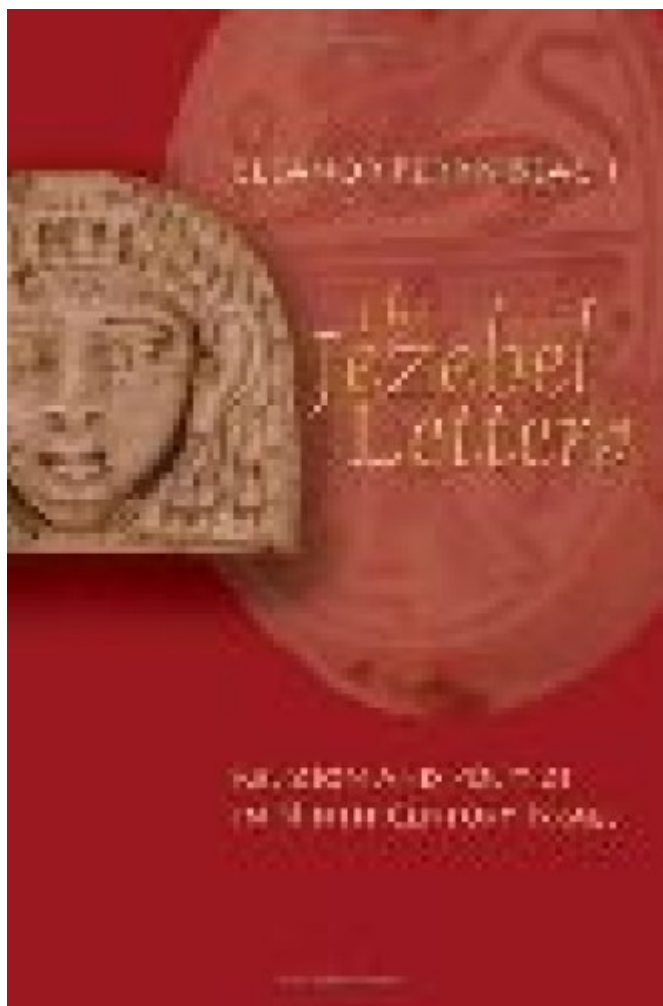


# Take and read

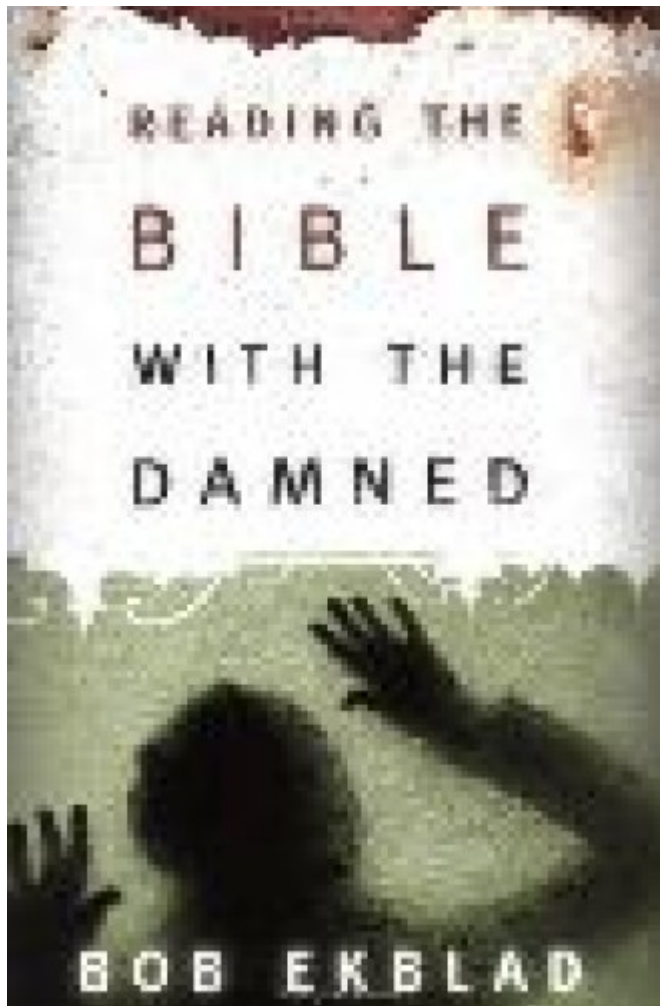
selected by [Walter Brueggemann](#) in the [May 30, 2006](#) issue

