



Friendship in the Hebrew Bible (The Anchor Yale Bible Reference Library)

Saul M. Olyan

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The first comprehensive study of friendship in the Hebrew Bible

Friendship, though a topic of considerable humanistic and cross disciplinary interest in contemporary scholarship, has been largely ignored by scholars of the Hebrew Bible, possibly because of its complexity and elusiveness. Filling a significant gap in our knowledge and understanding of biblical texts, Saul M. Olyan provides this original, accessible analysis of a key form of social relationship. In this thorough and compelling assessment, Olyan analyzes a wide range of texts, including prose narratives, prophetic materials, psalms, pre-Hellenistic wisdom collections, and the Hellenistic-era wisdom book Ben Sira. This in-depth, contextually sensitive, and theoretically engaged study explores how the expectations of friends and family members overlap and differ, examining, among other things, characteristics that make the friend a distinct social actor; failed friendship; and friendships in narratives such as those of Ruth and Naomi, and Jonathan and David. Olyan presents a comprehensive look at what constitutes friendship in the Hebrew Bible.

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