

AMNON BAZAK

MAGGID TANAKH COMPANIONS



RABBI AMNON BAZAK is an instructor (*ram*) at Yeshivat Har Etzion in Alon Shevut, Israel, and a lecturer in Bible and Oral Law at Herzog College. In addition to many articles in the fields of Halakha, Talmud, and Tanakh, he is the author of several Hebrew books, including *I Samuel: A King in Israel*, *II Samuel: The Kingdom of David*, and *Point of Departure: Studies in the Weekly Parasha*.

"A much-needed and a magisterial account of contemporary biblical scholarship from an Orthodox perspective, impressive equally in depth and scope and destined to become a standard work in the field."

Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks

Since the Enlightenment, Bible scholars have been divided into two groups: those who believe in the sanctity and divine origin of the text, and those who relate to the Bible as a literary creation of human origin. In recent years, as many *yeshivot* – especially in Israel – have re-embraced serious Tanakh study, rabbis and scholars have engaged in a deep and serious confrontation with critical academic approaches. This confrontation has generated new tools of analysis and fascinating syntheses between scientific methods and traditional approaches to interpretation. In consequence, we are now experiencing a flourishing of creative, meaningful, and reverent Tanakh scholarship, the likes of which has not been seen in many years.

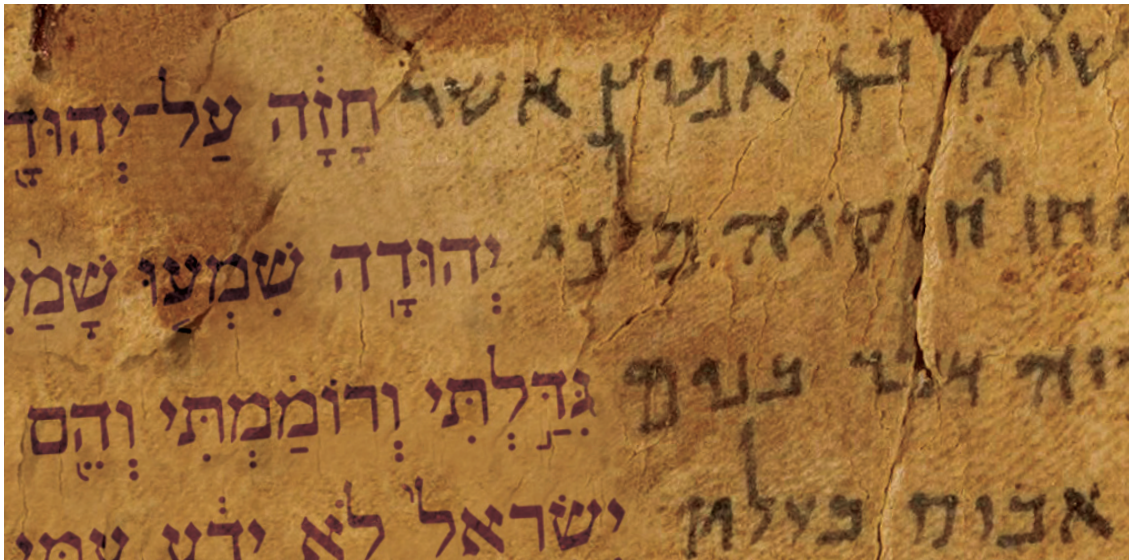
In *To This Very Day*, Rabbi Amnon Bazak, a leading figure in the contemporary renaissance of Tanakh study, offers a sophisticated understanding of Tanakh rooted in a firm belief in its sanctity. Setting forth with great clarity the range of issues that need to be addressed, he provides detailed and organized responses that are striking in their erudition and penetration. These topics include: the composition of biblical books, the contradictions found in legal and narrative sections, the findings of archaeology and our knowledge of the ancient Near East, the *peshat-derash* relationship, and the sins of biblical characters. This book is a must-have for students of the Bible on every level, and especially for people of faith who are looking to grapple in a deep and honest way with fundamental questions regarding Judaism's foundational text.

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BAZAK
TO THIS VERY DAY
FUNDAMENTAL QUESTIONS IN BIBLE STUDY



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IN BIBLE STUDY

The return to in-depth study of the plain text has naturally brought in its wake new challenges. In the past, the religious world dismissed questions of biblical criticism out of hand, either because of the non-Jewish origins of these questions, or because religious Jews were not heavily immersed in studying the *peshat* of Tanakh. For the last two hundred years or so, academic Bible scholarship has proposed views that are inconsistent with traditional Jewish belief. Biblical scholars who did not have a religious worldview took for granted that the Tanakh was a human document with no divine or prophetic source. This starting point was grounded in several different areas, including literary analysis of the text, archaeological discoveries, and the growing body of knowledge on the ancient Near East. In-depth study of the plain text has brought these questions to the fore and demanded clearer answers than those that might have sufficed in the past. . . . How, then, should one respond to the complex questions raised by close textual reading, by new methodology, and by recent discoveries? The recent changes demand a more in-depth examination of the basic assumptions of the academic world, and rabbis and thinkers have risen to the challenge.

(From the Introduction)