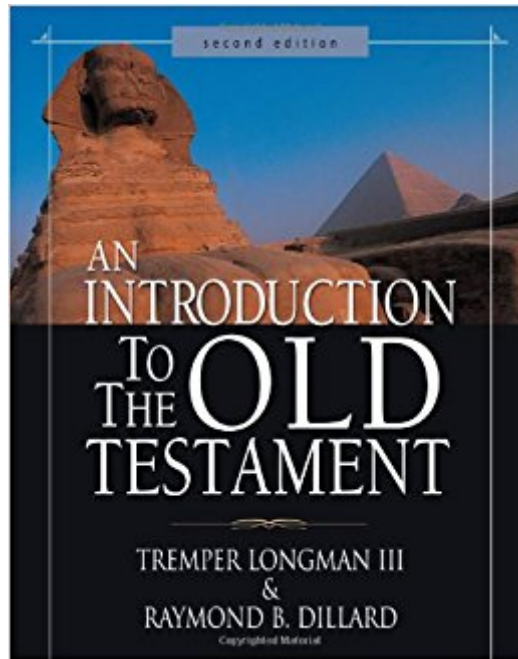




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# An Introduction To The Old Testament: Second Edition



## 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"---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.

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## Customer Reviews

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Tremper Longman III (PhD, Yale University) is the Robert H. Gundry Professor of Biblical Studies and the chair of the Religious Studies department at Westmont College in Santa Barbara, California, where he lives with his wife, Alice. He is the Old Testament editor for the revised Expositor's Bible Commentary and general editor for the Story of God Bible Commentary Old Testament and has authored many articles and books on the Psalms and other Old Testament books. The late Raymond B. Dillard (PhD, Dropsie University) was professor of Old Testament language and literature at Westminster Theological Seminary.

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. "It is difficult to say when the new consensus will be or even if a consensus will

emerge, but it is certain that the alternative will not be a return to a precritical acceptance of Mosaic authorship with only minute exceptions (the so-called a- and post- Mosaica) or to anything like a classic documentary approach. .... Evangelical scholars recognize that the Pentateuch contains pre-Mosaic sources as well as post-Mosaic glosses. ... In the final analysis, it is possible to affirm the substantial Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch in line with the occasional internal evidence and the strong external testimony, while allowing for earlier sources as well as later glosses and elaboration. ... In any case, our concern is the final form of the text, since that is what God has given the church as canon for its edification." So they are willing to look at various authorship theories, but they believe that God inspired the authoring process and the Bible we now have is from Him and is in the form that He intended. The book has a lengthy bibliography for each division of the introduction chapter, plus another bibliography for each of the subsequent chapters that deal with one book of the Old Testament. These bibliographies are not annotated, so I can only guess, based on the title, what is in each reference and what its perspective is. Some books are listed in many chapter bibliographies. An annotated bibliography for the whole book would be helpful. There is not much discussion of the Old Testament as a whole. It does not have a table to identify the Books of the Law (Pentateuch), Books of History, Books of Wisdom, Books of the Major Prophets, and Books of the Minor Prophets. It is assumed that the reader knows this. It does not give an overview of how the history books and prophecy books line up chronologically. Each chapter discusses the date of authorship and the dates of the events in view, but there is not a global view of the chronology. I read a lot of reviews of books about the Old Testament before selecting this one. I am satisfied with it, and I don't know of a better book for me. I am considering a future purchase of A Biblical History of Israel by Provan, Long, and Longman, to get a consolidated view of the history of the Old Testament era.

This is an alright intro to the Old Testament. I had ONE huge issue with it: it is not written for the basic beginning student. The book was written in a way that reads like a long review of literature written on a given OT book. For example, the authors spend pages discussing various theories about every imaginable aspect of a book. This is great for the scholar as a first "go-to" book but NOT for a student. I've taken 2 years of Hebrew and am finishing a degree in theology with a minor in biblical languages and this book was HARD to understand in many ways. I don't recommend it for the beginner, only for those of you have already a good grasp of Hebrew and OT issues (like Documentary Hypothesis and the Deuteronomistic Historian).

For any person who is serious about wanting to know more about God, I suggest you read this book. Each chapter gives an excellent narrative about the author and purpose of each book in the Bible along with pertinent information that will help a person like yourself to become a better Christ-follower and be drawn closer to God in your life. When there are so many other Bible commentaries out there to choose from, and you are confused as to which one to read, I strongly suggest you get this one. You will become more familiar with each book in the Bible, I give it five stars without a doubt, and I'm Marvin P. Ferguson, author of *On The Road Again*.

This work is alive and well! Beginners have no problem understanding the language. I truly recommend this book to anyone who desires to learn and study the ancient Greek and Hebrew world.

Longman is a prolific writer. He seems to be quite shrewd about writing for target audiences rather than just writing about whatever he finds interesting. This book is targeted very specifically at the college-level student of the OT. The perspective is deliberately and faithfully Evangelical. He works with a very useful pattern of analysis for the books: historical background, literary analysis and theological message. Literary analysis is a particular speciality of Longman's, and as such these sections are sometimes a bit too lengthy, although there is certainly no superfluous detail. It just feels a bit like getting cornered by a train spotter at a party. I wouldn't say there is anything particularly ground-breaking here, but Longman certainly brings a lot of his literary expertise to bear to an extent that is rare in an introductory text.

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