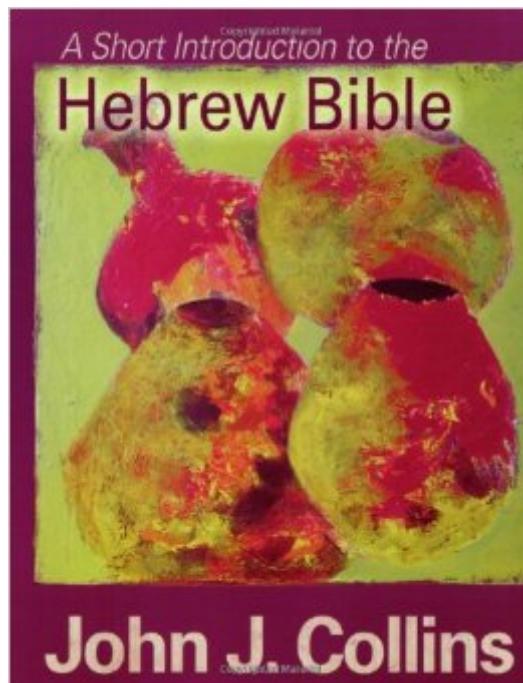


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# A Short Introduction To The Hebrew Bible



## **Synopsis**

John J. Collins's Introduction to the Hebrew Bible is a leading textbook in Old Testament studies. With this new, well-tailored abridgement of that larger work, Collins's erudition is now available to general readers and professors and students who prefer a shorter, more concise introduction to the Hebrew scriptures. New features, especially designed for the college student, include maps, images, and study questions. A companion web site includes special resources for both teachers and students including: PowerPoint presentations, chapter by chapter test banks, study questions, suggestions for further reading, and web site links.

## **Book Information**

Paperback: 320 pages

Publisher: Fortress Press; Abridged edition (July 1, 2007)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0800662075

ISBN-13: 978-0800662073

Product Dimensions: 9 x 7 x 0.6 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.7 pounds

Average Customer Review: 3.6 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (27 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #83,190 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #21 in Books > Textbooks > Humanities > Religious Studies > Judaism #23 in Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Bible Study & Reference > Old Testament > Biography #59 in Books > Religion & Spirituality > Judaism > Sacred Writings > Hebrew Bible (Old Testament)

## **Customer Reviews**

This is an excellent, concise introduction to the Hebrew Bible. I used it during a graduate course in Prophetic Literature as an extra source to help contextualize things for me and it certainly helped. It's an excellent reference especially if you just want some basic background on the various books, historical considerations, and a brief consideration on some scholarly debate pertaining to specific books. It's helpful for the scholar and student alike, but it is also approachable for those with little or no background in biblical scholarship. There are also plenty of diagrams to assist in illustrating the author's points. Incidentally, my professor decided to use the text for a graduate level intro in Hebrew Bible class next fall...

This is a widely used text for introductory college-level courses on the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament.

It's also the Year 1 (Old Testament) text for the University of the South's Education for Ministry, an international program of theological education for lay people (I'm a mentor in the program). If all you want is an introduction, this is a very good text. It's reliable, main-stream scholarship, and, as text books go, readable. Several reviews have complained that Collins is too brutal in his dismissal of the inerrancy of the Bible, but he does no more than point out that the text itself cannot support that doctrine. Particularly when you read the Bible with other ancient Mid Eastern literature, the folkloric and legendary aspects of the Biblical text are obvious: talking animals, cast away babies who grow up to be heroes, and divine beings mating with human women (but see more on this below). That said, Collin's unabridged Introduction to the Hebrew Bible is only \$20.00 more. It comes with a CD-ROM of the text (for the Libronix Digital Library System). If you are more than a beginner, the longer original is probably a better bet. The tables work better in Libronix than in Kindle, too. As far as I can tell, there's been very little updating of the text between the long version (2004) and the Short Introduction (2007). What got left out is often unfortunate. In the short version, Collins gives chapter and verse citations for the J and P accounts of Noah's flood, but the 2004 long version gives you the text itself. Much handier than having to juggle the text and a Bible. Similarly, the long version gives much fuller quotations from "contemporary" literature like the Enuma Elish and Gilgamesh, allowing you to see the parallels without consulting other sources. Ironically, access to those sources is something the target audience for the Short Introduction is likely to lack. Even worse, what got left out is sometimes critical. For example, the Short version list "Amphictyony" in its glossary but omits the unabridged version's discussion why the idea that the 12 Tribes of Israel began as an amphictyonic league to protect and serve the shrine at Shilo -- almost universally accepted by Biblical scholars in the 1950s -- has been abandoned.

Introduction to the Hebrew Bible (also by this author) is a leading textbook in Old Testament studies. With this new, well-tailored abridgement of that larger work, the author's erudition is now available to general readers and professors and students who prefer a shorter, more concise introduction to the Hebrew scriptures. New features, especially designed for the college student, include maps, images, and study questions. A companion web site includes special resources for both teachers and students including: PowerPoint presentations, chapter by chapter test banks, study questions, suggestions for further reading, and web site links.

I was looking for a guide to the Old Testament to read as I worked my way through the Old Testament. I am retired, and I decided to read the Bible cover-to-cover, something I had never

done. But I wanted a scholarly guide that would explain the history and give critical analyses of the books. This was just what I was looking for. Dr. Collins' knowledge and concise articulation were quite informative and provocative.

Just as the name says- this is a short introduction to the Hebrew Bible. It is good for the beginning OT student, but the serious student will want more depth. I bought it as a required text for an OT course I needed for continuing ed. Previous and similar courses I have taken had better texts.

As the title says this is a short introduction to the Old Testament. I purchased it for an adult Christian Bible study. It is more than an "introduction", though. By introduction I am assuming the author means that there is much more to be said on the subject, but the book is very complete. All chapters of the Old Testament are covered in just the right amount of detail. The nuances of the original languages as well as the pros and cons of modern translations are explored. I found the author's way of explaining traditional interpretations while adding modern thought and archaeological findings to be very well balanced.

This is for the person who really wants a brief synopsis. This is the Reader's Digest Condensed version. Not for the serious student or the person wanting in depth material.

I read this text as part of a class on Old Testament. I've never studied the OT but was told the class was appropriate for the beginner as well as more advanced students. Only a few chapters into this book, I already had a distaste for everything about it. This book is NOT for the beginner. As other reviews have mentioned, perhaps the unabridged version is better and more appropriate someone digging into the OT for the first time. It was frustrating that the author constantly made references to passages outside the scope of each chapter. If you're a beginner - look elsewhere for a book that easier to understand and written at a more basic level.

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