

about the Bible.

- Exhaustive with Greek/Hebrew Goodrick and Kohlenberger, *The NIV Exhaustive Concordance*, Zondervan
- Strong's Exhaustive Concordance. Based on the KJV and an older lexicon.
- New American Standard Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible/Hebrew-Aramaic and Greek Dictionaries
- New American Standard Strong's Exhaustive Concordance
- Exhaustive Concordances
- NRSV Concordance Unabridged Complete Concordances
- Cruden's Complete Concordance Concordance to the KJV.
- Concise Concordances
- The Concise Concordance to the New Revised Standard Version (Oxford)
- Topical Concordances
- Holman Concise Topical Concordance : An Easy to Use Alphabetical Reference Covering Hundreds of Topics (Holman Reference)

Bible Dictionaries

Bible Dictionaries provide definitions of various Biblical terms, information about places and people, and introductory information about Biblical books. Most information contained in a Bible handbook can be found in a Bible Dictionary, but it will be organized much differently.

The religious views of authors and editors will impact the content of a Bible Dictionary.

- Mainstream
HarperCollins Bible Dictionary
Anchor Bible Dictionary (6 volumes)
- Evangelical
New International Bible Dictionary
New Bible Dictionary (Intervarsity Press)

Bible Atlases

Oxford Bible Atlas
HarperCollins Concise Atlas of the Bible. Paperback and 152 pages, this one may be all the average Bible student needs!
The Harper Atlas of World History

Some Definitions

Mainstream: Materials which would be suitable for use in departments of religion at secular universities. This does not imply more or less correct in content.

Interfaith: Involving persons other than those of one faith (Christians and Jews, for example). Distinguish from *interdenominational*.

Interdenominational: Involving persons from more than one Christian denomination. Distinguish from *interfaith*.

Note: To save space, only minimal bibliographical information is given in this pamphlet. It should be enough to locate books in *Books in Print* or via online services such as Amazon.com

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**Energion Publications**
Participatory Study Series

Scholarship in Service

The following are some suggested resources for Bible study. They fall into 7 categories:

Bible Versions

You will need a Bible version that you can understand without having to consult an English dictionary too often.

- For quick reading (overview): *Contemporary English Version* (CEV)
3rd or 4th grade reading level; high degree of accuracy within the context of its aim for easy readability.
The Message
Heavily paraphrased with cultural terms translated. This version is fun to read, but will tend to obscure elements of the original cultures.
New Living Translation (NLT)
A more accurate revision of the *Living Bible*. This is the easy-reading Bible for evangelical Christians.

- For study or reading:
New International Version (NIV)
The always popular NIV is the Bible of choice for evangelical Christians.
Revised English Bible (REB)
This version was translated by an interdenominational committee with interfaith review. It contains some British English which may be hard on American ears.

- For study:
New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)
The Bible of choice for mainline

Christians needing a study Bible. The NRSV is often criticized for gender neutral language. It has also received interfaith review.
New American Standard Bible (NASB)

An alternative to the NRSV that is more conservative in its renderings. It is also often a bit less readable. Very literal.
New King James Version (NKJV)
Aimed primarily at fundamentalist and conservative Christians who prefer the manuscripts and text behind the KJV, but prefer updated English. Very literal and often a bit clumsy to read. Includes such disputed passages as Mark 16:9-20, John 7:53-8:11 and 1 John 5:7 & 8 which no other modern version includes.

Study Bibles

Study Bibles usually contain introductory articles giving Bible backgrounds, information on methodology and overviews of various themes in the Bible. They will also include introductions to each book and comments on difficult passages.

Study Bibles will reflect religious views of editors and authors, some more than others. Care should be taken to distinguish the Biblical text from the comments, and facts and opinions within the comments.

- *Oxford Study Bible* (OSB)
New Oxford Annotated Bible (NAB)
HarperCollins Study Bible (HCSB)
Mainstream and liberal notes with acknowledgment of more conservative options.

- *The NIV Study Bible* (Zondervan)
Evangelical study notes.
- *Spirit Filled Life Bible*
Aimed at a more charismatic audience.
- *Scofield Reference Bible* (various editions and versions)
A famous dispensational study Bible, commonly accepted amongst fundamentalists and conservative Christians.
- *Ryrie Study Bible* (various editions and versions)
Another well-loved conservative study Bible.

Bible Handbooks

Bible handbooks provide historical and cultural information, usually with a number of general articles and then comments on particular books and passages. Using a Bible handbook along with your Bible is like having a Bible with study notes, though usually having a handbook in a separate volume will mean that the handbook contains more exhaustive information.

Bible handbooks, like study Bibles, will reflect religious presuppositions of the editors. Use them carefully.

- Mainstream and/or Liberal
The Cambridge Companion to the Bible
- Moderate/Conservative
Eerdman's Handbook to the Bible
Zondervan's Handbook to the Bible
- Conservative
Halley's Bible Handbook

Background Documents

Pritchard, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*
Large, expensive, hard cover but a

tremendous resource for the Bible student.

Pritchard, *The Ancient Near East, Volume 1, An Anthology of Texts and Pictures* (Both 1958 and 1975 editions still available)
Charlesworth, James H. *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (2 volumes). This work is a standard for editions of these extra-Biblical works.

Concordances

Concordances may be exhaustive, complete, or concise. Usage of these terms is not 100% consistent. In addition they may either be either organized by words or topics.

Many Bibles contain small, concise concordances. Many study Bibles contain topical concordances.

Exhaustive concordances contain every reference to a word listed under every word. Complete concordances contain references to each and every verse, using significant terms, though not necessarily under every word in the verse. Concise concordances contain selective references and may not reference all verses.

Concordances with Greek and/or Hebrew Lexicons can be useful, but one should remember that translation is not so simple as just picking a word from a dictionary definition. Such concordances with lexicons are very often abused in discussions