



Unlocking the Garden: A Feminist Jewish Look at the Bible, Midrash, and God

Naomi Graetz

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Unlocking the Garden: A Feminist Jewish Look at the Bible, Midrash, and God, is a collection of 15 articles which are exemplars of the state of the art of feminist Jewish interpretation of biblical texts. In these articles Naomi Graetz explores some of the reasons why biblical women are extolled in post-biblical sources when they adhere to their prescribed roles yet deprecated by these same midrashic sources when they speak up. The author demonstrates that much of present-day thinking about Jewish marriage is conditioned by metaphors. She discusses the theological implications of the dangerous marriage metaphor which describes God and Israel in an abusive husband and wife relationship and addresses the problem of God's responsibility for Israel's suffering. Graetz combats the approach of rabbinical midrash, not only by critique, but by writing Jewish midrash that is consciously feminist in its intent. Naomi Graetz is the author of *The Rabbi's Wife Plays at Murder* (Shiluv Press, 2004); *S/He Created Them: Feminist Retellings of Biblical Stories* (Gorgias Press, 2003) and *Silence is Deadly: Judaism Confronts Wifebeating* (Jason Aronson, 1998). She has written many articles about women and metaphor in the Bible and Midrash. Graetz teaches critical reading skills at Ben-Gurion University in the English Department and describes herself as a feminist Jew who is grounded both in Jewish tradition and feminist thought who has to grapple with problems of modernity while seeing the value of tradition.

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