

Scripture Tools

There are a whole host of resources available practically at your fingertips to help enrich your study of the Bible. I list some of the most helpful resources below. This information is also available on the course Web site (<https://webpages.scu.edu/ftp/cmurphy/courses/all/bible/tools.htm>). That version has links to the actual resources (if they're online) or to the library record pages.

Texts & Versions of the Bible

The Jewish and Christian scriptures were originally copied by hand in their original languages (Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek) and translated into other languages. Scribal errors and regional differences led to several different versions of each of these books, and also to different lists of books to be included in a given community's "sacred scriptures." This variety of versions and the consequent variety of interpretations caused problems for religious communities. They responded by determining at some point in time that form of each individual book would be official, and which books could be included in their "canon" of sacred scripture. The course Web site allows you to view resources for the textual history of the Jewish and Christian manuscript traditions by rolling over scrolls associated with the major versions (your browser must be set to allow pop-ups). For the Christian Bible, the four helpful resources are:

- Aland, Kurt and Barbara Aland. *The Text of the New Testament: An Introduction to the Critical Editions and to the Theory and Practice of Modern Textual Criticism*, 2d rev. ed. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1995. [Main Stacks Lower Level BS 1937.5 .A42 1989]
- Ehrman, Bart D. *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture: The Effect of Early Christological Controversies on the Text of the New Testament*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1996. [Main Stacks Lower Level BS 2325 .E47 1996]
- Koester, Helmut. *Ancient Christian Gospels: Their History and Development*. Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1990. [Main Stacks Lower Level BS 2555.2 .K64 1990]
- Metzger, Bruce M. *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration*, 3d enlarged ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 1992. [Main Stacks Lower Level BS 2325 .M4 1992]

There are a few Web sites that provide access to the main versions of the Bible, often with search capabilities. Here are some of them:

- | | |
|--|---|
| ▪ USCCB New American Bible Revised Edition
(usccb.org/bible/books-of-the-bible) | ▪ Early Christian Writings
(www.earlychristianwritings.com) |
| ▪ NRSV (and others)
(biblia.com/books/nrsv/Mt1) | ▪ Noncanonical Homepage
(wesley.nnu.edu/sermons-essays-books/noncanonical-literature) |
| ▪ Bible Gateway
(www.biblegateway.com/passage) | |

The Biblical Apparatus

The editors of modern versions of the Bible place footnotes and marginal comments on the pages of the text that provide interesting supplementary information about the readings, parallel material elsewhere in the Bible, or denominational interpretations of important passages. Study Bibles in particular provide a lot of this type of information, along with articles, atlases and indices.

Synopses

A synopsis aligns parallel versions of a text with each other so that the reader may more easily compare and contrast them (see pp. 91-3 for a more complete description and directions for how to use it). A second edition of Aland's *Synopsis* is a required text for this class.

- Aland, Kurt, ed. *Synopsis of the Four Gospels*, 2nd ed. New York: American Bible Society, 1985. [ARS BS 2560 .A58 1985]
- John W. Marshall's *The Five Gospel Parallels* online (sites.utoronto.ca/religion/synopsis/)

Concordances

A concordance is a list of every word that occurs in a given corpus (e.g., the Bible), along with citations for every place in that corpus that the word occurs. When selecting a concordance, be sure to choose the version that corresponds to the particular translation of scripture that you are using. If you are using the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) of scripture, be sure to choose the NRSV concordance; if you are using the New American Bible (NAB; the Catholic Study Bible version), be sure to find the NAB concordance (for searchable online Bibles, see "Texts & Versions").

- Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, John R. Kohlenberger, ed. *New American Bible Revised Edition Concise Concordance*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2012.
- Hartdegen, Stephen J., ed. *Nelson's Complete Concordance of the New American Bible*. Nashville: T. Nelson, 1977. [Reference Lower Level BS 425 .N36]
- Kohlenberger, John R., III. *The NRSV Concordance Unabridged*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1991. [Electronic resource in our library]
- -----. *The NRSV Concordance Unabridged*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1991. [Reference Lower Level BS 425 .K645 1991]

Commentaries

A scriptural commentary is a discussion of a biblical book or of the Bible as a whole. If its focus is one book, it usually includes an introduction to the book and a verse-by-verse analysis of the book. If its focus is all of scripture (e.g., *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary* or *The Women's Bible Commentary*), it will focus on the most salient features of the book. Commentaries are usually published in series, and can emphasize the beliefs of particular religious denominations.

