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Wright, Jacob L. *David, King of Israel, and Caleb in Biblical Memory*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014. 284 pp. \$29.99. (9781107672635). Also available as an eBook.

Dr. Wright of Emory University argues that the David narratives in the books of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles are various in nature. Some affirm the legitimacy of the Davidic dynasty, others reflect upon the relationship of the nation to the monarchical state, and yet others deal with the membership and status of numerous groups within the nation. In addition, in three separate chapters, Wright deals with the Caleb texts as an especially strong example of attempts to define membership and status within the nation—in this case for the Calebite clan. Certainly the complications and differences in the biblical narratives and the resulting complexity of the figure of David that emerges invite attempts at explanation. Wright's boldest attempt is based upon the assumption that the texts that deal only with David and those that deal only with Saul were originally unrelated and that the attempt to synthesize them on the part of the biblical authors leads to a largely fictional text. This conclusion is not impossible *Reviews of Nonfiction Titles for Adults* 36 *AJL Reviews* November/December 2014 but it is based upon an assumption and the evidence he adduces in support of this assumption is, overall, pretty thin. Wright is on much firmer ground when he discusses the differences between the David of Solomon and Kings on the one hand, and the David of Chronicles on the other, and also in recognizing the ambiguous, depiction of the monarchy as an institution. One needn't be a biblical literalist to find much of this book highly conjectural and sometimes tendentious.

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