



The Tree of Life: An Exploration of Biblical Wisdom Literature

By Roland E. Murphy

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Since 1990 Roland Murphy's *Tree of Life* has been a standard introduction to the wisdom literature of the Bible. Now *The Tree of Life* is available in a third edition, complete with a new preface by the author and a special supplement that surveys the latest developments in wisdom research.

This superb study thoroughly explores the wisdom writings of the Bible, interpreting this literature in a way that illumines the development of Israel's search for wisdom throughout its tumultuous history. Murphy looks at each wisdom book individually -- Proverbs, Job, Ecclesiastes, Ecclesiasticus, and Wisdom of Solomon -- and adds to them a discussion of wisdom from other parts of the Old Testament. His careful investigations expose the various guises that wisdom adopts -- the "fear of the Lord," moral formation, the universality of human experience, the mysteries of creation, and others.

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Editorial Review

From Library Journal

This excellent commentary by a leading Roman Catholic biblical scholar provides clearly written and up-to-date research and interpretation of biblical books that reflect on daily human experience of a world created by God--a contrast from the holy history approach of most of the rest of Hebrew scripture. Murphy examines Proverbs, Job, Ecclesiastes, Ecclesiasticus or Ben Sira, and Wisdom of Solomon in detail, examines other passages of scripture that are "wisdom's echoes," and reflects on themes and meanings. Essential for academic, seminary, and large public libraries.

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Review

Walter Brueggemann

"An amazingly discerning and helpful book."

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"Murphy is one of the acclaimed doyens of the study of biblical literature. . . . This is a rich escort, providing many worthwhile insights into the wisdom literature."

Catholic Library World

"Murphy combines sound scholarship with a rich pedagogical approach. . . . This book can be recommended in every way. It provides a sure path for the uninitiated and may even provide new insights for the expert."

Religious Studies Review

"Murphy's wide reading and balanced judgment enrich the additions to each of the nine chapters, conveniently linked to page numbers in the earlier book."

The Bible Today

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Theological Book Review (U.K.)

"This admirably structured work should be an essential purchase for biblical libraries, and a valuable resource for any serious student working in the area. Strongly recommended."

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"A standard introduction to the Israelite wisdom literature."

Review of Biblical Literature

"Highly recommended for both collegiate and graduate school students. Unquestionably, this work is one of the finest introductions to Israel's wisdom literature in print."

About the Author

(1917–2002) Roland E. Murphy was George Washington Ivey Professor of Biblical Studies Emeritus at Duke University and adjunct professor of biblical studies at the Washington Theological Union.

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