## In Review



### **The Jezebel Letters: Religion and Politics in Ninth-Century Israel**

Eleanor Ferris Beach  
Fortress



## **Reading the Bible with the Damned**

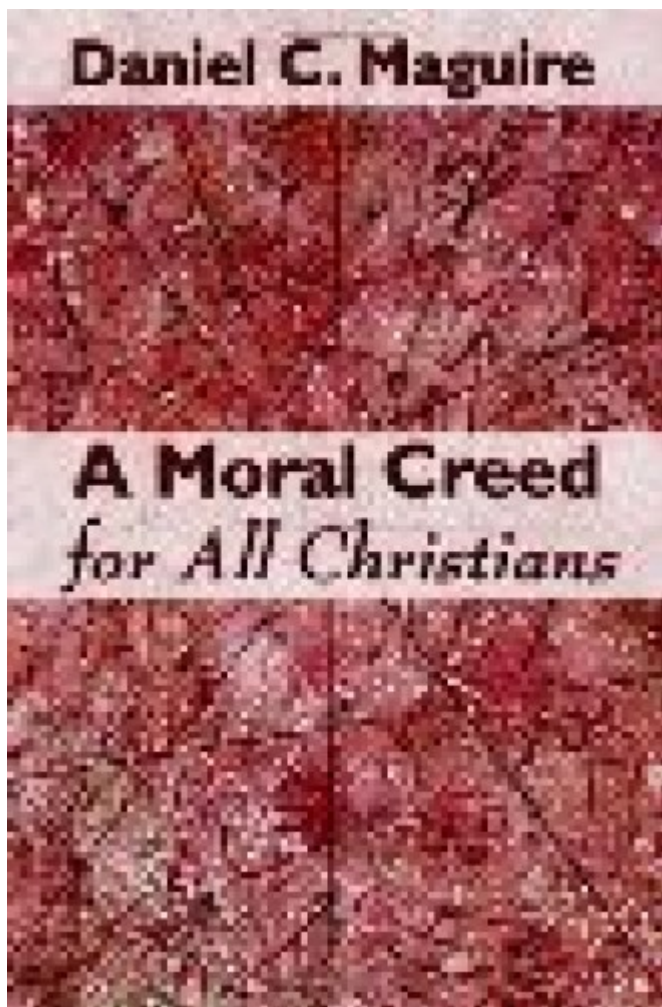
Bob Ekblad



## **Song of Songs**

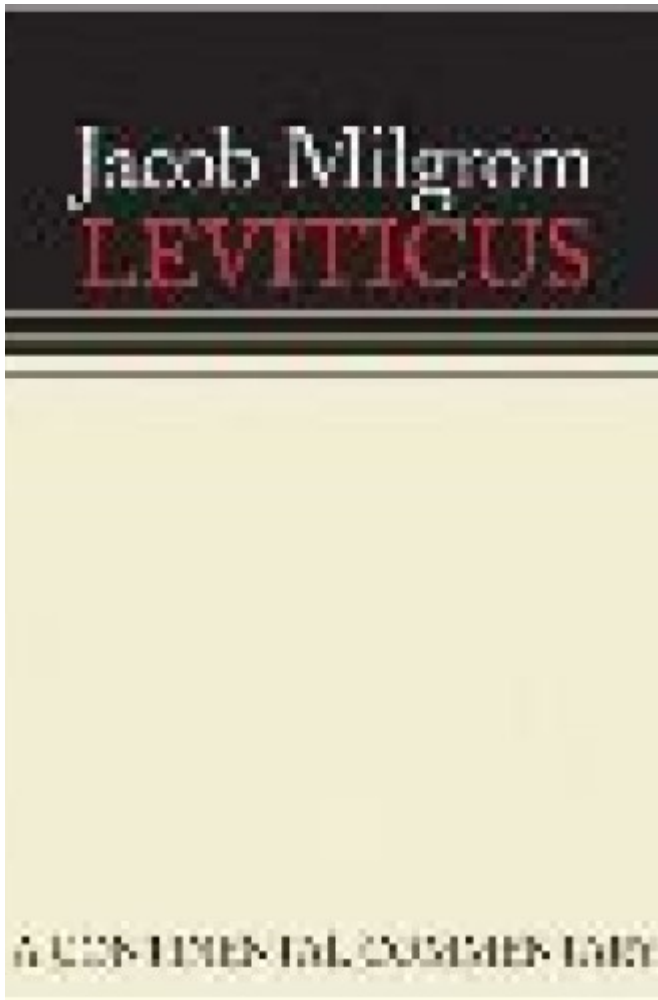