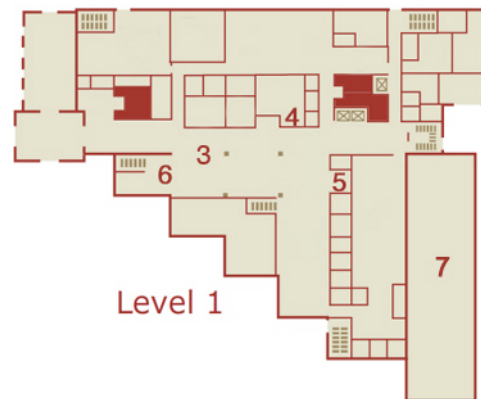
- *Anchor (Yale) Bible Commentaries*. New York: Doubleday. [separate volumes on each biblical book; Main Stacks Lower Level BS 192.2.A1 1964 .G3]
- Brown, Raymond E., et al., eds. *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1990. [single-volume commentary; Reference Lower Level and Course Reserves, BS 491.2 .N485 1990]
- *Hermeneia Commentaries*. Minneapolis: Fortress. [separate volumes on each biblical book; Library of Congress number depends on book]
- Newsom, Carol A. and Sharon H. Ringe, eds. *The Women's Bible Commentary*, 3rd rev. ed. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 2012. [single-volume commentary BS 491.2 .W66 1992]

The Library, from the Ground Up



- 1 – Main Stacks Lower Level
- 2 – Reference Lower Level

darkened areas are the restrooms



- 3 – Circulation Desk (reserve, check-out)
- 4 – Technology Help Desk
- 5 – IT Help desk
- 6 – New Books
- 7 – ARS (Automated Retrieval Facility)

Abstracts

One of the best shortcuts for finding and comprehending relevant sources for your research is a journal of abstracts in the field. These journals of abstracts survey all recently published articles and books in the discipline, providing not only complete bibliographic records but also summaries or abstracts of the works. There are two resources of this kind for biblical studies:

- *New Testament Abstracts* - This journal, published three times a year, provides abstracts or summaries of articles and books published in the field of New Testament and related studies. These abstracts are much more useful than the mere bibliographic record provided in the ATLA Religion Index, in that they alert you to the thesis and conclusions of a given work. Like the ATLA database, this resource is so important that it will be the focus of one of the exercises in this workbook. In that exercise, you'll get specific directions for how to use the abstracts to find articles and essays related to your topic. Our library has hard copies of these volumes [BS 410 .N35], but fortunately for you the whole set is also available as an online database of its own.
- *Old Testament Abstracts* - Like *New Testament Abstracts*, except for the range of biblical books it covers. [Also available in hard copy BS 410 .O42 and as an electronic database]

Handbooks for Exegesis

A variety of handbooks are available to help you learn how to analyze and study scripture.

- Barton, John, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Biblical Interpretation*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998. [Main Stacks Lower Level BS 511.2 .C35 1998]
- Brenner, Athalya, et al. *Feminist Companion to the Bible* series. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press. [separate volumes on biblical books; Library of Congress numbers depend on book.]
- Hayes, John H. and Carl R. Holladay. *Biblical Exegesis, A Beginner's Handbook*, rev. ed. Atlanta: Knox, 1987.
- Guides to Biblical Scholarship Series (Minneapolis: Fortress). [Type that in to a title search on the www.scu.edu/library page]
- Interfaces (Collegeville: Liturgical Press). [Type that in to a title search on the www.scu.edu/library page]
- Levine, Amy-Jill et al. *Feminist Companion to the New Testament and Early Christian Writings* series. Cleveland: Pilgrim. [separate volumes on canonical and non-canonical early Christian books; Library of Congress numbers depend on book.]
- Methods in Biblical Interpretation (New York: Cambridge University Press)
- WATSA Series: What Are They Saying About ... (Mahwah, New Jersey: Paulist). [Type the words (not the acronym) into a title search on the www.scu.edu/library page]

Documents for the Study of the Gospels

Anthologies and studies of ancient literary works that are generically similar to the New Testament texts have been published.

- Cartlidge, David R. and David L. Dungan, eds. *Documents and Images for the Study of the Gospels*. Baltimore: Project Muse, 2015. [Our library has the electronic book]
- Library of Early Christianity Series (Philadelphia: Westminster). [Type that in to a title search on the www.scu.edu/library page]