



The Old Testament: A Brief Introduction

Christoph Levin

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No other book has influenced the religion and culture of the Western world like the Bible and its largest component, the Old Testament, which is shared by Jews and Christians alike. This groundbreaking work by noted biblical scholar Christoph Levin is the most current and concise introduction to the Old Testament available today.

The book fully explains the development of the Old Testament canon, as well as the editorial history underlying its various parts, including the five books of Moses, the prophetic books, and the Psalms. Examining the Old Testament in its historical context, it also sheds new light on many of the shorter books, including Jonah, Job, Ruth, the Song of Solomon, Ecclesiastes, Esther, and Daniel.

Levin surveys fundamental changes that have taken place in Old Testament scholarship, noting that the accepted view of this part of the Bible has been called into question both by literary scholars and by archaeologists. He points out that many of the Old Testament writings are thought to have originated later than previously believed, and argues that our knowledge about the exodus from Egypt, the Israelite conquest of Palestine, and the opposition between belief in Yahweh and Canaanite religion can no longer be seen as securely established.

While the book treats the Old Testament as part of the cultural and religious history of the Ancient Near East, it also reminds readers that it emerged not as a history of ancient Israel but as the Holy Scripture of Judaism. Clear and engaging, it will prove a compelling read for anyone interested in the history of religion and the history of ancient Israel.

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