J. Cheryl Exum

Westminster John Knox



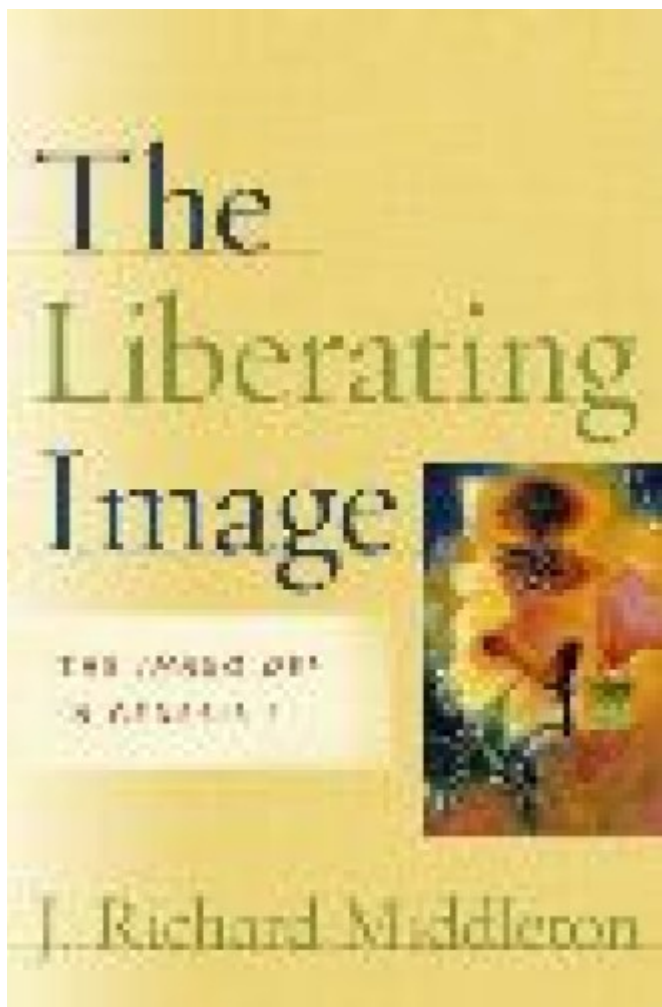
## **A Moral Creed for all Christians**

Daniel C. Maguire  
Fortress



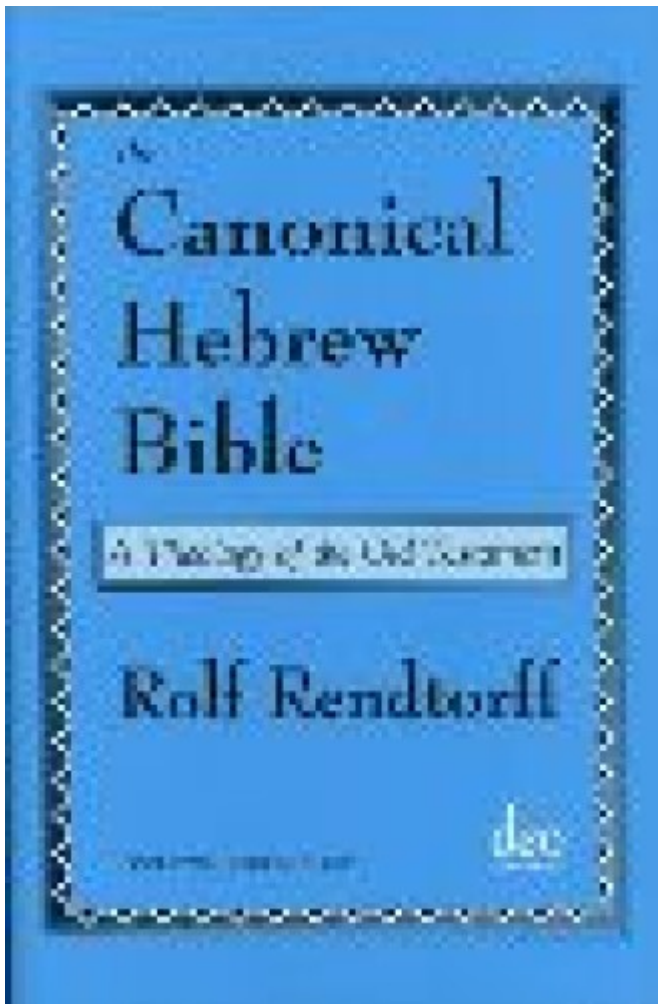
## **Leviticus: A Book of Ritual and Ethics**

