



Religions

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Special Issue Reprint

The Bible and Ancient Mesopotamia

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One of the most vibrant fields of current biblical research is the investigation of the relationships between Sumerian, Babylonian, and Assyrian theological speculation and literary and scientific practice with Hebrew biblical textuality, including the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha. Alongside this focus on the biblical text, the research encompasses how Mesopotamian culture affected Judean modes of intellectual enquiry and the worldview that they produced. In the era of the Mesopotamian domination of Syro-Palestine, and particularly during the exile, Judean intellectuals—the scribal community—were exposed to Mesopotamian epistemology. By marked contrast, the impact of Mesopotamian theological conceptions and rhetorical devices on the writers of the New Testament has received little attention. However, recognition is growing of the fact that substantial portions of the New Testament display an imprint of ideas that originated beyond the Roman Empire's eastern borders. This Reprint contains essays by eleven distinguished scholars working in different fields of this cross-disciplinary space, from archaeology and art history to philology and literary criticism and theology, and from Old Assyrian epistolary texts and the Amarna letters to Enochic Judaism and the Gospels. Each contributor was invited to showcase fresh research in their areas of study. The resulting collection attests to the extraordinary breadth and depth of current research in the Bible's relationship with ancient Mesopotamia.



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