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From Gods to God

How the Bible Debunked, Suppressed,
or Changed Ancient Myths and Legends

Avigdor Shinan and Yair Zakovitch

Translated by Valerie Zakovitch

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368 pp. 6 tables, 1 glossary

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Book Synopsis:

The ancient Israelites believed things that the writers of the Bible wanted them to forget: myths and legends from a pre-biblical world that the new monotheist order needed to bury, hide, or reinterpret. Written in clear and accessible language, this volume voyages behind the veil of the written Bible to reconstruct what was told and retold among the ancient Israelites, even if it is “not what the Bible tells us.”



Book Description

The ancient Israelites believed things that the writers of the Bible wanted them to forget: myths and legends from a pre-biblical world that the new monotheist order needed to bury, hide, or reinterpret.

Ancient Israel was rich in such literary traditions before the Bible reached the final form that we have today. These traditions were not lost but continued, passed down through the ages. Many managed to reach us in post-biblical sources: rabbinic literature, Jewish Hellenistic writings, the writings of the Dead Sea sect, the Aramaic, Greek, Latin, and other ancient translations of the Bible, and even outside the ancient Jewish world in Christian and Islamic texts. The Bible itself sometimes alludes to these traditions, often in surprising contexts.

Written in clear and accessible language, this volume presents thirty such traditions. It voyages behind the veil of the written Bible to reconstruct what was told and retold among the ancient Israelites, even if it is “not what the Bible tells us.”

Pre-Publication Praise

“In this remarkable volume, Avigdor Shinan and Yair Zakovitch have channeled their prodigious learning into a narrative about the legacy of the Bible that is not only readable but compelling. Anyone who loves the Bible and the interpretive challenges it has bequeathed generations of readers will enjoy the encounter with these two illustrious commentators.”—Gary A. Anderson, Hesburgh Professor of Catholic Theology, University of Notre Dame

Post-Publication Praise

Please visit this book’s [web page](http://www.nebraskapress.unl.edu/product/From-Gods-to-God,675647.aspx) (<http://www.nebraskapress.unl.edu/product/From-Gods-to-God,675647.aspx>) for the most current post-publication praise.

Author Biography

Avigdor Shinan is the Yitzhak Becker Professor of Jewish Studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He is the author of numerous books in Hebrew on rabbinic literature, Jewish liturgy, and the Aramaic translations of the Bible.

Yair Zakovitch is the Emeritus Father Takeji Otsuki Professor of Bible at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and a professor of Jewish Peoplehood at the Interdisciplinary Center (IDC) Herzliya. He is the author of numerous books in Hebrew on biblical literature and ancient interpretation of the Bible.

Valerie Zakovitch is a translator and editor of works in Jewish studies and the humanities.

Additional Information

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