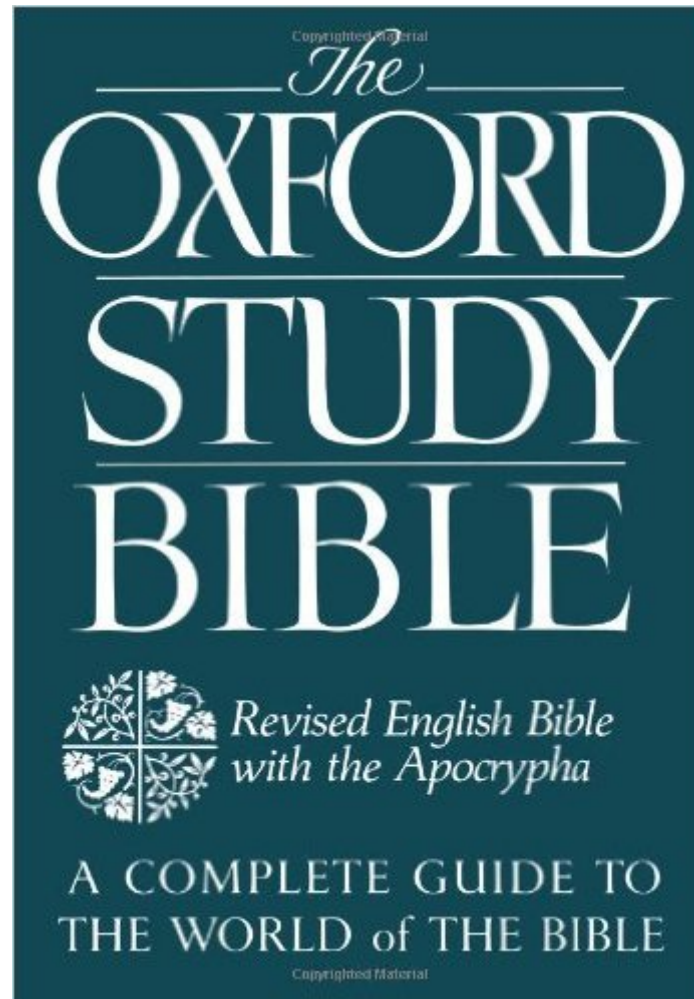


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The Oxford Study Bible: Revised English Bible With Apocrypha



Synopsis

The Oxford Study Bible is the first one-volume resource that introduces readers to the Bible through a combination of an overview of biblical history and scholarship and direct commentary on the text. Its features include 23 indispensable articles on the history, literary background, and cultural influences of the Bible, the complete text of the Revised English Bible with the Apocrypha, fully revised and updated page-by-page textual annotations, a special index to people, places, and themes in the Bible, and full color New Oxford Bible Maps with index.

Book Information

Hardcover: 1824 pages

Publisher: Oxford University Press; First Printing edition (March 12, 1992)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0195290011

ISBN-13: 978-0195290011

Product Dimensions: 9.3 x 1.6 x 6.9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.6 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (82 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #411,496 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #56 in [Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Bible Study & Reference > Concordances](#) #89 in [Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Bible Study & Reference > Additional Texts > Apocrypha & Pseudepigrapha](#) #2101 in [Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Bible Study & Reference > Commentaries](#)

Customer Reviews

The 200 pages of prefatory articles form a really good introduction to contemporary Biblical scholarship. Twenty scholars offer such titles as "The Social World of the New Testament," "Torah and Covenant," "The Contributions of Archaeology," "The Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Jewish Literature." Each book from Genesis to Revelation has a compact introduction and the chapters are usefully annotated. The translation is perhaps the clearest rendering of the Bible into English ever accomplished. There are 14 wonderful maps (based on the Oxford Bible Atlas) with an index to all place names in the Bible. There is a condensed concordance of people, places and themes. This is a marvelous rendering of faith into words that deserves a place in every library. I notice many of the reviews refer to its "liberal bias" which misrepresents the triumph that is this work. To denounce "liberalism" in this way defends ignorance. To read the Oxford Study Bible is like studying the Bible at a great seminary with brilliant professors offering great lectures employing state-of-the-art

scholarship.

I carried a Revised English Bible with me through all three years of seminary; and constantly compared it to the Greek and Hebrew texts. Although it is not the most precise, literal translation (here I would lean towards the New Revised Standard because of my personal dislike for the scholarship behind the New American Standard), the sense of language and poetry in the REB is far superior to any reliable translation. For this reason, the REB is the translation that I read from the pulpit. The scholarly articles and footnotes in the Oxford edition are top-notch; although they have a decidedly Anglican flavor in places they are generally ecumenical and quite informative. If you were to only have one study Bible, this is the one I would recommend.

I have read and compared three translations of the Bible in English: the New International Version, the New Revised Standard Version, and the Revised English Bible. My favorite is the REB. The NRSV is the most literal (except for the gender neutral changes), and it is also the most difficult to read. The NIV is often too informal for my tastes. Although the REB is a scholarly translation, it is the least literal of the three in its phrasings, but less gender-neutral than the NRSV. Because the REB is so well-written, I find that I get more out of reading it than either of the other two, and I tend to use the others primarily for comparison of specific passages. Reading a study bible with its commentary, study aids, and maps is essential for most of us, especially the beginner. This study bible is one of the best for the layman. It strikes a good balance between what I consider to be too much information (Harper NRSV Study Bible) and too little (Oxford Annotated NRSV Bible). My only complaint is that this study bible does not come in a nice leather edition. The only leather REB is the superb edition published by Cambridge, but it contains only text with no study aids or maps.

I carried a Revised English Bible with me through all three years of seminary; and constantly compared it to the Greek and Hebrew texts. Although it is not the most precise, literal translation (here I would lean towards the New Revised Standard because of my personal dislike for the scholarship behind the New American Standard), the sense of language and poetry in the REB is far superior to any reliable translation. For this reason, the REB is the translation that I read from the pulpit. The scholarly articles and footnotes in the Oxford edition are top-notch; although they have a decidedly Anglican flavor in places they are generally ecumenical and quite informative. If you were to only have one study Bible, this is the one I would recommend.

The Revised English Bible is surely the most underrated and under appreciated version of the bible today. It is a thorough revision of the New English Bible, which was a bold and daring completely new translation from the original languages, published in 1961 and 1970. The REB is an accurate, literary, intelligent version of the Holy Scriptures, with dignified language. It is a somewhat free translation, but transparent to the original languages, as theologian Harvey Cox comments. It is not a paraphrase, but a reliable translation for devotions or study, for layperson or scholar. I found that by reading the REB along side my NRSV New Oxford Annotated Bible, 3rd edition, that the REB actually adopts renderings suggested in the NOAB commentary notes (e.g., Genesis 15).

Furthermore, the Oxford Study Bible is one of the very finest study bibles available. True, there are only minor revisions from the 1976 edition, and those mostly for inclusive language and to fit the REB rather than the NEB text. But the notes hold up remarkably well, and I do not see that any of the newer study bibles have much over the Oxford Study Bible. The scholarly articles are also very helpful, and completely brand new. My only complaint is that the print is smaller than the original 1976 edition, but it is still very readable. The Revised English Bible, Oxford Study edition is an excellent study bible. If I was starting all over again, and could only own one edition of the Holy Scriptures, the REB in the Oxford Study Edition would be my choice. It is my new "stranded on a desert island" translation!

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