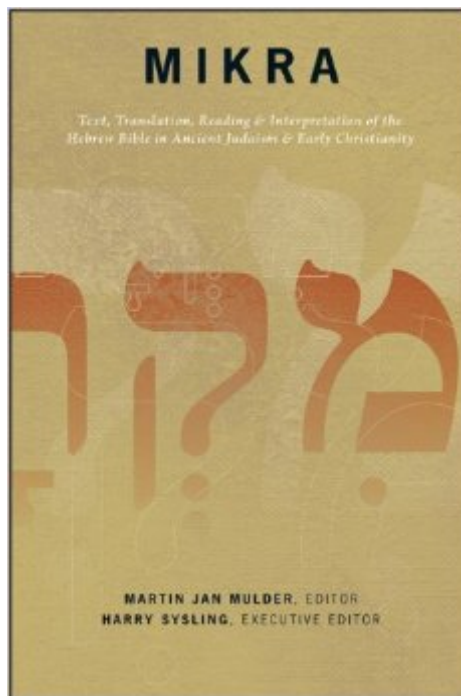


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Mikra: Text, Translation, Reading And Interpretation Of The Hebrew Bible In Ancient Judaism And Early Christianity



Synopsis

The term "Mikra" is frequently used interchangeably with "Bible" and "Holy Scripture." Nevertheless the term carries more freight, for it means "the way in which the text has always been and ought to be recited and understood by those who have been closely connected with the texts." The many scholars, all specialists in their fields, who contribute to this expansive volume elucidate the many translations and interpretations of the texts from the formation of the canon, through the Greek and Aramaic translations, the Samaritans, the Rabbis, the New Testament writers, the Latin translations, and the early Christian fathers.

Book Information

Paperback: 956 pages

Publisher: Baker Academic (March 1, 2004)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0801047234

ISBN-13: 978-0801047237

Product Dimensions: 6.1 x 1.6 x 8.9 inches

Shipping Weight: 2.4 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

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This volume, edited by Martin Mulder and Harry Sysling, is a priceless collection of studies written by biblical scholars on the Hebrew Bible (Mikra). Anyone interested in the Mikra should have this volume in his/her library. It covers the whole spectrum of topics under the book's subheading "text, translation, reading and interpretation." Each study is well written and very thorough with references, bibliography and occasional illustrations or photographs. The first several articles deal mostly with the biblical text itself, from the alphabet, writing system, literacy in the ancient world, scribal practices, reading cycles, versions of the text, textual transmission to canonization of the text and formation of the Hebrew Bible. Then, the focus shifts to discussing various methods of interpretation of the text of the Hebrew Bible across time and by various groups. This ranges from biblical interpretation at Qumran to biblical interpretation as attested in Rabbinic literature, in writings of

Josephus and Philo, to biblical interpretation by Gnostics and Early Christians, to name a few. The list is simply too long, but it provides probably the most thorough coverage of the topic to be found in a single volume. The beauty of this volume is not only the depth and breadth with which it covers the Hebrew Bible, but also in the fact that the articles, while arranged in a logical order, are independent of each other. Thus one can pick up virtually anywhere in the book and read the topic he or she is interested in without having to read the preceding chapters. However, with that said, the articles are well written and should be accessible to both scholars and laymen alike. So the reader will certainly be edified by reading just about any article in the book.

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