



King David

Sacred and Secular in Bible Times

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DESCRIPTION:

The Bible contains many doublets: conflicting accounts of the same event. These are a challenge to faith: if the Bible is the Word of God, how can it differ from itself? It was proposed that the first five books of the Old Testament were formed from combining four source texts, each of them without contradictions. But scholars have argued endlessly over the details, and in any case, there are doublets in the other books of the Bible. How to deal with all of them?

This book regards the Bible as words of men about God, and sees the doublets as evidence of growth over time, as an early opinion is superseded by a later one. On this view, the doublets are not the problem, they are the answer: they show the growth of doctrine and opinion as the Biblical centuries pass.

That approach is supplemented by a new statistical test of stylistic difference, which can suggest, on objective grounds, which Biblical passages might be, and which could not be, by the same writer. Both Canaanite and Hebrew traditions are noticed, and tendencies common to all the antiquities, such as urbanization, law, and the new legal status of women, are given due attention.

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