

***Landscapes of Memory****The Old Testament's Sensory Engagement with Nature*

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## How Nature Helps Us Remember Scripture

### What led to your interest in writing about the Old Testament and the natural world?

**Emma M. Austin:** I am interested in the way that visiting the lands of the Bible leaves a lasting impact on people. In particular, the diverse ecosystems and landscapes, many of which remain beautiful and wild today, bring a dimensionality to Scripture that we can miss simply by reading. The purpose of this book is to encourage readers to engage their senses as they read the text and consider the impact on their memories.

### What is your main thesis in *Landscapes of Memory*?

**Austin:** This book shows how attention to the natural world in the Old Testament can transform the way readers remember and engage with Scripture. I introduce “mnemonature,” a method that combines contextual analysis, sensory awareness, and memory studies to foster an embodied approach to biblical interpretation. By blending biblical studies with sensory imagination and travel narrative, the book equips readers to appreciate biblical landscapes while constructively drawing on their own experiences of the natural world to come more alive to the biblical story and God’s creation.

### Who did you have in mind as you were writing this book?

**Austin:** This book is middle-shelf biblical studies, appropriate for college and seminary students in Old Testament classes. It also appeals to pastors, theologians, educated laypersons, and pilgrims to the Holy Land, who are interested in biblical studies combining travel narrative; the ancient Near Eastern, literary, and physical context of the Old Testament; or sensory/memory approaches to the Old Testament.

### What do you hope your book contributes to the study of the Old Testament?

**Austin:**

1. It introduces a new interpretative framework, “mnemonature.”
2. It offers an interdisciplinary bridge between biblical studies, sensory experience of place, and memory studies, demonstrating how attention to real and written landscapes and our own experiences in the natural world can inform interpretation.
3. It demonstrates a pedagogical model that invites readers on an interpretative journey through the natural world of the Old Testament.



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