

Norman K. Gottwald's magisterial work *The Tribes of Yahweh* (1979) marked a revolutionary turning point in biblical studies—in more ways than one. Since its publication, his interpretation of the revolutionary origins of Israel in the land of Canaan has been widely discussed and widely accepted, his conclusions being described or assumed in introductory textbooks and study Bibles alike. In 1985, the publication of *The Hebrew Bible: A Socio-Literary Introduction* made those conclusions and the methodological considerations that led to them more broadly accessible in a clearly organized textbook supplemented with maps and diagrams.

Now Fortress Press is pleased to present this textbook, carefully and faithfully abridged from *The Hebrew Bible* for the college and university classroom. Here the reader will find a helpful overview of the methods of Hebrew Bible study. Here are Professor Gottwald's key insights, arguments, and conclusions regarding the formative stages in ancient Israel's history that shaped the writings of the Hebrew Bible. Here, and on a companion Web site, <http://www.fortresspress.com/gottwald>, are clear and informative charts, maps, and illustrations to bring that history and those writings to light.

Students and teachers will appreciate a number of features of *The Hebrew Bible: A Brief Socio-Literary Introduction*:

- **Suggested Bible readings** to accompany chapters 4–12 are prominently listed on the opening page of each chapter and can be made part of course reading assignments. If students will read major portions of the Pentateuch and Joshua through 2 Kings, they can refer to Tables 6.1, 6.2, III.1, 7.1, and 11.1 and (on the Web site) Web Tables G and H.
- **Readings from ancient Near Eastern literature** are also identified in correlation with each chapter, as indicated by Web Table A, keyed to collections by James B. Pritchard (*The Ancient Near East in Texts Related to the Old Testament*, 1969) and Walter Beyerlin (*Near Eastern Religious Texts Related to the Old Testament*, 1978).

- The **charts and diagrams** that made *The Hebrew Bible* such a valuable resource are presented here (and on the Web site) in clearer, more readable, and more colorful detail.
- **Numerous maps** have been prepared especially to orient the reader of this textbook to the world of the Bible. For more specific detail the opening pages of chapters 2 and 4–10 are keyed to the historical maps in Yohanan Aharoni et al., *The Carta Bible Atlas*, 4th ed. (Jerusalem: Carta, 2002).
- This abridged edition of *The Hebrew Bible* also contains **new bibliographical resources** that supplement and update the bibliography to the original edition. These include (1) select lists of further readings appended to each chapter, and at the end of the book, (2) a fuller chapter-by-chapter bibliography and (3) a topical bibliography treating subjects that cut across chapter divisions. These resources are also provided, along with the extensive bibliography to the 1985 edition, on the Web site.
- **The companion Web site (www.fortresspress.com/gottwald)** provides valuable resources both for teachers (a pre-made test, suggestions for one- and two-semester course syllabi, reading assignments, and a digital bank of maps, charts, and tables for classroom use) and for students (chapter summaries, study questions, and a guide to writing research papers). Teachers may obtain an electronic key to the test by writing to Pamela.Johnson@augzburgfortress.org.
- One of the great strengths of *The Hebrew Bible* is Professor Gottwald's correlation of historical, literary, social, and religious-theological spheres in ancient Israel. **Clear cross-references in the text** enable readers to pursue any of these "tracks" through the text; a key for instructors who wish to assign readings along these tracks is also available on the Web site.

We are grateful to Rebecca Kruger Gaudino and to Norman Gottwald for providing a clear and concise manuscript and to Zan Ceeley, Ann Delgehausen, and Beth Wright of Trio Bookworks for the exercise of their various talents in bringing this textbook to the light of day.

Neil Elliott
Fortress Press