



Old Testament Today: A Journey from Original Meaning to Contemporary Significance

By John H. Walton, Andrew E. Hill

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Proven three-tiered approach and a wealth of full-color images help readers connect the Old Testament with today's world. Old Testament Today is unique among Old Testament surveys. It not only provides an orientation to the world of the Old Testament but also builds a bridge between the original audience and modern readers, demonstrating why the ancient message is important for faith and life today. Old Testament Today goes beyond basic content to help students understand what the Scriptures mean and how to apply them personally. Similar to the acclaimed NIV Application Commentary, this text takes the reader section by section through the Old Testament using a progressive, three-step format:

- Original Meaning presents the details of the content, focusing on the story line, historical background, and literary information that address the original setting and audience.
- Bridging Contexts focuses on theological perspectives and on issues of the author's purpose and the universal message of the text, building a bridge between the original audience and today's audience.
- Contemporary Significance develops an understanding of the relevance of the Old Testament writings to today's Christian, showing how they can be applied in personal faith and practice.

The image-rich full-color design gives Old Testament Today a strong visual appeal. A wide array of charts, sidebars, illustrations, photos, and supplemental materials complement the body of the text, helping students to easily comprehend the literature, theology, and history of the Old Testament.

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Editorial Review

From the Back Cover

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About the Author

John H. Walton (PhD, Hebrew Union College) is professor of Old Testament at Wheaton College Graduate School. He is the author or coauthor of several books, including *Chronological and Background Charts of the Old Testament*; *Ancient Israelite Literature in Its Cultural Context*; *Covenant: God's Purpose, God's Plan*; *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament*; and *A Survey of the Old Testament*.

Andrew E. Hill (PhD, University of Michigan) is professor of Old Testament studies at Wheaton College in Illinois. He is the coauthor with John Walton of *A Survey of the Old Testament* and the author of Malachi in the Anchor Bible commentary series. His articles have appeared in such scholarly publications as *Hebrew Annual Review*, *Journal of Biblical Literature*, and *Vetus Testamentum*.

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ABOUT THE OLD TESTAMENT The Old Testament can be considered a book, a part of a book, and a collection of books. It is a book to the extent that its parts form a single whole. This book is often referred to today as the Hebrew Bible because it constitutes the Scripture of the Jewish people. As history progressed and Jesus Christ came, taught, died, and rose again, a whole new round of Scripture was formed to document the life of Christ and the rise of the church and to explore the theological and practical implications of what

Christ had done. This New Testament was joined with the Old to become the Christian Bible, and so the Old Testament has become part of that book. We also understand that the Old Testament is a collection of books--thirty-nine books by various authors written over the span of a millennium. These books share a common religious perspective, but they vary widely in the types of literature they represent and the functions they serve. In the pages of these books the reader will find consideration of origins, tribal and national histories, collections of laws, collections of poetry, philosophical discussions, and prophetic sermons. But in all of these and through all of these, the reader will find theology--or, more appropriately put, God. Though the genres (types of literature) may vary, each is theological throughout. So, for instance, the discussion of origins is not about science; it is about God. The presentation of history is not concerned with facts or events in themselves; it is concerned with God's role. And perhaps most important, rather than simply being human thoughts and opinions about God, the Old Testament is God's presentation of himself, that is, his self-revelation.

THE BIG STORY LINE/PLOTLINE God made the world operational and put people into it. Adam and Eve disobeyed his command, resulting in their being driven from the Garden of Eden. Thus begins the story of dislocation. Over time the 'Eden Problem,' sin, became so pervasive that God sent a flood to destroy all but Noah and his family. The Tower of Babel represents the next step as people imagined that God had needs and saw themselves as providing the way for God to come down and have his needs met. This misperception of God can be called the 'Babel Problem.' Consequently, God chose Abraham to be the ancestor of a chosen people through whom he would reveal himself and correct the distortion represented at Babel. He brought Abraham to the land of Canaan, where his family lived on the brink of extinction for three generations before going down to Egypt. There they lived for more than four hundred years and became a large nation. God brought them out of great oppression in Egypt, and they began their journey back to the land of Canaan, the Promised Land. After stopping at Mount Sinai, where Moses received the law--God's next phase in revealing himself--they were waylaid in the wilderness for a generation because they lacked the faith to let God lead them into the land. Under the command of Joshua, the Israelites returned to the land and, in a series of battles, God won them control of the land. Joshua divided the land among the tribes, and they began to settle in. Over the next several centuries, known as the period of the judges, there was no king. Each tribe had its own tribal leadership, but they constantly fell prey to the surrounding nations. God allowed this because of the failure of the Israelites to be faithful to God in their beliefs. Finally, the people initiated a move to a monarchy form of government. The first attempt, in which Saul was crowned king, failed because of unrealistic and theologically misguided expectations of the king and his role. At his death, Israel was just as bad off politically and spiritually as when he came to the throne. The second attempt was more successful. David was chosen by the Lord to be king, his dynasty became established through a covenant with the Lord, and Jerusalem was made the capital city. As the empire of David expanded, Israel finally came into control of the land that had been promised to Abraham nearly a millennium earlier. He successfully passed this empire to his son Solomon, but Solomon's misjudgments and excesses in both political and theological terms eroded the empire as well as the support of the people. After Solomon's death in 931 BC, his son Rehoboam retained control of only a small section of the kingdom from Jerusalem south, while God gave a new dynasty control of the much larger northern kingdom. The southern kingdom was now designated 'Judah,' and the northern kingdom, under Jeroboam, was designated Israel. For just over two hundred years, this situation continued. The Davidic dynasty remained in control in Judah, while the northern kingdom, Israel, experienced a series of dynastic lines. When the Assyrians extended their control across the ancient world in the middle of the eighth century, Israel joined a coalition against the Assyrians and eventually lost the war. The capital city, Samaria, was destroyed in 722 BC, and the northern kingdom was assimilated into the Assyrian Empire. Judah remained an independent nation but was for the most part under Assyrian control. During this time there were kings who were faithful to the Lord (such as Hezekiah), but for the middle fifty-five years, Manasseh forged a regime that accepted not only Assyrian rule, but foreign religious practice as well. The Assyrian Empire lasted for another century until it weakened and was taken over by the Medes and the Babylonians. Already as the Assyrian Empire receded, the prophetic voices in Judah, such as Jeremiah, were calling on the people to return to the Lord and were warning of impending doom at the hands of the

