

The Original Torah: The Political Intent of the Bible's Writers

By S. David Sperling

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Is the Torah true? Do the five books of Moses provide an accurate historical account of the people of ancient Israel’s origins?

In **The Original Torah**, S. David Sperling argues that, while there is no archeological evidence to support much of the activity chronicled in the Torah, a historical reality exists there if we know how to seek it.

By noting the use of foreign words or mentions of technological innovations scholars can often pinpoint the date and place in which a text was written. Sperling examines the stories of the Torah against their historical and geographic backgrounds and arrives at a new conclusion: the tales of the Torah were originally composed as allegories whose purpose was distinctly and intentionally political.

The book illustrates how the authors of the Pentateuch advanced their political and religious agenda by attributing deeds of historical figures like Jeroboam and David to ancient allegorical characters like Abraham and Jacob. If “Abraham“ had made peace with Philistines, for example, then David could rely on a precedent to do likewise. **The Original Torah** provides a new interpretive key to the foundational document of both Judaism and Christianity.

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Editorial Review

Review

“The modern biblical interpreter . . . faces a daunting task in trying to unravel the intentions of the Torah's authors. S. does not retreat from the challenge.”
-*Theological Studies*

“An excellent and provocative read . . . challenges the reader to rethink previously held suppositions concerning biblical texts.“
-Carl S. Ehrlich,York University

“Likely to be the standard work on this subject for years to come, and to contribute to one of the most important debates in the history of the Jewish people, on the very nature of Israel and the Covenant.”
-James R. Russell,Harvard University

About the Author

S. David Sperling is Professor of Bible and Chair of the Faculty at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. Sperling is also the author of *Students of the Covenant*, and served as the consulting editor for the *Haftarah Commentary*.

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