Jacob Milgrom  
Fortress



## **The Liberating Image: The Imago Dei in Genesis 1**

J. Richard Middleton  
Brazos



## **The Canonical Hebrew Bible: A Theology of the Old Testament**

Rolf Rendtorff

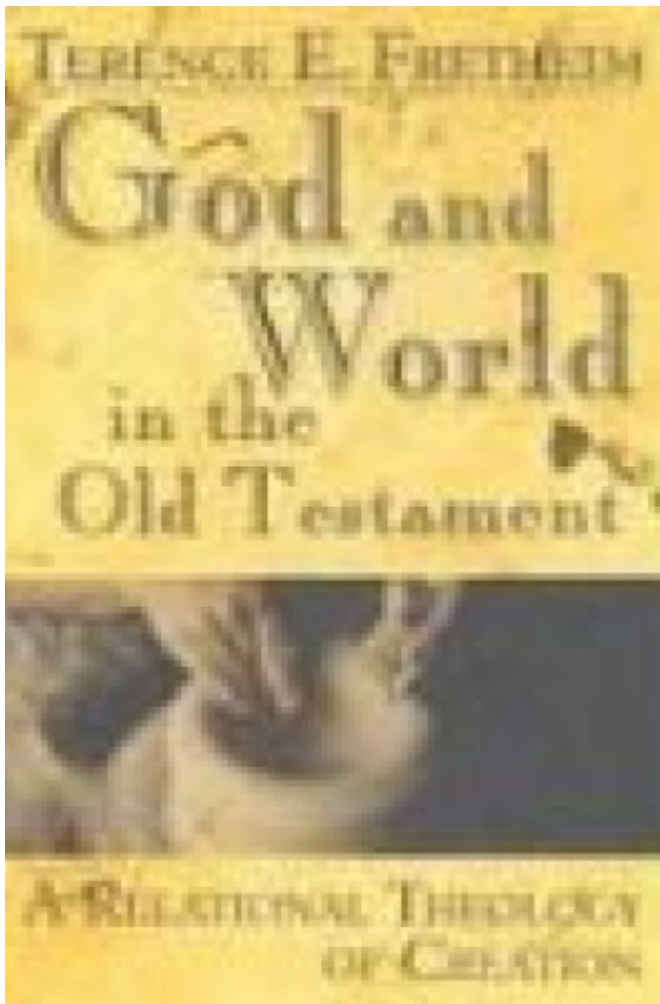
Deo



## **Making Wise the Simple: The Torah in Christian Faith and Practice**

Johanna W. H. van Wijk-Bos  
Eerdmans





## **God and World in the Old Testament: A Relational Theology of Creation**

Terence E. Fretheim  
Abingdon

With a clever convergence of biblical texts, ancient Near Eastern literature, archaeology, and fictive imagination that is not fictitious, Beach weaves a new account of Jezebel and Ahab from the perspective of Jezebel. In addition to offering stimulating entertainment, the book invites us to notice how our taken-for-granted biblical narrative is partisan and lacking in innocence.

Ekblad practices ministry among the marginalized and disinherited. He brings the biblical text to that work; but he also reads back from his ministry to the text. In moving both ways between text and ministry, he raises difficult and large questions that require faith in response. The book breaks apart our usual categories of

interpretation and lets texts speak afresh.

Exum has written a remarkable commentary on a difficult text with shrewdness and a deep sense of the text's subtlety. She focuses on the "construction of desire" given to us in delicate, artistic form. As an exercise in hermeneutics, the book is especially important in a consumer culture that is endlessly constructing desire and reducing love to a commodity.

A world-class scholar in biblical theology, Fretheim brings together his immense learning and interpretive imagination to summarize the testimony of creation theology that permeates the Old Testament. This is the most important book I have read this year; with this book the move away from a "God's mighty deeds in history" interpretive model is complete. The new paradigm of creation theology invites new work on many fronts.

Maguire offers a biblically grounded ethic for public power. While not a scripture scholar, he is attuned to the claims of the text. His pages on the eight marks of prophecy are worth the price of the book.

The most learned interpreter of the priestly traditions of the Hebrew Bible, Milgrom offers an accessible commentary on the most forbidding book of the Bible. Attention to Milgrom's scholarship is essential to Jewish-Christian rapprochement and recovery of the holiness traditions, and study of these texts is urgent given the culture wars in the church, which are all about holiness. Milgrom is a reliable guide for that study.

Middleton explores the crucial theological metaphor of the image of God, probing into its ancient Near Eastern roots and carrying the discussion toward poignant consideration of contemporary ethical issues. The metaphor is crucial for issues in both sexuality and environmental responsibility. Middleton does much of the preparatory work for new interpretive initiatives.

Rendtorff is the most senior German theological interpreter of the Old Testament, heir to the work of Gerhard von Rad. In this work he summarizes his lengthy, reflective study on the Old Testament, utilizing von Rad's categories and moving well beyond them. Of special note is his long-term engagement with Jewish scholars. The book is accessible and comprehensive, reflecting the efforts of an authoritative teacher and interpreter.

Wijk-Bos offers an interpretation of the biblical Torah that is accessible, critically informed and theologically sensitive. The book's pastoral point is that Christians

have much to unlearn about Judaism, Jewish tradition and the Old Testament; the author makes particular reference to Christian caricatures of "Jewish law." Her conclusions concerning Jesus and Paul in relation to the Torah are of special interest and merit careful study.