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Missionary of the Sacred Heart

**An Introduction  
to  
the Older Testament  
  
Holy Books  
of the  
Jewish and Christian Faith**

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# Preface

Readers will be familiar with the use of the expression 'Old Testament' used by Christians to describe the holy books of the Jewish faith. The closest we get to it in the New Testament is where Paul speaks of the 'old covenant' in his Second Letter to the Christian community in Corinth (see 2Corinthians 3:14). 'Old Testament' came to be used to distinguish the inspired books of the Jewish faith from the writings of the 'New Testament' that emerged within the Christian community in the first century AD. I have chosen to speak of the Older and the Newer Testaments: terms which focus more explicitly on the relationship between the two sets of writings.

Having completed a seventeen year project of commentaries on both testaments, I wish to offer here an Introduction to the reading of books of the Older Testament. When I returned in 1988 from Rome where I had obtained an LSS at the Pontifical Biblical Institute, my first task as coordinator of Biblical Studies at St Paul's National Seminary, Kensington NSW was to present a course entitled 'Introduction to the Old Testament', and I have been working on the material in the intervening twenty-five years, which have included four return trips to Rome for further research.

Almost all the material in this book can be found in the Introductions to the commentaries listed on the opposite page. I hope the reader will find it helpful to have the material available in a single volume.

# Contents

Chapter One: The Books of the Older Testament	page 1
The Hebrew Bible: Torah, Prophets, Writings	
The Greek Older Testament: Writings	
Chapter Two: Religious Experience, Inspiration & Revelation	3
The Canon	18
Chapter Three: Prophecy in Ancient Israel	22
The Genesis of a prophetic scroll	27
Chapter Four: Wisdom in Ancient Israel	29
Chapter Five: Understanding the text	33
Paul's method	33
Origen's method	35
Today's method	36
The Literal Sense	38
The spiritual sense	40
The fuller sense	41
Factors making reading difficult	43
Defective concepts of God	45
Fundamentalism	50
Chapter Six: Scientific study of the Older Testament	53
Establishing the text	57
Genre criticism	58
Rhetorical criticism	60
Narrative analysis	60
Source criticism	62
Redactional criticism	64
Canonical criticism	64

Chapter Seven: Story	page 67
History 68	
Chapter Eight: The Torah	72
Chapter Nine: The Deuteronomists	77
Deuteronomy 84	
Joshua 84	
Judges 87	
1&2 Samuel 87	
1&2 Kings 88	
Kings of Judah & Israel (list) 89	
The Deuteronomic 'history' 90	
Chapter Ten: The Priestly School	92
Exodus 93	
Leviticus 94	
Numbers 96	
Chapter Eleven: Genesis	101
The Patriarchs (Genesis 12-50) 101	
The primeval narrative (Genesis 1-11) 105	
Chapter Twelve: From the 13th to the 9th centuries	110
The tribes of Israel in Canaan 110 [map 113]	
Moses and the Exodus 113	
Israel's struggle for survival 117	
The Monarchy 118	
Map of David's wars 121	
The divided kingdom 122 [map 123]	
Kings of Israel and Judah (list) 125	

Chapter Thirteen: The 8th century	126
Kings of Israel & Judah (list)	126
Amos	126
Hosea	129
Judah	131 [map 133]
Isaiah	132
Micah	135
Chapter Fourteen: The 7th century	page 137
Kings of Judah (list)	137
Zephaniah	139
Nahum	140
Final years of independant Judah	141
Habakkuk	141
Jeremiah	143
Chapter Fifteen: The 6th century	151
Exile in Babylon	151
Ezekiel	152
Lamentations	155
Isaiah School in exile	158
Judah after the return	161 [map 163]
Haggai	164
Zechariah 1-8	165
Isaiah School in Judah	166
Chapter Sixteen: The 5th century	169
Obadiah	170
Zechariah 9-14	171
Ezra & Nehemiah	172
Malachi	173
Jonah	174
Joel	175
Song of Songs	176
Job	178
Ruth	180

Chapter Seventeen: The 4th and 3rd centuries	page 182
Last Years of Persian rule	182
Proverbs	182
Ecclesiastes	185
Esther	193
Early years of Greek rule	195
1&2 Chronicles	195
Judah ruled from Egypt	197
The Seleucid and Ptolemy Empires (map)	198
Tobit	199
Psalms	201
The Septuagint	201
 Chapter Eighteen: The 2nd and 1st centuries	 203
The Wisdom of Ben Sira	203
Baruch	205
Antiochus IV	206
Daniel	208
1Maccabees	213
2Maccabees	214
Kings of Syria (list)	215
The Hasmonean dynasty (list)	215
Judith	216
Judah under Roman rule	217
The Wisdom of Solomon	217