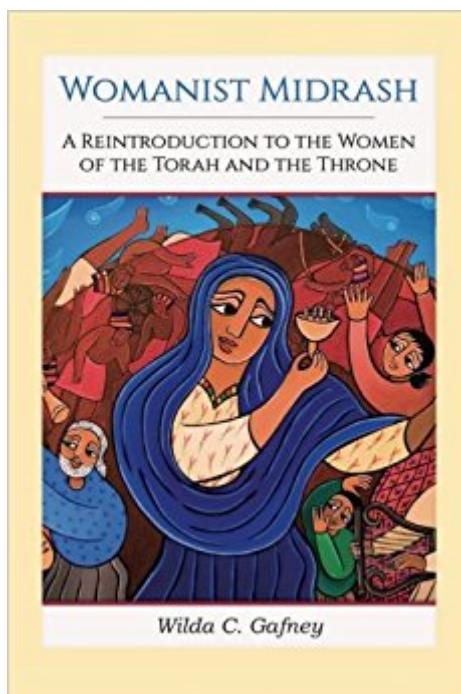


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Womanist Midrash: A Reintroduction To The Women Of The Torah And The Throne



Synopsis

Womanist Midrash is an in-depth and creative exploration of the well- and lesser-known women of the Hebrew Scriptures. Using her own translations, Gafney offers a midrashic interpretation of the biblical text that is rooted in the African American preaching tradition to tell the stories of a variety of female characters, many of whom are often overlooked and nameless. Gafney employs a solid understanding of womanist and feminist approaches to biblical interpretation and the sociohistorical culture of the ancient Near East. This unique and imaginative work that is grounded in serious scholarship will expand conversations about feminist and womanist biblical interpretation.

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Customer Reviews

Wil Gafney is Associate Professor of Hebrew Bible at Brite Divinity School in Fort Worth, Texas. She is the author of *Daughters of Miriam: Women Prophets in Ancient Israel* and coeditor of *The People's Bible* and *The People's Companion to the Bible*. Visit his website at wilgafney.com.

Dr. Gafney is a superb Hebrew Bible/Old Testament biblical scholar. Her work is always on point. This time, however, she outdid herself! Dr. Gafney's knowledge of and passion for the biblical text shines through on every page. I finished reading my copy today and was sad for the book to end. I especially appreciated her perspective on the Royal Women of Israel and Judah--a unique offering in biblical scholarship. She made these women, who generally are barely mentioned in the biblical text, and their stories come alive. Her notes on translation as art and science gave the reader a

glimpse of the often mysterious world of what goes on in a translator's mind..Scholarly yet accessible, creative yet rigorous, Gafney opens the door to Womanist thought and biblical interpretation to anyone who would enter in. From first word to last, she captures the depth of literary treasure in the biblical text. Her focus on women assures that women, whose stories are often overlooked and undervalued, will be overlooked and undervalued no more!Dr. Alfie Wines

Wil Gafney's book combines superb Biblical scholarship with powerful yet accessible language. It is useful for preachers, teachers, and lovers of the Hebrew Bible. It is also a balm for those of us who long to understand the voices and stories of women in the Hebrew Bible. Her explanation of the complexity of translation and its impact on how we apprehend the text should be shared with every preacher who thinks there is no work of interpretation once one has an English translation of the Torah in hand. On each page, I learned something I hadn't thought of before, even with the most familiar text. This is an authoritative and moving work, and I commend it to all.

Dr. Gafney's Womanist Midrash is an informative and insightful look at the women in the texts of the Hebrew Bible. Dr. Gafney's aim is to acknowledge (by name, as often as possible) the women in, around, and behind the text. This was extremely helpful to me because I have been trained to read the Scriptures with from an androcentric viewpoint, where the women are included in the text as props for the actions of the dominant men. Dr. Gafney's book aims to humanize those women in the eyes of readers.Because this is a self-acknowledged Midrash, Dr. Gafney makes interpretive choices. Not all of her "sanctified imagining" (a term used repeatedly throughout the book) can be fully supported by the text, but she goes to great pains to ensure that those interpretive choices are well-grounded within the text of the Hebrew Bible, ancient interpretive traditions, and the culture of the time.I think this book is a very important book for ministers to read because it causes us to question our received interpretations of many biblical passages. I consider myself to have a fairly open mind when it comes to biblical interpretation, and yet Dr. Gafney's womanist perspective provides commentary and insights that I, as a straight, white man in ministry have never before considered (and I find myself now questioning how I could not have ever considered some of these things).This book is a reminder that the Western, androcentric approach to scripture does not have a monopoly on biblical interpretation, and that serious students of scripture should engage with many other perspectives to try and get a more complete picture of what is going on in the biblical narratives.

I just finished reading the section on Rachel, one of my favorite women in the Hebrew scriptures, and am still stunned and fascinated by the way Gafney's writing has deepened my perspective. Gafney takes the scriptures we all know and opens them up in an engaging and fascinating way, causing deep thought and reconsideration of how the text has always been presented. Rachel as a woman with the struggles we have as women presented in Gafney's style left me ...stunned and intrigued. I recommend this book to everyone; I especially recommend it to every woman, regardless of race or ethnicity.

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