



Making Men: The Male Coming-of-Age Theme in the Hebrew Bible

Stephen Wilson

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Making Men identifies and elaborates on a theme in the Hebrew Bible that has largely gone unnoticed by scholars--the transition of a male adolescent from boyhood to manhood. Wilson locates five examples of the male coming-of-age theme in the Hebrew Bible. The protagonists of these stories include the well-known biblical heroes Moses, Samuel, David, and Solomon. He also reveals the existence of a narrative theme of failing to mature to manhood, exemplified in the tales of Samson and Gideon's son Jether.

Beyond identifying the coming-of-age theme, Wilson describes how the theme is employed by biblical narrators and redactors to highlight broader messages and transitions in the historical narratives of the Hebrew Bible. He additionally considers how these stories provide unique insight into the varying representations of biblical masculinity and how the ideals associated with manhood can change dramatically over time.

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