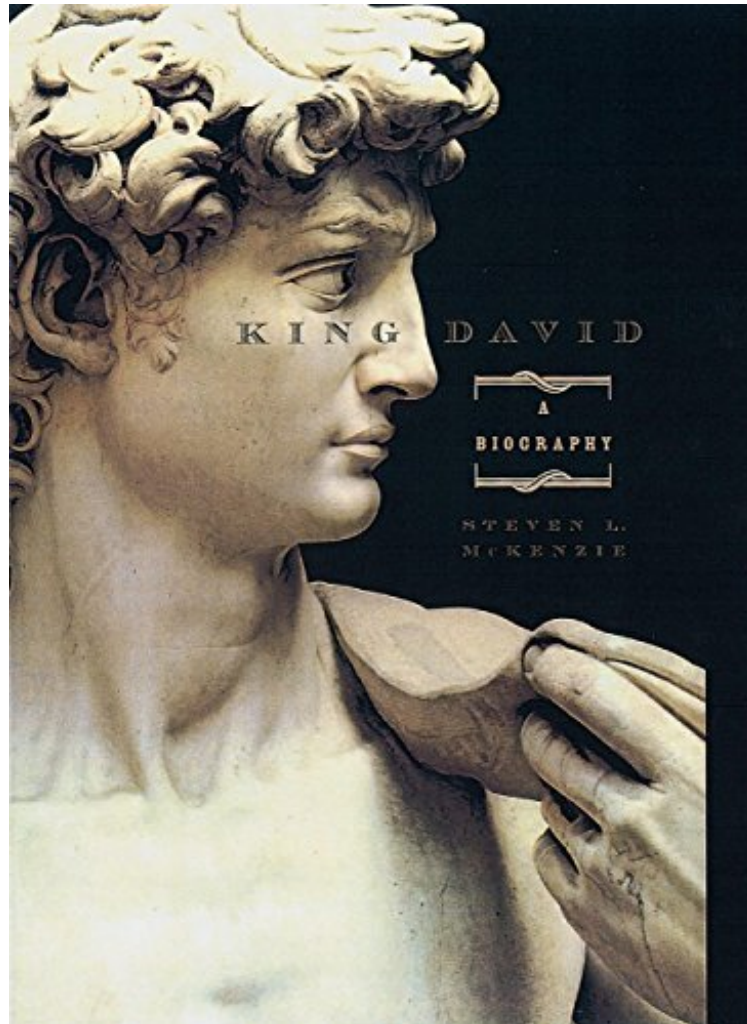


(Read free) King David: A Biography

King David: A Biography

Von Steven L. McKenzie

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Von Steven L. McKenzie : King David: A Biography before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised King David: A Biography:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen1 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. A hellion after my own heart!Von Charles S. HouserArguably, the three great stories of the Bible are the stories of Moses, King David, and Jesus. While some of the stories in Genesis may be easier for the average person to recount (loosely) from memory, the story of King David gets more ink from the biblical authors. With the publication of KING DAVID: A BIOGRAPHY by Steven McKenzie and THE DAVID STORY by Robert Alter, it looks like Israel's great king might finally be getting his due recognition (vis-a-vis Moses and Jesus, anyway). "Part of the appeal of the David story," says McKenzie, "has been the earthiness of its plot. It reads like a modern soap opera with plenty of sex,

violence, and struggles for power. The relationships are intricate." David's story (found primarily in 1 & 2 Samuel) reads like a season of "Dallas" and has inspired modern classics by the likes of William Faulkner and Joseph Heller. Anyone who works in an office, a government agency, or university is more likely to identify with David--or one of the secondary characters in his narrative--than they would with Jesus. David is as guileful as Jesus was guileless. In spite of his modest claim to be offering nothing new, McKenzie has accomplished an amazing feat. He has organized, presented, evaluated, and summarized recent biblical scholarship on the David story. He also discusses the scant, but intriguing, archaeological evidence of David's reign. He is not dismissive of the biblical record, but he deftly helps the average reader to understand the kind of reasonable skepticism that scholars have had to adopt in order to extract a plausible portrait of David from all the spin-doctoring the biblical authors and editors have put on the events they describe. The economy and clarity of McKenzie's prose and the relentless rationality of his argumentation is gripping and persuasive. He explains why scholars find certain texts "apologetic" and others more likely to reflect events as they might actually have occurred. McKenzie takes each major phase of David's career and methodically creates a portrait of the man. Each chapter ends with a short summary, so the reader has a second chance to decide for him or herself if the emerging portrait is credible. I found McKenzie's discussion of David's confrontation with Goliath and his brief, revisionist portrait of Bathsheba especially fascinating. The extensive bibliography directs the ambitious reader to works of primary scholarship (mostly in English) and to other literary treatments of the David story. To get the most out of this book, take McKenzie's suggestion and read or re-read the biblical texts first.

