



The Love of David and Jonathan: Ideology, Text, Reception (BibleWorld)

James E. Harding

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Were David and Jonathan 'gay' lovers? This very modern question lies behind the recent explosion of studies of the David and Jonathan narrative. Interpreters differ in their assessment of whether 1 and 2 Samuel offer a positive portrayal of a homosexual relationship. Beneath the conflict of interpretations lies an ambiguous biblical text which has drawn generations of readers - from the redactors of the Hebrew text and the early translators to modern biblical scholars - to the task of resolving its possible meanings. What has not yet been fully explored is the place of David and Jonathan in the evolution of modern, Western understandings of same-sex relationships, in particular how the story of their relationship was read alongside classical narratives, such as those of Achilles and Patroclus, or Orestes and Pylades. *The Love of David and Jonathan* explores this context in detail to argue that the story of David and Jonathan was part of the process by which the modern idea of homosexuality itself emerged.

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