century that throws light on this episode.

Does any other text have such a discrepancy between the amount of time generations have devoted to studying it and the actual understanding derived from this huge effort?? Century after century people have been told that these books were God's word, an instruction manual on how to live. Generation after generation, people have lived in houses with copies of the Bible. Family history, marriages, births and deaths were recorded in it. Dedicated missionaries spent lifetimes hard at work at their desks, just so they could translate the ancient Hebrew text into obscure languages. Just what the 19th century Hawaiians made of these brutal tales is beyond me. Did they actually read it? I have relatives who defend "Biblical marriage," -- did they actually read about all the concubines? Or was it just a sacred object? So I tried to read it, first as religious guidance, then as poetry and then as history. But I either couldn't follow it, or I just didn't believe it could be saying what I thought it was saying: all that murder, rape, genocide, pillage. As an archivist, I like to get as close to the original text as possible. Robert Alter seemed to be the most qualified guide, and I decided to make one last attempt.After reading the Five Books of Moses with Robert Alter's commentary, I was addicted and went on to read "Ancient Israel," translations and commentary on Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings. only with Alter's footnotes could I make sense out of the narratives. And when the actual text itself is garbled, he points out the likely reasons. For me this time, reading the OT became something of a soap opera with lots of dramatic irony as the reader sees looming disaster, "No! Don't do that!...Oh, no, they did..." There is lots of dual causality, disaster comes because the deity is mad about the worship of idols, and also because of more

mundane factors like superior forces. Alter is upfront about the overall effect of the first half of "Ancient Israel" -- ruthlessness, and the general impression made by the second half -- tedium. And " nowhere in the Bible is there a more palpable discrepancy between the values and expectations of the ancient Near Eastern era in which the book was written and those of twenty-first century readers." The story of the defeat of the Canaanites is apparently mythical, not supported by archeological evidence. According to his theory, the genocide against the Canaanites as described with great approval in the Bible, probably never actually happened. The later battles with the Assyrians and Babylonians have more of a basis in fact. Alter's notes puts all of these discrepancies and correspondences between text and extra-biblical evidence in context. The Bible's fundamental if brutal honesty however comes out in the deep moral ambiguity of nearly all the great biblical heroes, so even King David, actually especially King David, they all did pretty dastardly things, that is essentially true to human nature.With Alter's framework, the folklore elements woven into the mythical and historical narratives stand out. Elijah is simply different from any of the other prophets before him. He works wishful-thinking miracles and helps the downtrodden. He miraculously provides food in times of hunger, an early model for the loaves and fishes (like the fairy tale "Tischlein Deck Dich"). Apparently these features made him the star of Jewish folklore over the centuries. Alter convincingly concludes that Elijah provides the template for many of the Jesus stories of the New Testament. The interconnections are starting to make sense to me. I'm grateful to Alter for using both his erudition and his deep insights to help non-specialists such as myself get a sense of what the OT is all about. I'm not about to give the Bible a rating, that's rather presumptuous, but Alter's notes definitely deserve 5 stars. Worth the time and effort to work through...I'm still not about to use the Bible as a guide to living, but as a guide to human nature, it's all in there.

Download to continue reading...

Ancient Israel: The Former Prophets: Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings: A Translation with Commentary Handbook on the Historical Books: Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, Ezra-Nehemiah, Esther Conflict of the Ages (The Complete Series): The Story of Patriarchs and Prophets; The Story of Prophets and Kings; The Desire of Ages; The Acts of the ... Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan The JPS Commentary on the Haggadah: Historical Introduction, Translation, and Commentary (JPS Bible Commentary) Ancient Book Of Jasher: Referenced In Joshua 10:13; 2 Samuel 1:18; And 2 Timothy 3:8 The David Story: A Translation with Commentary of 1 and 2 Samuel Joshua Tree: The Complete Guide: Joshua Tree National Park (Color Travel Guide) The Book of Jasher Referred To In Joshua and Second Samuel Daughters of

Miriam: Women Prophets in Ancient Israel 1 Samuel: The Lives of Samuel and Saul (MacArthur Bible Studies) Interpreting the Prophets: Reading, Understanding and Preaching from the Worlds of the Prophets The Book of Judges (New International Commentary on the Old Testament) Thinking Spanish Translation: A Course in Translation Method: Spanish to English (Thinking Translation) Life in Biblical Israel (Library of Ancient Israel) Be Strong (Joshua): Putting God's Power to Work in Your Life (The BE Series Commentary) Prophets and Kings [Illustrated] How to Walk in the Footsteps of Jesus and the Prophets: A Scripture Reference Guide for Biblical Sites in Israel and Jordan Prophets, Poets, Priests, & Kings : The Story of the Old Testament First and Second Samuel: Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching Word Biblical Commentary Vol. 10, 1 Samuel

Contact Us

DMCA

Privacy

FAQ & Help