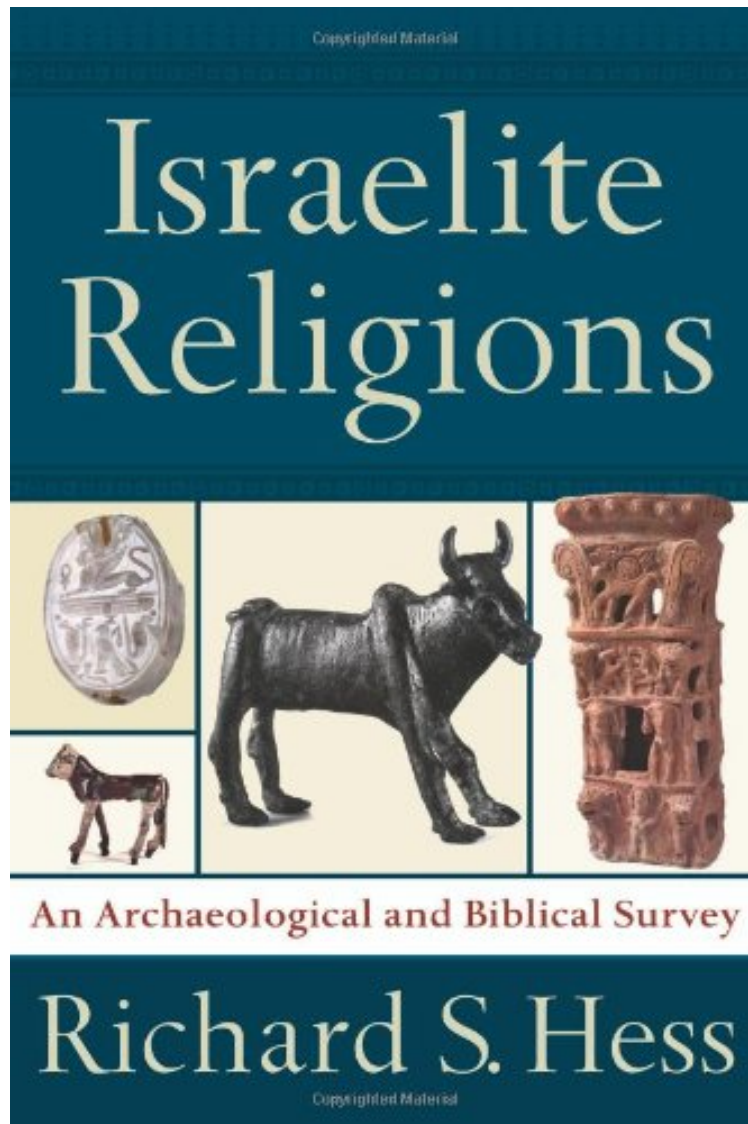


Israelite Religions: An Archaeological and Biblical Survey

Richard S. Hess

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Richard S. Hess : Israelite Religions: An Archaeological and Biblical Survey before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Israelite Religions: An Archaeological and Biblical Survey:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Good Resource BookBy JuliaHelpful for my Old Testament Classes in Seminary. Good Resource2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Lots of good infoBy SedesGobhaniThis author understands ANE culture very well and it shows. Also it was very easy to read. I enjoyed it.5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Important conservative study on Israelite religionBy E. L. BessThe usefulness of Hess's book for me was its copious archeological data and summaries of several approaches to and scholarly views of the

bible throughout the past century or so. Hess's main approach is to combine ancient textual and material-cultural data with the bible, with an emphasis on the antiquity of the biblical traditions. He fortunately avoids theological considerations about deviations from some idea of a 'normative' Israelite religion and instead focuses on descriptions of various religious practices in Israel. This makes for tedious reading at times with the sheer number of data he lists and summarizes. The pieces on other ancient religious texts and material culture outside of Israel was helpful for putting Israelite religion/s in perspective. Some of the biblical and evidence comparisons seem vague and superficial sometimes though. I would have also liked to see Hess tackle the question of the development of Yahweh-alone theology in depth. He avoids it, mentioning the work of Tigay several times, by merely suggesting Yahweh-alone theology seems to have appeared very early in Israelite history. The work overall is quality with a conservative bent, and I will continue to use it in my studies, especially for its mine of data, its summaries, not to mention its huge bibliography.

