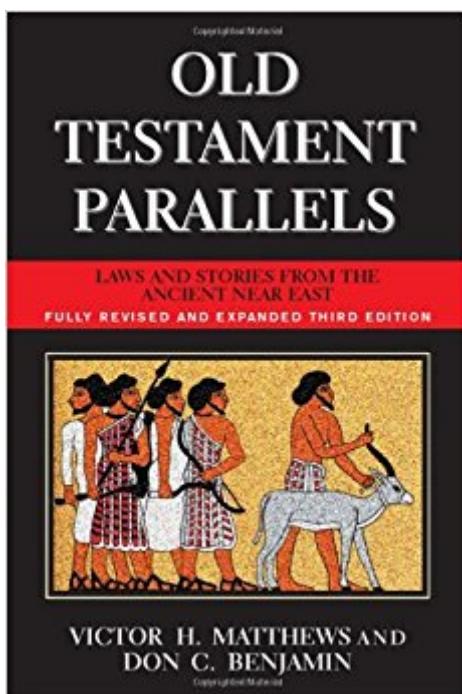


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Old Testament Parallels (New Revised And Expanded Third Edition): Laws And Stories From The Ancient Near East



Synopsis

An all-new translation of the most important ancient Near East documents that share parallel themes and issues with biblical stories.

Book Information

Paperback: 430 pages

Publisher: Paulist Press; 3 Rev Exp edition (January 1, 2007)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0809144352

ISBN-13: 978-0809144358

Product Dimensions: 6.1 x 0.9 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars 30 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #15,155 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #9 in Books > Law > Legal History #9 in Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Bible Study & Reference > Criticism & Interpretation > Old Testament #19 in Books > History > Middle East

Customer Reviews

This collection of Middle Eastern texts, which are analogs to parts of the Old Testament, is comprehensive, arranged in order according to the canonical text that each in some way parallels, and supplemented by notes that point out specific points in common and identify where the Middle Eastern text was found. This volume is an important and convenient supplement to the study of Hebrew scriptures which puts those scriptures in context and enables the reader to discover what is and what is not distinctive in Hebrew scripture. Essential. Copyright 1991 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

For the undergraduate student and for those engaged in private study, this is strongly recommended as an excellent introduction. -- Theological Book ReviewImportant, convenient, essential. -- Library JournalMatthews and Benjamin have done a fine job in sorting through what's accessible and explaining their relevance to Scripture. -- Religious Book Club NewsThe sourcebook of choice for undergraduate courses in the Old Testament. --Chris Hauer, Westminster College

This book provides translations of recovered tablets, etc. from the regions covered in the Old Testament and some in the New Testament, ranging from Babylon, Ur, Egypt, and others. The

words on those artifacts have parallels to Old Testament stories and doctrines, showing the cultural origins of such. Whenever there are parallels, the authors cite scriptural chapter and verse for the reader to locate the corresponding place in the Bible. As an example, in an Egyptian story from around 2300 B.C.E., a farmer uses the phrase that one should do to others as they would have done to themselves. I found that moral code, which parallels Jesus' words "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you," to be fascinating to learn of its antiquity. Another example is the doctrine in Ur that a man with a barren wife could choose to have a child by a servant, showing that the custom in Ur where Abram and Sarai were from, was followed when Abram took Hagar and she conceived a son, Ishmael. This book is mostly dry, however, and should be read by one who is knowledgeable of the Bible and who wishes to expand their knowledge.

Add this to your book collection for serious OT study. Wonderful arrangement of content, illustrations throughout provide good visual aids, this is a great addition to the OT collection. This book is a deep volume of relevant parallel stories which our most beloved OT literature probably originated or shared a common source with. No, this does not undermine "inspiration" of Scripture, rather it illuminates the world and context of the OT. A must have for a three dimensional look to OT Scriptures.

This book is an excellent compilation of non biblical texts organized by the books of the Bible they are supposed to be associated with. Individual lines and short segments are cross referenced with biblical verses or chapters. Sometimes these seem like a stretch, but the renderings of the ancient texts make this book very worthwhile.

If you want to read things that were written over 5,000 years ago, this is it. I know how scholars were able to translate Egyptian Hieroglyphics by using the Rosetta stone but I am puzzled by how they could translate cuneiform in all the dialects that used it. If you want to read about other creation stories, Flood stories, or just about how these ancient people thought about life and their gods, this is one I would highly recommend.

This is the type of book that is probably best used as a reference book, but worth reading through in its entirety. I thoroughly enjoyed reading through the "parallels", although in the majority of instances that word is used very loosely. As the authors make clear in their introduction: "There are genre parallels, motif parallels, social institution parallels, plot parallels, and parallels in historical

events."As you read through the text you will be treated to an introduction to each ancient document that usually discusses it's origin, date, and reason for its inclusion in the book. In addition to this, as you read through each selection you will be treated to referenced biblical texts for comparisons. Although the referenced biblical texts strewn throughout each ancient selection often seemed quite awkward when presented as parallels. I flipped open the book randomly and pulled up an example of this. This particular ancient text reads as follows:"Then I will travel with you to safe harbor, Then we shall live together forever" pg229The parallel text is Psalm 94:19 which reads as follows: "In the multitude of my thoughts within me thy comforts delight my soul." KJV.As you can see, I was left scratching my head as to how this was a parallel, but others are slightly more applicable, dealing with similar topics(ie: food, life, oxen, etc.) as we see in the biblical texts.Now to the primary topic, the stories/texts themselves! Many of these stories are thematically similar(ie: laments, poems, stories about brothers, laws against crimes, stories about barren women, etc.) to the biblical narratives, but often strikingly different in actual content and intent. The most notable exception to this is the flood story of Gilgamesh. However, this is difficult to determine if this is due to a common tradition of a real event, a borrowed tradition from one culture to another, or something else entirely. As the authors themselves make clear: "Establishing the correct connection between related biblical and non-biblical traditions is never easy. Simple solutions are generally misleading solutions." (Forward xiii).The most enjoyable parallels were those that demonstrated grammatical and stylistic similarities of the texts - it is a beautiful reminder that the Hebrew people were a real people, in the real world, who interacted with their cultural peers.That said, I learned quite a bit from this volume and I have accumulated a few pages of notes for further study.

If you ever wanted to understand where the Bible writers came up with all those fascinating stories, presented here are all the other near east's cultures stories in a clear precise order. Very well researched and easy for anyone to understand. I highly recommend it if you are at all interested in the Bible and its origins.

good

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