



Old Testament Theology for Christians: From Ancient Context to Enduring Belief
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The Old Testament Through Ancient Eyes

Old Testament Theology for Christians is the capstone of John H. Walton’s career in studying and teaching the Old Testament through the distinct vantage of the Ancient Near Eastern cognitive environment. Walton notes that the Old Testament was written *for us* but not *to us*, and in this book he invites readers to leave modern—and even many Christian—preconceptions at the threshold and enter the world of the Old Testament. His challenge is for Christians to see it anew, as guests in a strange and foreign land.

Walton’s work fills an important need for Christians to understand and embrace Old Testament teaching. He writes: “If we are correct in thinking that the Old Testament is God’s revelation of his plans and purposes, and that through that revelation we should be able to come to some basic understanding about God, it is then logical to conclude that the most important message of the Old Testament is found in what it teaches us about God. That teaching does not expire, grow obsolete, or change. It is not the sort of teaching from which we can pick and choose what parts we want to believe and what parts we want to set aside. Its truth about God should comprise our beliefs about God. Furthermore, there is much information about God revealed in the Old Testament that is never addressed in the New Testament. If we only read the Old Testament christologically, or from the vantage point of the New Testament, we will miss some of what God has revealed about himself.”

As Walton presents a theology of the Old Testament guided by what the ancient authors intended as they wrote, he addresses the following questions:

- Why was the law given to Israel and how should we view it today?
- How does the Old Testament understand sin and salvation?
- Did God command Israel to commit genocide?
- What was the role of the temple and its sacrifices in God’s covenant with Israel?
- Is there an integrating and central theme of Old Testament theology?
- What did God require of Israel and how does that apply to Christians today?
- Should we look to the Old Testament for solutions to twenty-first century issues?
- How should we read the Old Testament in light of Christ?

“John Walton is one of the leading Old Testament scholars of our generation. I am always informed and stimulated in my own thinking whenever I read his work,” writes Tremper Longman III, Robert H. Gundry Professor of Biblical Studies at Westmont College. “He is rightly sensitive to the ancient context of the Old Testament as he pursues its continuing significance for our lives as Christians. *Old Testament Theology for Christians* presents his most wide-ranging analysis yet. I recommend this book enthusiastically to all who want to think seriously about the Old Testament.”

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John H. Walton (PhD, Hebrew Union College), author of *Old Testament Theology for Christians*

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“A Voice of Reason” in Biblical Studies

John H. Walton (PhD, Hebrew Union College) is professor of Old Testament at Wheaton College and Graduate School. His primary focus is in areas of comparison between the Old Testament and the Ancient Near East, particularly Genesis, teaching classes such as Old Testament Literature, Biblical Archaeology, Theories of Origin, Hebrew Grammar, and many others. Previously, he was professor of Old Testament at Moody Bible Institute in Chicago for twenty years.

Throughout his career, Walton’s emphasis has been to show students and readers the importance of learning the Bible. In his latest capstone work, he teaches readers how to approach the Old Testament. “I want Christians to be able to recover the theology of the Old Testament and see that it has a vital role in their faith,” he said.

Walton has published extensively, and some of his books include *The Lost World of Scripture*, *The Lost World of Genesis One*, *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament*, *The Essential Bible Companion*, *Genesis* (NIV Application Commentary), and *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament* (with Victor H. Matthews and Mark W. Chavalas). He’s published numerous articles on his topics of expertise in journals such as *Bulletin for Biblical Research*, *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, *Hebrew Studies Journal*, *Christian Education Journal*, *PreachingToday.com*, *Journal of Biblical Literature*, and others.

Walton’s work and writing has been widely praised for enlightening current debates and allowing the Bible to shine through his efforts. “John Walton is a voice of reason, and he has shown time and time again that we must learn to read the Bible as God gave it, not the way we’d like it to be,” said Scot McKnight, professor of New Testament at Northern Seminary.

Additionally, “Walton [brings] a fresh perspective that enlightens, enriches, and honors the biblical text,” Sean M. Cordry said in *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith*.

Walton’s ministry experience includes church classes for all age groups, high school Bible studies, and adult Sunday school classes, as well as serving as a teacher for “The Bible in 90 Days.” John and his wife, Kim, live in Wheaton, Illinois, and have three adult children.