Archaeological excavation in the Holy Land has exploded with the resurgence of interest in the historical roots of the biblical Israelites. *Israelite Religions* offers Bible students and interested lay leaders a survey of the major issues and approaches that constitute the study of ancient Israelite religion. Unique among other books on the subject, *Israelite Religions* takes the Bible seriously as a historical source, balancing the biblical material with relevant evidence from archaeological finds.

From the Inside Flap "Richard S. Hess, well known for his numerous studies in biblical and ancient Near Eastern topics, now brings his extensive knowledge to bear on 'Israelite religions.' The plural form of the title is decisive: everywhere the accent is on the pluriformity and complexity of Israelite religion(s) in various periods and locales. The subtitle is equally critical: Hess surveys an immense array of biblical and archaeological data both judiciously and economically. Throughout the book, Hess's attention to what may be unique or distinctive about Israelite religion(s) vis--vis its cultural congeners is instructive. Moreover, his care to define key terms, his correlation of textual and artifactual material, his awareness of the relationship of Israelite religion to biblical theology, as well as his trademark skill in onomastics--not to mention the useful and extensive bibliography--are among the aspects that make the present book not only welcome but also essential reading on the subject."--Brent A. Strawn, associate professor of Old Testament, Candler School of Theology and Graduate Division of Religion, Emory University "Richard Hess's book on Israelite religions displays impressive knowledge of their archaeological and ancient Near Eastern background as well as of the modern scholarly literature (over one thousand items in the bibliography!). Even those who will question some of Hess's more conservative conclusions will learn much from this fascinating volume."--John Day, professor of Old Testament studies, Oxford University "Echoing the works of William Foxwell Albright and Cyrus Gordon, Richard Hess's new book on Israelite religion offers a survey of Israelite religion fundamentally based on the framework and claims of the Bible and informed by archaeological evidence and extrabiblical texts. The book provides a clear, conservative treatment of this material from the Middle and Late Bronze Age down through the demise of Judah in 586. To the scholarly discussion of these sources, Hess adds his own expertise, particularly in Bronze Age texts. The field now has a general treatment of Israelite religion produced by a scholar with a strong faith in the Bible's veracity. Even if readers do not share Hess's strong trust in either the Bible's historical claims or his high dating for many biblical texts and traditions, this volume nonetheless presents a good listing of research."--Mark S. Smith, Skirball Professor of Bible and Ancient Near Eastern Studies, New York University

From the Back Cover "Having dedicated the last fifty years, full-time, to the study of the Bible and archaeology, I found Richard Hess's *Israelite Religions* a veritable tour de force. Not only is it a remarkably inclusive review of major issues in our field, but it also presents a well-informed critique of these matters. This comprehensive study attests to the broad erudition of the author and his unusual ability to communicate recondite material in an intelligible manner. This book will serve as an extraordinary resource for a long time; the bibliography alone makes it invaluable. Hess's control of both ancient and modern languages, as well as anthropology and archaeology, enhances the value of his lucid presentation."--Philip J. King, professor emeritus of biblical studies, Boston College "This new study by Richard Hess is a scrupulously detailed analysis of the most relevant research on the history of ancient Israel. The author has given ample attention to the main views and approaches to the subject. However, this is more than a review of the current state of the art. Professor Hess gives his own interpretation of the evidence, literary and archaeological. The result is a balanced, thoughtful presentation of the religion(s) of ancient Israel as he sees it (them). Every scholar and advanced student will want to use this erudite but clearly written essay on the religion of ancient Israel."--Anson F. Rainey, emeritus professor of ancient Near Eastern cultures and Semitic linguistics, Tel Aviv University; adjunct professor of historical geography, Bar Ilan University "Writing from a tradition with high regard for what the Bible knows about ancient Israel, Richard Hess puts Scripture in dialogue with the full range of evidence for Israel's religious life. In a lucid, accessible text for students, Hess also pushes forward a crucial conversation among scholars about the Bible and the ancient world."--Daniel E. Fleming, professor of Hebrew and Judaic Studies, New York University

About the Author Richard S. Hess (PhD, Hebrew Union College) is professor of Old Testament at Denver Seminary. He is the

author or editor of a dozen titles, including *Israel's Messiah in the Bible and the Dead Sea Scrolls* and commentaries on the *Song of Songs* and *Joshua*.