

An Introduction to the Old Testament: Sacred Texts and Imperial Contexts of the Hebrew Bible

By David M. Carr

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This comprehensive, introductory textbook is unique in exploring the emergence of the Hebrew Bible in the broader context of world history. It particularly focuses on the influence of pre-Roman empires, empowering students with a richer understanding of Old Testament historiography.

- Provides a historical context for students learning about the development and changing interpretations of biblical texts
- Examines how these early stories were variously shaped by interaction with the Mesopotamian and Egyptian, Assyrian, Babylonian, Persian, and Hellenistic empires
- Incorporates recent research on the formation of the Pentateuch
- Reveals how key biblical texts came to be interpreted by Jewish, Christian, and Muslim faiths
- Includes numerous student-friendly features, such as study questions, review sections, bibliographies, timelines, and illustrations and photos

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Editorial Review

Review

"Carr's book is an excellent introduction to what mainstream (non-evangelical) scholars have come to believe about ancient Israel's literary history." (International Review of Biblical Studies, 2010)

Review

"An innovative approach to the Hebrew Bible. Instead of surveying the Bible book-by-book beginning with Genesis, this work introduces readers to the major works of the Bible by timeframe. With this approach, it is easier for readers to see both how biblical works are products of their times and how they respond to their times - and to some degree, to one another ... A very readable introduction and a model of judicious synthesis."

—*Mark S. Smith, New York University*

"Carr's volume provides a very readable and informative introduction to the study of the Hebrew Bible for beginning theological students. He combines a very useful analysis of the historical and social contexts in which the texts of the Bible were written together with an insightful account of the contexts in which they have been read in both Judaism and Christianity."

—*Marvin A. Sweeney, Claremont Graduate University*

From the Back Cover

Offering readers a balanced and informative guide to the forces that shaped the Old Testament and methods for study of it, this comprehensive text explores the emergence of the Hebrew Bible in the broader context of world history. It particularly focuses on the way the Hebrew Bible was shaped by its interaction with ancient empires, empowering students with a richer understanding of the Old Testament.

In charting the development and impact of the work that forms the core of Judeo-Christian belief, the author examines how these early stories were variously shaped by contact with the Mesopotamian and Egyptian, Assyrian, Babylonian, Persian, and Hellenistic empires. He explores the historical context of the varied readings of the Old Testament, revealing how the Bible came to be interpreted by Jewish, Christian, and Muslim faiths.

This introductory text engages students by placing the development and reception of biblical texts in their historical context – enabling them to explore the formation of the Hebrew Bible and also its subsequent interpretation. Numerous reader-friendly features are incorporated throughout, including study questions, review sections, bibliographies, timelines, and illustrations and photos.

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