



# Old Testament: An Introduction to Biblical Scholarship

*Arthur J. Bellinzoni*

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The Hebrew Bible, or the Old Testament (as Christians know it), purports to describe the origins of Judaism and is the basis of the entire Judeo-Christian tradition. Its thirty-nine books recount events that allegedly took place in the distant past, during time periods not only far removed from our contemporary world, but also far removed from the date of the earliest written records. Outside of sheer faith, how can people living today evaluate the accuracy of these ancient records? How can we know what really happened two or three thousand years ago?

One answer is the historical method, which is based on the scientific method and, like archaeology, aims at a reasoned and reasonable reconstruction of events from long ago. In this readable, engaging introduction to the Old Testament, veteran biblical scholar Arthur J. Bellinzoni shows the lay reader how the field of biblical scholarship uses the historical method to understand biblical texts. After explaining the methodological principles involved in the scholarly study of the Bible, Bellinzoni delves into the following key areas of Old Testament studies:

- Primordial and patriarchal history
- The exodus from Egypt
- The conquest and entrenchment of Canaan
- The establishment of the united monarchy
- The role and function of prophecy
- The fall of northern Israel and southern Judah
- The restoration in Jerusalem under the priestly hierarchy
- The problematic issues involved in trying to establish the original text of the Hebrew Bible

Complete with illuminating diagrams and maps, this lucidly written, fact-filled work will enlighten and inform both longtime readers of the Bible and those largely unfamiliar with its contents.

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