

## NEW BOOKS: BRIEFLY NOTED

*Lashon Hakodesh: History, Holiness and Hebrew*, by Reuven Chaim Klein. Mosaica Press, 2014, 289 pp.

This book presents the traditional approach to the development of Hebrew and Aramaic, from Genesis to the modern era. Of particular interest to JBQ readers are the sections regarding the language that Adam spoke and how did he learn it, the language spoken prior to the Tower of Babel, the language spoken by the Israelites while in Egypt, the development of Hebrew script and possible Egyptian influences on Biblical names. The author is a frequent contributor to this journal, and as in his articles here, the book is meticulously researched with extensive footnotes and sources.

*The Jews and the Bible*, by Jean-Christophe Attias. Stanford University Press, 2015, 235 pp.

The relationship between the Bible and the Jewish people is more complicated than one might think. These relationships are explored in a nuanced way, from the traditional Jews who understand the Bible through the lens of the Oral Law, to the contemporary non-religious who still seek relevance in the Bible. Sections deal with the Jewish response to pagan, Christian and Muslim criticisms of the Bible, the use of the Bible by both religious and secular Zionists, and the various ways Jews relate to modern Bible Criticism.

*Berit Olam: Studies in Hebrew Narrative and Poetry – Isaiah 56 -66*, by Paul V. Niskanen. Liturgical Press, 2014, 108 pp.

Over the years, Biblical scholars have come to divide the Book of Isaiah first into two distinct units, and later into three. This volume focuses on Trito-Isaiah, understood to reflect a postexilic Judean context. It deals, chapter by chapter, with the themes found in this part of the Book of Isaiah. Within the general context of a new hope for the future, repopulating and rebuilding what was destroyed, individual chapters focus on specific ideas. Trito-Isaiah is also considered within the broader context of the Book of Isaiah as a literary whole.

*Jews and Anti-Judaism in Esther and the Church*, by Tricia Miller. James Clarke & Co., 2015, 210 pp.

The author is an academic Bible scholar who is currently a senior research analyst at CAMERA (the Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America), making this a unique work on Esther. The book traces the way Esther was interpreted through history; with particular emphasis on the anti-Jewish Christian approach that Esther demonstrates Jewish aggression. This is related to current anti-Zionist trends within Christianity that seek to negate the right of Israel to defend itself against those who seek its destruction.

*The Commentator's Bible: Deuteronomy*, Michael Carasik, editor. Jewish Publication Society, 2015, 296 pp.

The final volume of the new JPS "Mikraot Gedolot", where the Hebrew text is surrounded by both the new and old JPS translations and abridged (and sometimes revised) versions of the commentaries of Rashi, Rashbam, Ibn Ezra, Ramban and the questions of Abarbanel, along with some Additional Comments. A useful volume for those not fluent in Hebrew who want the experience of engaging with the Torah text and the traditional commentaries.

*The Bible on Location: Off the Beaten Path in Ancient and Modern Israel*, by Julie Baretz. Jewish Publication Society, 2015, 344 pp.

A guidebook to 21 Biblical sites in Israel by a veteran Israeli tour guide. The book is arranged in chronological order, covering the period of the books of the Prophets and Writings, beginning with Jericho (Joshua 2 and 6) and ending in Jerusalem (Ezra 8-10, Nehemiah 2 and 4), with an emphasis on places not normally visited on organized tours, such as Geshur (2 Samuel 13) and Shunem (2 Kings 4). Each site description contains the relevant verses from the Bible, historical and archaeological information, the author's lively commentary, maps and technical information regarding how to get to the sites. This paperback is ideal for visitors, and is also appropriate for those who want to learn about the places where the Biblical narratives took place from the comfort of their home.