0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Excellent blend of historical writing and historical method
Von Robert E. Helmerichs
McKenzie has done a remarkable job of writing a biography of a man for whom the only substantial source, the Bible, was written long after the fact with a specific agenda. Through a careful, critical reading of the Biblical accounts of David's life, McKenzie is able to recover a surprising amount of historical information, and his arguments are generally quite sound. Although as he admits himself he is only able to create a "plausible tale," the tale is plausible indeed, and as a very pleasant bonus, the style of the book is very accessible and readable. I'm not familiar with Davidic scholarship, but McKenzie's biography seems to be squarely in the mainstream. It stands both as a splendid book in its own right, and also as an excellent exercise in historical method, when dealing with extremely difficult sources.

0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Long live the king!
Von Alberto S. VMagnificent book about historical facts. Mr. McKenzie knows very well the biblical character and try to do a complete study of the man, not the king, not the saint. It must be controversial for the people who believes every word of the Bible. But, McKenzie is not a destroyer of the Faith. He is a writer, a student of the biblical figures, and try to explain the history of a dark period in the humanity past. After read this book, king David grows up in our minds like a political leader. A great book for christians and jews. An excellent book for history students.

KurzbeschreibungOne of the most important and complex characters in the Bible, King David has been the subject of innumerable portraits, both artistic and literary. Michaelangelo's magnificent sculpture of him is perhaps the single best known work of art in the world, and the story of the humble shepherd who slew Goliath and became king has assumed a powerful mythological status. But was David a real person--and if so what kind of person was he? Through a close and critical reading of biblical texts, ancient history, and recent archeological discoveries, Steven L. McKenzie concludes that David was indeed a real person. This David, however, was no hero but a usurper, adulterer, and murderer--a Middle Eastern despot of a familiar type. McKenzie shows that the story of humble beginnings is utterly misleading: "shepherd" is a metaphor for "king," and David came from a wealthy, upper-class background. Similarly, McKenzie reveals how David's ascent to power, traditionally attributed to popularity and divine blessing, in fact resulted from a campaign of terror and assassination. While instituting a full-blown Middle Eastern monarchy, David was an aggressive leader, a devious politician, and a ruthless war chief. Throughout his scandalous reign, important figures who stood in his way died at convenient times, under questionable circumstances. Even his own sons were not spared. David's story, writes McKenzie, "reads like a modern soap opera, with plenty of sex, violence, and struggles for power." Carefully researched and vividly written, *King David: An Unauthorized Biography* offers a provocative reappraisal of the life of one of the Bible's most compelling figures.

deKing David: A Biography is a revisionist account of a life that has been viewed as heroic throughout history. Taking a stance against this traditional view, Hebrew scholar Steven L. McKenzie maintains that David was in fact tyrannical to the bone. Thus, McKenzie's version of the David story "reads like a modern soap opera, with plenty of sex, violence, and struggles for power." McKenzie's arguments are based on ancient inscriptions and archaeological artifacts that shed light on the biblical stories of David's reign--and on the Bible stories themselves. (Throughout the book, McKenzie also refers to the many poems, plays, novels, paintings, and sculptures that have helped shape David's reputation.) The key to McKenzie's argument is the apologetic tone of the biblical David stories, which he traces with enthusiastic rigor. McKenzie explains: "The fact that the author felt the need to try to explain the motives behind David's deeds indicates that those deeds were widely believed to have occurred. An author would not invent accusations against David--such as that he

once served as a mercenary to the Philistines--just to try to explain them away." In other words, McKenzie believes that the Bible's misrepresentation of King David's despotic reign is the best evidence that the Bible is historically reliable. It's a somewhat contorted argument, but it has been the consensus among Hebrew scholars for some time. McKenzie has done readers a great service by writing an accessible version of this important academic theory so that lay readers will be better equipped to judge David's reputation for themselves. --Michael Joseph Gross

Pressestimmen McKenzie is little short of brilliant. The New York Times Book A provocative look at a complex biblical figure... McKenzie uses biblical texts and recent archaeological discoveries to paint a searing portrait of the 'real' King David. The Sunday Star-Ledger [A] remarkable book... McKenzie brings to bear all the analytical tools of the modern historian... We see a darker and more realistic David and a more troubling biblical history... McKenzie's portrait of David is both convincing and disturbing. Bible Mckenzie... uses historical analysis of the texts, augmented by archaeology and the immense body of scholarship about the ancient Middle East, to create a plausible real-life portrait of the figure who gets more space in the Bible than anybody, Moses and Jesus included... A spirited analysis. The Fayetteville Observer The conventional, laudatory image of David as a simple shepherd boy who courageously slew Goliath and rose to become Israel's greatest king despite some human failings is disputed by McKenzie. Publishers Weekly