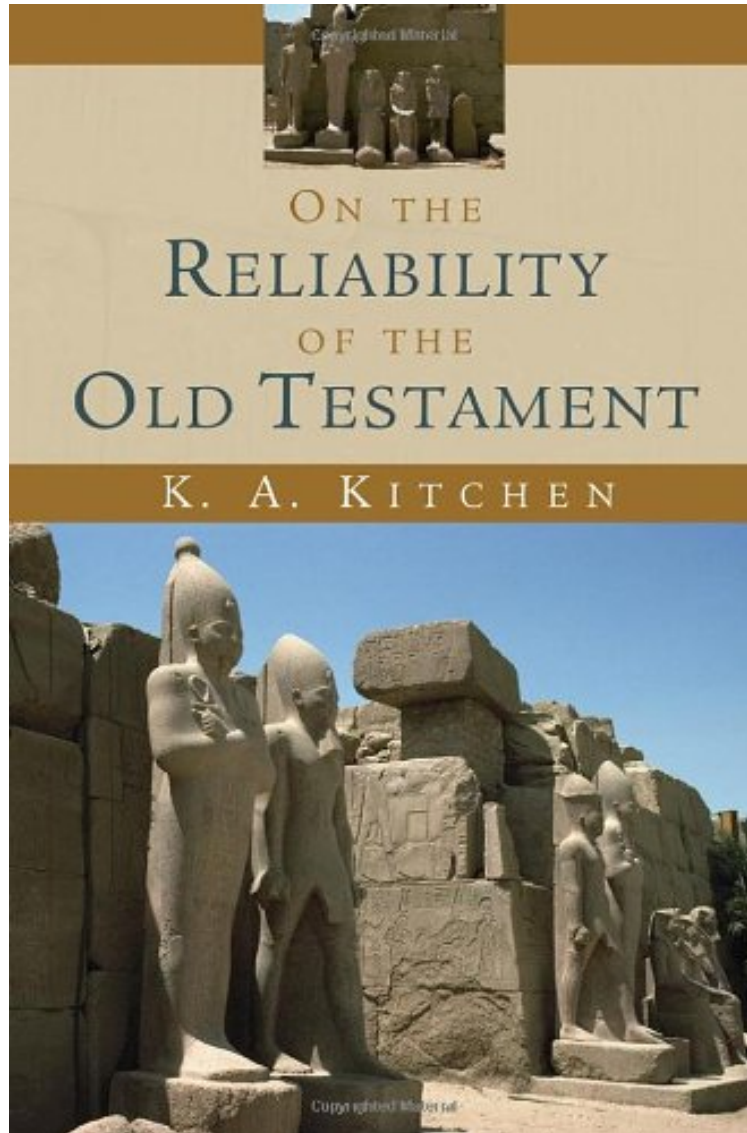


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On the Reliability of the Old Testament

K. A. Kitchen

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For more than two hundred years controversy has raged over the reliability of the Old Testament. Questions about the factuality of its colorful stories of heroes, villains, and kings, for example, have led many critics to see the entire Hebrew Bible as little more than pious fiction. In this fascinating book, noted ancient historian K. A. Kitchen takes strong issue with today's "revisionist" critics and offers a firm foundation for the historicity of the biblical texts. In a detailed, comprehensive, and entertaining manner, Kitchen draws on an unprecedented range of historical data from the ancient Near East -- the Bible's own world -- and uses it to soundly reassess both the biblical record and the critics who condemn it. Working back from the latest periods (for which hard evidence is readily available) to the remotest times, Kitchen systematically shows up the many failures of favored arguments against the Bible and marshals pertinent permanent evidence from antiquity's inscriptions and artifacts to demonstrate the basic honesty of the Old Testament writers. Enhanced with numerous tables, figures, and maps, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament* is a must-read for anyone interested in the question of biblical truth.

Anvil "Everyone has much to thank Kitchen for in this volume. . . Hopefully, his latest work will preserve another generation of theological students from losing faith in Scripture." *Biblical Studies Bulletin* "The scope of this book is nothing less than the entire sweep of Old Testament history, and Kitchen introduces an impressive amount of evidence for the historical reliability of most Old Testament narrative. . . This is a hugely impressive book, packed with detail and energetic argument." *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* "Those of us who have benefited from Kitchen's contributions . . . welcome the present work as a culmination of a lifetime of rigorous and unflinching dedication to the task of setting the Old Testament on a solid bedrock of credibility as a historical text. Kitchen's effort is grounded not in dogmatic or theological givens, but rather is the product of painstaking attention to history, archaeology, and critical methodologies." William W. Hallo "After decades of 'minimalism,' it is refreshing to have this first systematic refutation from the opposite position. It provides a step-by-step review of the evidence for biblical history in its Near Eastern context by a leading authority equally at home in Egyptology as in the archaeology, history, and literature of ancient Western Asia. K. A. Kitchen writes with conviction and verve, not sparing those who are 'factually disadvantaged' or who 'do not do their Near Eastern homework.' He takes readers back through time like an archaeologist digging a mound. Even those unwilling to follow him all the way down to the earliest strata will be able to use his lucid expositions and generous documentation to arrive at a balanced view of their own on some of the most burning issues of current biblical scholarship." K. Lawson Younger Jr. "Eminent Egyptologist and ancient Near Eastern scholar Kenneth Kitchen has produced here a tour de force that questions many of the simplistically assumed hypotheses of Old Testament scholarship while at the same time contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of the environment in which the Hebrew Bible was composed. Kitchen's lifetime of study of the ancient context of the Old Testament makes this volume a must-read." Harry A. Hoffner Jr. "Why should I be concerned about the historical reliability of the Old Testament? The overriding concern of most Bible readers is 'Are this book's claims about God, Jesus, and the afterlife reliable enough that I should carefully heed and believe what it says?' This is the 'absolute truth' that Kenneth Kitchen in his preface states is beyond the purview of this book. Kitchen's approach is not 'How much historical reliability do I need for my faith?' but 'How much faith do the facts of archaeology (including ancient texts) tell me that I actually have?' In the course of his tour through three pre-Christian millennia, Kitchen approaches his subject with the skill and experience of a bona fide expert and the frankness, honesty, and wit of a Scotsman. His book takes into account the very latest discoveries. There could be no better author for a book like this, an author who for over forty years has read, published, and taught most of the ancient texts he cites. Professor I. Howard Marshall should be congratulated for prompting Kitchen so many years ago to write such a book!"