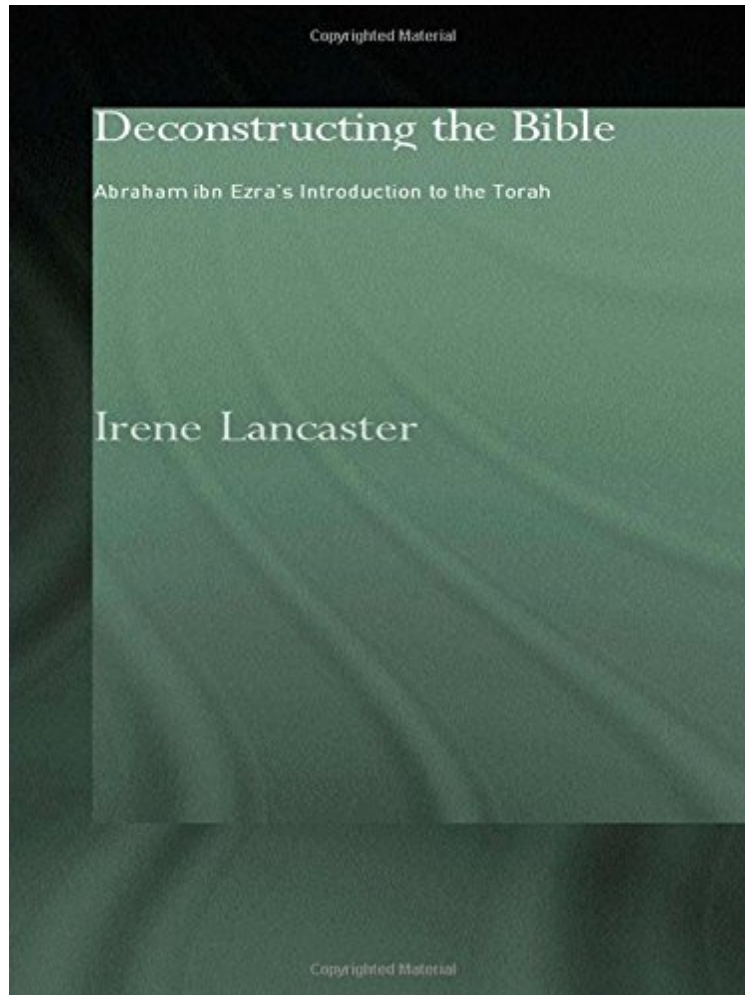


Deconstructing the Bible: Abraham Ibn Ezra's Introduction to the Torah

Irene Lancaster

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Irene Lancaster : Deconstructing the Bible: Abraham Ibn Ezra's Introduction to the Torah before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Deconstructing the Bible: Abraham Ibn Ezra's Introduction to the Torah:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Four StarsBy Pearl MukenDelivery was a bit slow. Item was exactly as described.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A very good introduction to one of the greatest rational interpreters of the BibleBy Israel DrazinThis is a good introduction to one of Judaism's greatest rational thinkers. Abraham ibn Ezra wrote two introductions to the Bible. In the introductions he stressed that he will explain the plain meaning of scripture and not the homiletical, midrashic, imaginative interpretations that the rabbis fancy. He was a rationalist. Those who seek the plain meaning of the Torah look at his understandings, as well as those of Rashi's

grandson Rashbam, and of course the Great Eagle Maimonides who soared above all other thinkers. As the saying goes From Moses to Moses there was none like Moses. (The first Moses was the lawgiver and the second Moses Maimonides.) Unlike Maimonides who was rational in all his thinking, ibn Ezra had some superstitious ideas. One of the ideas that crept into many of his interpretations was his belief in astrology. But this aside, he was otherwise a great thinker. As with all great thinkers, the masses of people could not understand his rational approach to the Bible. They were afraid to let go of their superstitious notions. As a result, he was poor. He wrote that he was so unlucky that if he went into a business selling umbrellas, it would stop raining, and if he went into the business of making coffins, people would stop dying. Like many others, he extolled the early fourth century Aramaic translation of the Bible called Targum Onkelos. (The Talmud, which did not know who wrote the translation, offers an opinion that Onkelos may have been composed in the second century by the Greek Aquila, but I showed in my studies on Onkelos, that the translator borrowed his interpretations from the final version of the midrashim whose final editing was not done until around 400 CE. The translator only incorporated into his translation what the midrashim stated when the midrashim gave the plain meaning of the text, what is called in Hebrew peshat not the homiletical interpretations called derash.) Ibn Ezra wrote in his introductions that he would follow the methodology of Onkelos. One of the striking things about ibn Ezra was that he recognized that there were parts of the Five Books of Moses that could not have been composed during the lifetime of Moses. He identified a half dozen examples. Spinoza praised him for this idea and added more examples. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Very important work By Lisa Anyone interested in Jewish-Christian interfaith dialogue will be interested in this great thinker and writer and will find this book a very good read.

Deconstructing the Bible represents the first attempt by a single author to place the great Spanish Jewish Hebrew bible exegete, philosopher, poet, astronomer, astrologer and scientist Abraham ibn Ezra (1089-1164) in his complete contextual environment. It charts his unusual travels and discusses changes and contradictions in his hermeneutic approach, analysing his vision of the future for the Jewish people in the Christian north of Europe rather than in Muslim Spain. It also examines his influence on subsequent Jewish thought, as well as his place in the wider hermeneutic debate. The book contains a new translation of ibn Ezra's Introduction to the Torah, written in Lucca, northern Italy, together with a full commentary. It will be of interest to a wide variety of scholars, ranging from philosophers and theologians to linguists and students of hermeneutics.

'A most welcome study of a remarkable man who modern scholars have not taken time to recognize sufficiently.' - The Jerusalem Post
'This is an excellent book ... for serious readers looking for a thorough treatment of Ibn Ezra and his influences, this work is ideal.' - Jewish Chronicle
Language Notes
Text: English (translation) Original Language: Hebrew
About the Author
Irene Lancaster teaches at the University of Manchester. She lives in Salford, England.