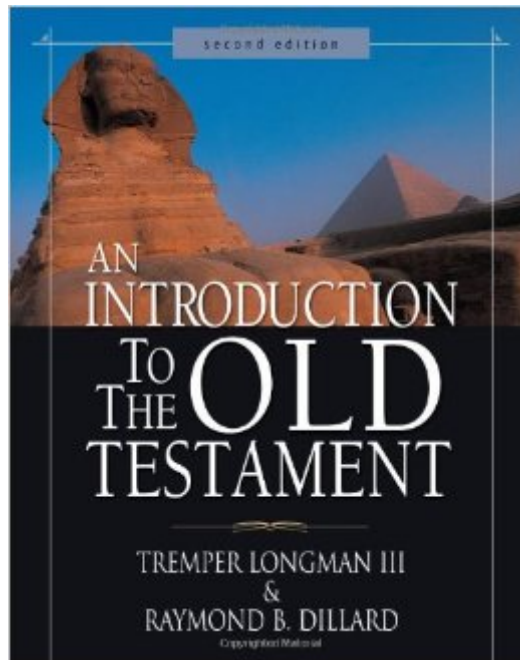


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An Introduction To The Old Testament: Second Edition



Synopsis

This second edition of *An Introduction to the Old Testament* integrates and interacts with recent developments in Old Testament scholarship. Several distinctive set it apart from other introductions to the Old Testament:

- It is thoroughly evangelical in its perspective
- It emphasizes a special introduction to the study of individual books
- It interacts in an irenic spirit with the historical-critical method
- It features points of research history and representative scholars rather than an exhaustive treatment of past scholarship
- It deals with the meaning of each book, not in isolation but in a canonical context
- It probes the meaning of each book in the setting of its culture

Including callouts, charts, and graphs, this text is written with an eye on understanding the nature of Old Testament historiography. This upper-level introduction to the Old Testament offers students a solid understanding of three key issues: historical background, literary analysis, and theological message.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

An Introduction to the Old Testament, Second Edition The target audience for this book is seminary students. I am not a seminary student or a Bible College graduate, but after reading many reviews I thought this book would be helpful to me, and it is. I use it as a supplement to my study Bible. *An Introduction to the Old Testament* has an introduction chapter followed by one chapter for each book of the Old Testament. The Introduction chapter lets you know the perspective of the authors (Protestant and evangelical), what they are trying to accomplish, and how the subsequent chapters

are organized. Some other authors deny the existence of any supernatural divine activity, but these authors recognize and respect the supernatural and the divine. The introduction presents some information related to hermeneutics, regarding the culture and context of the Old Testament. Each chapter following the introduction reads much like the notes at the beginning of a Study Bible, but with a little more breadth and depth. The major divisions that are included in every chapter are Historical Background, Literary Analysis, Theological Message, and Approaching the New Testament. Some chapters have additional major divisions for Alternative Critical Views (Genesis), Evaluation of the Critical Reviews (Genesis), Ancient Near Eastern Background (Genesis), and Text-Critical Issues (Samuel). The Historical Background section is usually the longest and includes a discussion of various theories about who was the author. Longman and Dillard present the critical scholarship and other views in a distant, third-person tone that is almost void of emotion. They very gently put forward their own view. The discussion of the authorship of Genesis reveals their tone and their view.

I read Longman and Dillard's "Introduction to the Old Testament" as an assigned text for three Old Testament seminary courses. Overall, it was a helpful book to provide some introductory information about all of the Old Testament books. To their credit, Longman and Dillard are able to engage with the critical scholarship while maintaining a truly evangelical voice. I appreciated that they were willing to question and rethink some particular evangelical positions when the evidence did not support them, but they were also unwilling to blindly subscribe to the critical scholarly consensus when it blatantly conflicted with the biblical witness. Though some would surely be suspicious of this approach, I think it's particularly helpful to take both the biblical text and the scholarly analysis seriously, and Longman and Dillard do this well. My primary critique of the book is the balance of the time the authors spend in those two worlds of the biblical text and the critical scholarship. Frankly, I do not think an introductory textbook should be focused primarily on pointing out the various positions of critical scholarship. I wanted to read about the Old Testament. It just seemed to me that many of the chapters in this book leaned far too heavily in the direction of the scholarship and skimmed through the actual biblical text. I would have preferred a summary of the scholarship and more analysis of the biblical text, whereas their approach often felt like in-depth analysis of the scholarship and a summary of the biblical text. As a point of comparison, I found Norman Geisler's "A Popular Survey of the Old Testament" to deal much more significantly with the biblical text, and I wish that Longman and Dillard had leaned more in that direction.

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