Babylonians. The Assyrian Empire breathed its last gasp in the fall of Carchemish in 605 BC, and the Babylonians began to exert their control into Judah. For several years it was uncertain whether Babylon or Egypt would have the greatest influence, and the kings of Judah rocked back and forth. Eventually Babylon prevailed as the army under Nebuchadnezzar moved west to punish the rebellious King Jehoiakim. His son Jehoiachin was taken into exile in Babylon along with many others in the administration, but the kingdom was left intact. In the next decade, however, the lure of rebellion became too strong, and King Zedekiah joined a conspiracy against the Babylonians. This time there was no mercy. The result of the Babylonian invasion in 587 was the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple, the massive deportation of the Israelites, and the incorporation of Judah as a Babylonian province. The prophets' warnings had come to pass, and for the first time in more than four hundred years, there was no king on David's throne. The seventy years that were spent in exile were given very little treatment in the text. Prophetic voices such as Ezekiel and Daniel continued to speak, but no historical literature discussed the situation in either Israel or Babylon. When the Babylonian Empire fell to the Persian king Cyrus in 539 BC, a new policy of tolerance allowed the exiles to return to Israel and rebuild their temple. In this postexilic period they had no king, but a governor ruled the small state of Yehud on behalf of the Persian king. Under the leadership of individuals such as Ezra and Nehemiah, the city of Jerusalem was rebuilt and the people recommitted themselves to the covenant and the Lord. Yet they remained a state under Persian rule until Alexander the Great overthrew the Persians and they became part of another empire. As Daniel had indicated, empire followed empire as the people waited for their deliverance and the return of a Davidic king, their Messiah.¹ FUNDAMENTALS

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From reader reviews:

Diane Russel:

Spent a free time for you to be fun activity to perform! A lot of people spent their down time with their family, or their friends. Usually they carrying out activity like watching television, going to beach, or picnic in the park. They actually doing same thing every week. Do you feel it? Would you like to something different to fill your personal free time/ holiday? May be reading a book might be option to fill your no cost time/ holiday. The first thing that you ask may be what kinds of publication that you should read. If you want to consider look for book, may be the publication untitled Old Testament Today: A Journey from Original Meaning to Contemporary Significance can be good book to read. May be it might be best activity to you.

Sharon Keller:

A lot of people always spent their free time to vacation or even go to the outside with them family or their friend. Did you know? Many a lot of people spent many people free time just watching TV, or maybe playing video games all day long. If you want to try to find a new activity honestly, that is look different you can read any book. It is really fun to suit your needs. If you enjoy the book which you read you can spent 24 hours a day to reading a reserve. The book Old Testament Today: A Journey from Original Meaning to Contemporary Significance it doesn't matter what good to read. There are a lot of those who recommended this book. These folks were enjoying reading this book. If you did not have enough space to create this book you can buy the particular e-book. You can m0ore effortlessly to read this book from a smart phone. The price is not too costly but this book has high quality.

Thomas Hill:

People live in this new moment of lifestyle always try and must have the free time or they will get great deal of stress from both daily life and work. So , if we ask do people have time, we will say absolutely sure. People is human not really a huge robot. Then we request again, what kind of activity are there when the spare time coming to anyone of course your answer will certainly unlimited right. Then do you try this one, reading ebooks. It can be your alternative in spending your spare time, typically the book you have read is Old Testament Today: A Journey from Original Meaning to Contemporary Significance.

Jasper Parsons:

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