

## BOOK REVIEW

*JPS Guide: The Jewish Bible*, Project Editor Carol Huppig, Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2008, 291 pp. Reviewed by David J. Zucker.

The near 300-page *JPS Guide: The Jewish Bible* is filled with some excellent introductory articles and overviews, drawn primarily from previous JPS publications and authors, with some specially commissioned for this volume. The first two thirds consist of 16 chapters, which culminate in a chapter dedicated to Summaries of the Books of the Bible. The initial section covers a variety of subjects: What Is the Bible?, How the Bible Became "the Bible," The Matter of Gender in the JPS Torah Translation, Biblical Law, Biblical Poetry, the Prophets, the Wisdom Literature, Commentaries on the Bible, and Midrash. The next 55 pages are reference-based: a glossary, weights and measures, a timeline of biblical events, chronologies of the monarchies and the prophets, and maps, among other subjects. Finally, there are a list of recommended books and relevant websites, and an index.

Taken as a whole, there is a wealth of information here, attractively set out and generally well written. There is something for the person just entering the world of biblical study and for the scholar as well. This work is intended for both a Jewish and a non-Jewish readership. In the main, its tone reflects a modernist approach, recognizing, for example, the well-known major divisions by sources (J, E, D, P, and H; see the section on Methods of Bible Study, especially pp. 114-116). At the same time, it gives a nod to the more traditional view, as, for example, when presenting the Timeline of Biblical Events, where the dates, at least of the early period, "are based on the internal biblical chronology" (e.g., Ex. 12:40; see p. 251).

There are some regrettable errors in the book, which appear to have resulted from inadequate proofreading of the galleys prior to publication. In a chart on page 4, the Nevi'im (Prophets) spill over into the Ketuvim (Writings) section, listing Zechariah and Malachi as part of the latter group. On page 166, there are spelling mistakes, with Betael (sic), and Northdale (sic) instead of

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Betzalel and Northvale. On page 220, regarding Bilhah, there is a reference to the Twelve Ttribes (sic) of Israel.

These errors aside, this is a valuable book, offering a great deal of relevant and wide-ranging information for its readers.



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