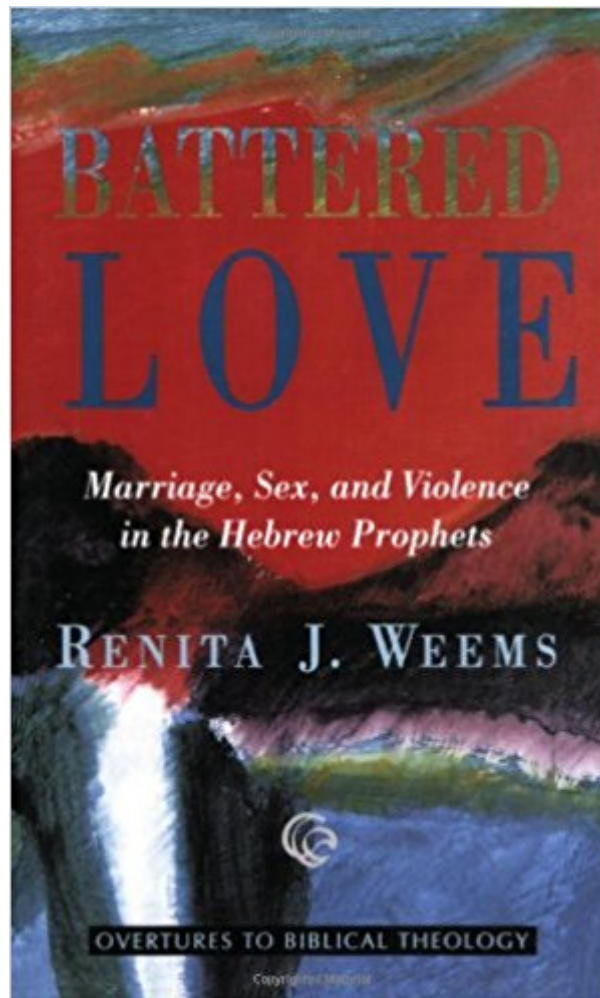


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Battered Love (Overtures To Biblical Theology)



Synopsis

Weems's pioneering study explores the puzzling ways in which the Hebrew prophets' portrayals of divine love, compassion, and conventional commitment often became associated with battery, infidelity, and the rape and mutilation of women. She wrestles with the prophets' rhetoric and sexual metaphors to uncover Israelite social structures, asking, "What is implied about women, men, and God by the language that the prophets use to describe the covenant between Yahweh and Israel?" This provocative work by a leading African American biblical scholar delves deeply into issues of intimacy and power, violence and control, seduction and betrayal, and is a searing indictment of the axial points of Israelite religion-its covenantal and prophetic traditions-and their authority today.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Renita J. Weems is a writer, Bible scholar, and minister, and the author of "Just a Sister Away" and "I Asked for Intimacy." She lives with her husband and their daughter in Nashville, Tennessee, where she also teaches Old Testament studies at Vanderbilt University Divinity School.

Dr. Renita Weems, always tells it like it is...No one ever ask women how they understand the Bible with all of its violence directed at women, how we look to the Father on one hand, and live under the rulership of men on the other. Dr. Weems does a excellent job of explaining Bibilical metophors and how the Prophets used women's issue to "shock" men into reality, but also at the same time it

caused men to see woman as a devious and worthless, which allowed them justification to do whatever with us and to us. This book should be required reading for every woman who attends any church!

If you can get through the explicit, violent nature of Judges 19, this is an excellent book for females for understanding the sexual violence and metaphorical language regarding women in the bible. It's a lot to read. Not meaning pages, but you have to have time to take in what the author is explaining. It is repetitive, but that's good for this book. It's a must read for female clergy as well as females in general.

Amazing insight into the Hebrew Bible. It's difficult for me to get into Bible study, and this really helps me get more context.

Even if you have no real interest in women in the Bible this book is beneficial. Weems aptly explains the use of metaphor in scripture with regard to textual interpretation. If I have a small criticism it is that she over-explains just a little bit, but her writing here is applicable to many scriptural texts as a basis for understanding context. I would recommend this book to anyone interested in better understanding the Bible as a whole. If you are particularly interested in women in the Bible you will find this book fascinating. If you enjoy studying prophecy you will find this book insightful. It's an easy read - it won't take much of your time to read it, and the benefit is well worth it.

Premise of book is not well developed or supported. This feels like an author "proof-texting" ideas she has fashioned in her own mind.

I read this book in the last year of my time at theology school and it gave me an understanding of why there is so much violence against women to this day. The 'marriage metaphor' of the Old Testament was and is a flawed metaphor. You don't change people's hearts through exhorting people as the prophets did. You minister to them and find their needs and questions, you serve and listen. This and a book on the immoral Syphilis experiments done on men (and their families were never told) in Tuskegee, Alabama, have stayed with me. I still have both of them and often refer to them to this day.

Battered Love is about how the Hebrew Bible prophets portrayed the relationship between Israel

and God. Many times the metaphor of God as husband and Israel as wife was used. Weems points out in a fascinating study, that God was often portrayed as setting up all the rules and that strict obedience of the rules was necessary for people of Israel, the subordinate partner in the divine/human relationship. If the Israelites disobeyed the rules, then God was permitted to beat up Israel. If Israel later returned to God, then God would love Israel again. Renita Weems explains how a metaphor works and how metaphors are used by people. Furthermore she explains quite lucidly that for many people the human husband represented God, and the wife represented the subordinate partner. Therefore, husbands throughout the centuries have believed that they have permission to beat up their disobedient wives. Renita Weems especially looks at the prophets Ezekiel, Hosea, and Jeremiah to prove her case. Words do hurt!

Overall, I found this book was rather interesting. The writing was solid and easy to understand. However, the author made the assumption that the reader would agree with the basic premise that the biblical world was an inherently sexist society, in which women had no status. While I would agree with that, since she did not examine or support her presumptions, it made her conclusions harder to accept because she did not lay a good foundation. She does seem to presume that the reader would have more difficulty with the role of metaphor in the Bible. In essence my low rating comes from the viewpoint, that I wanted more content in the structures of sexism within ancient Israel rather than an explanation of metaphor in the Bible. I should say I was torn between giving this book three or four stars. If there was a button for three and a half, that is probably what I would have given it.

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