

According to the well-known story in Genesis 11, the LORD saw the Tower of Babel under construction and said, "Come, let us go down, and confuse their language there, so that they will not understand one another's speech" (Gen 11:7, NRSV). In generation after succeeding generation, students of the Bible have had reason to regret the confusion of languages in the biblical world and the ancient Near East.

*Beyond Babel* helps to ease the pain of such students by providing a general introduction to and overview of the languages that are significant for the study of the Hebrew Bible and ancient Israel. Included are essays on Biblical and inscriptional Hebrew; Akkadian; Northwest Semitic dialects (Ammonite, Edomite, and Moabite); Arabic; Aramaic; Egyptian; Hittite; Phoenician; Post-biblical Hebrew; and Ugaritic.

Each chapter in the volume shares a common format, including an overview of the language, a discussion of its significance for the Hebrew Bible, and a list of ancient sources and modern resources for further study of the language. The contributors are Peggy L. Day, Frederick E. Greenspahn, Jo Ann Hackett, Harry A. Hoffner, Jr., John Kaltner, Charles R. Krahmalkov, Baruch A. Levine, David Marcus, Simon B. Parker, and Donald B. Redford. A general introduction by John Huehnergard discusses the importance of the study of Near Eastern languages for biblical scholarship, helping to make the volume an ideal resource for persons beginning an in-depth study of the Hebrew Bible.