



Early History of the Israelite People: From the Written and Archaeological Sources (Studies in the History of the Ancient Near East, Vol 4) (Kdi Research Monograph)

Thompson

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Through a review of historical scholarship of the past century, and an analysis of data drawn from archaeological excavations and surveys and from written and historical records from the late second and early first millennium, the author reconstructs the historical basis of Israel's origins within the contexts of geography, anthropology, and sociology. Thompson argues that none of the traditional models for the origin of biblical Israel in terms of conquest, peaceful settlement, or revolution are viable. The indigenous nature of the Israelite people has roots that lead back to the late Neolithic period. The Iron I period is not the period in which the origins of Israel are to be sought. Rather the geographical and regional expansion of settlements in this period reflects an economic response to drought conditions that affected the entire East Mediterranean basin. The ninth and eighth century states of Samaria and Jerusalem had separate and independent origins rooted in the development of a Mediterranean economy and an expansion of trade brought about by Assyrian interests. The development of the ethnic concept of biblical Israel with its roots in the United Monarchy finds its context in history first at the time of the Persian renaissance guided by the theological concepts of 'exile' and 'restoration.' Finally, Thompson argues that biblical Israel is historically the creation of the tradition itself in the Persian period and attempts to outline both a historical context and an interpretative matrix for the Bible.



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