



Understanding the Old Testament

Bernhard W. Anderson, Steven Bishop, Judith Newman

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Presents a study of the Old Testament by interweaving historical, archeological, literary, and religious perspectives. The book traces the story of the people of Israel from the Exodus in the time of Moses through the dawn of the Common Era. It considers the importance of literary criticism and other methods for understanding the literature of ancient Israel; treats the latest archaeological discoveries that illuminate the Old Testament period.

Understanding the Old Testament Details

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From Reader Review Understanding the Old Testament for online ebook

Lisa Sellers says

A great intro to Old Testament that has been around a long time - I first read it in 1984 at Warren Wilson College in the course named "Old Testament"

One of my favorite features is the upside down map of middle east which is more meaningful and get me out of my western view and understanding more of the region and its people and their culture

Gordon Schneider says

mine was the 2nd edition

Kirsten says

This is a textbook, so it's not exactly thrilling reading, but it's great if you're not familiar with the historical context of the Old Testament. (My copy is actually the 4th edition)

Gs C says

it's better for my studies
thanks

Lindsay Gunter says

I loved it. Good book

Cameron says

Focuses more on the historical events of antiquity (particularly Jews/Jesus followers). Not too stuck in dogma. Still a college textbook, it's dry.

Jc says

An introductory level text book that serves nicely as a survey of the literary, historical, archeological, and cultural background of the Jewish scriptures/Xtian Old Test. Of course, as this edition is from 1975, some bits need some updating (there is a 5th edition from 2006), but this one served my purpose. I especially appreciated that, instead of a book-by-book discussion, Anderson tried to address the "books" from the perspective of Jewish/Middle Eastern history (much more useful for the reader who is not looking at these for religious reasons). I considered giving it one more star, but as it is very much a college textbook, it is not really intended for the general reader, so it isn't for everyone.

Terri Milstead says

I was assigned one half of this book for a Hebrew Bible I class. (The second Hebrew Bible class, unfortunately will use a new text due to a change in curriculum, so I'll get to experience another text for that.) This book is full of good information, charts and maps and is relatively easy to digest. A good reference book that I'm sure I will use when preaching or teaching from the Old Testament.

Erik Graff says

Anderson's Understanding the Old Testament is a solid, college level introduction to the history of the Hebrew nation and what became of that part of their scriptures assimilated into the later Christian canon. I read it because we hadn't used a textbook for the introductory courses in either college or seminary. Indeed, now that I think of it, hardly any of my courses at either school used textbooks, the notable exception being Educational Psychology. Still, this one isn't bad. The author is a Methodist, but he avoids, so far as I can see, Christian sectarianism and makes efforts not to offend possible Jewish readers--though not enough to avoid the use of "Old Testament".

Since this book was never assigned, I read it on a break from seminary. In fact, I read a good deal of it while in Boston visiting my old college friend Rick Strong, a bassist who would take me along to his various performances. The particular venue occupied by the reading of this text was some dimly lit Polynesian dinner club where I partook of--forgive the phonetic spelling--"a flaming poo-poo platter".

Rebecca says

Two years of Old Testament study completed today with the end of this book. It was a very good textbook, with a good overview and plenty of references to other materials for further reading.

Ricky D. Gonzalez says

So far the most AWESOME historical analysis ever on the Old Testament!

Nathan "N.R." Gaddis says

I used this as a companion for reading through the Old Testament. Unfortunately I used the now 20 year old 4th edition left over from college days. Be sure to find the newest edition as scholarship concerning civilizations this old tends to change rapidly.

Tung says

Most texts that provide overviews of the Old Testament organize their chapters by book of the Bible. Anderson's book is focused on providing for the reader the context of the Old Testament through the lens of Jewish culture and history, so he organizes his text with that in mind. We have sections like: The beginning of Israel, the covenant community renewed, a kingdom of priests, etc. Anderson's focus is less on the interpretation of the books of the OT, and more on the cultural impact and historical tie-in of the book to Judaism. There are lots of illustrations and tables and charts, as well as references to other books. The prose is a little dry, and it's missing informational aspects of each book (like date of writing, possible authors, etc), but overall, it provides a different perspective on the OT than other survey texts. Recommended for students and readers interested in understanding the OT.

Phubc says

Our copy has a hard brown cover

Stephen says

A bit cursory in its scope and noncommittal in its theories, but certainly good for cementing and reviewing the real text.
