



Rewriting the Old Testament in Anglo-Saxon Verse: Becoming the Chosen People (New Directions in Religion & Literature)

Samantha Zacher

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The Bible played a crucial role in shaping Anglo-Saxon national and cultural identity. However, access to Biblical texts was necessarily limited to very few individuals in Medieval England. In this book, Samantha Zacher explores how the very earliest English Biblical poetry creatively adapted, commented on and spread Biblical narratives and traditions to the wider population. Systematically surveying the manuscripts of surviving poems, the book shows how these vernacular poets commemorated the Hebrews as God's 'chosen people' and claimed the inheritance of that status for Anglo-Saxon England. Drawing on contemporary translation theory, the book undertakes close readings of the poems *Exodus*, *Daniel* and *Judith* in order to examine their methods of adaptation for their particular theologico-political circumstances and the way they portray and problematize Judaeo-Christian religious identities.

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