



Piety and Politics: The Dynamics of Royal Authority in Homeric Greece, Biblical Israel, and Old Babylonian Mesopotamia (The Bible in Its World)

Mr. Dale Launderville

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In Homeric Greece, Biblical Israel, and Old Mesopotamia, the king was said to be installed by divine appointment and was regarded as having a special and privileged relationship with God or the gods. This comparative and thematic study assesses the role of the king as a divine messenger and his use of, and reliance on, piety to legitimate his position and ensure the compliance of his subjects. Based on a variety of texts from each of the three regions, including poetry, philosophy, history and theological works, Launderville examines the rhetoric of royal legitimation. He also looks at what the community expected from the king as the centralising symbol of the community, the chief messenger from the divine world and the dispenser of justice, and he explores the means by which the king's power and privileged position could be kept in check.

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