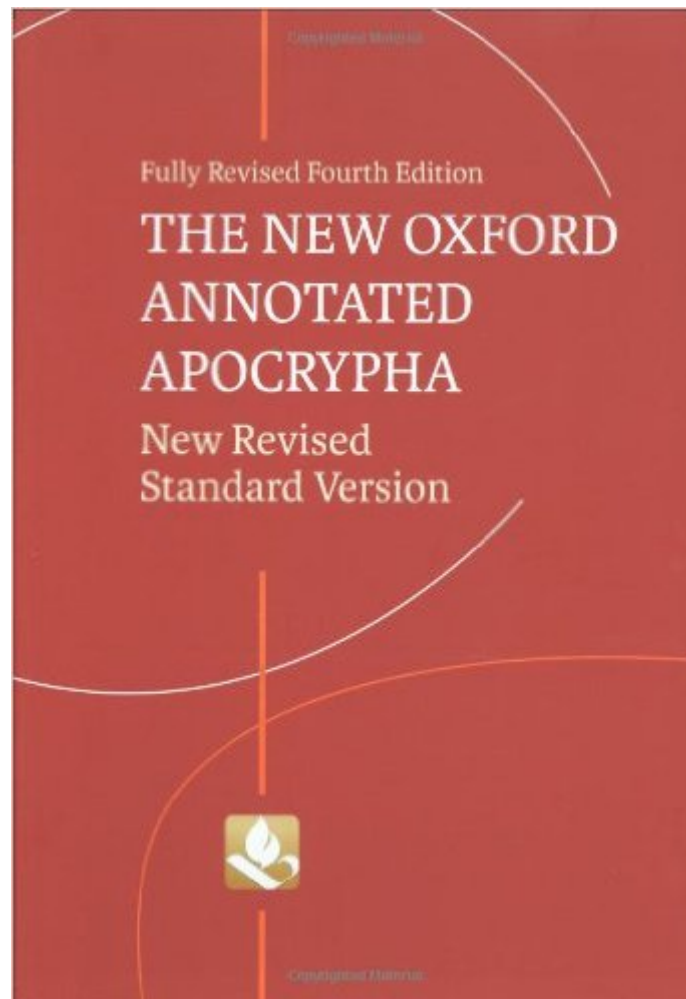


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# The New Oxford Annotated Apocrypha: New Revised Standard Version



## Synopsis

The premier study Bible used by scholars, pastors, undergraduate and graduate students, The New Oxford Annotated Bible offers a vast range of information, including extensive notes by experts in their fields; in-text maps, charts, and diagrams; supplementary essays on translation, biblical interpretation, cultural and historical background, and other general topics. Extensively revised--half of the material is brand new--featuring a new design to enhance readability, and brand-new color maps, the Annotated Fourth Edition adds to the established reputation of this essential biblical studies resource. Many new and revised maps, charts, and diagrams further clarify information found in the Scripture text. In addition, section introductions have been expanded and the book introductions present their information in a standard format so that students can find what they need to know. Of course, the Fourth Edition retains the features prized by students, including single column annotations at the foot of the pages, in-text charts, and maps, a page number-keyed index of all the study materials in the volume, and Oxford's renowned Bible maps. This timely edition maintains and extends the excellence the Annotated's users have come to expect, bringing still more insights, information, and perspectives to bear upon the understanding of the biblical text. Â The renowned New Revised Standard Version Bible translation, the scholarly standard for study of the Bible.Â Wholly revised, and greatly expanded book introductions and annotations.Â Annotations in a single column across the page bottom, paragraphed according to their boldface topical headings. Â In-text background essays on the major divisions of the biblical text.Â Essays on the history of the formation of the biblical canon for Jews and various Christian churches.Â More detailed explanations of the historical background of the text. Â More in-depth treatment of the history and varieties of biblical criticism. Â A timeline of major events in the ancient Near East.Â A full index to all of the study materials, keyed to the page numbers on which they occur.Â A full glossary of scholarly and critical terms.Â 36-page section of full color New Oxford Bible Maps, approximately 40 in-text line drawing maps and diagrams. Classic but not stodgy, up-to-date but not trendy, The New Oxford Annotated Bible: 4th Edition is ready to serve new generations of students, teachers, and general readers.

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## Customer Reviews

I just received copies of the New Oxford Annotated Apocrypha, which is an excerpt of the larger NOAB, 4th edition. I was very pleased with this newest release in a long, distinguished history of Oxford Study Bibles. The physical quality of the book takes a step forward from previous editions. The pages are of a thicker stock, and therefore almost opaque and easy to handle. This is a great improvement on previous editions of the NOA Apocrypha, which used the "onion skin" paper for which Bibles are famous. The font and layout have been well designed to allow for more "white space" on the page to aid reading. The shift to paragraph-style annotations rather than the two-column format is a visual improvement. The fonts are smaller than the third edition that I had been using (the original Murphy-Metzger 3rd edition, not the augmented 3rd), and that's never a good thing with my particular set of eyes. The annotations are more generous than in previous editions, and I regard this as a great step forward. I used to recommend the HarperCollins Study Bible over the NOAB to my students for this reason, but I think that will now change. In the interest of fair disclosure, I am prejudiced toward this edition, having contributed the introduction and annotations to 4 Maccabees (does anyone out there ever really read 4 Maccabees?). But I stand in much more distinguished company. Three of the authors of annotations are immediately recognized as "deans" of Second Temple Judaism and its literature -- John Collins on 3 Maccabees, Lester Grabbe on Wisdom of Solomon, and Daniel Harrington on Ben Sira. Many others are acknowledged specialists on the book for which they provide annotations, such as Theodore Bergren (the foremost scholar on 2 Esdras 1-2, 15-16) on 2 Esdras, John Bartlett (author of a fine guide to this book) on 1 Maccabees, Daniel Schwartz (author of the new standard in commentaries on this book) on 2 Maccabees, and Lawrence Wills (specialist on tales of Jews in foreign courts) on Judith. The remaining contributors are no less distinguished, including, for example, Amy-Jill Levine (whose prolific and consistently solid scholarship defies classification) on Tobit and the Additions to

Daniel. Congratulations to Michael Coogan and his team of editorial colleagues (Marc Brettler, Carol Newsom, and Pheme Perkins) on this remarkable achievement, giving anyone who cares to use this edition such expert guidance on reading and entering into the Scriptures!

There seems to be some confusion regarding the Apocrypha. The Apocrypha are the collection of books (usually between 7-15 depending how you count them and which canon you use), that the early Church used with little controversy. They do not include Gnostic texts such as the Gospel of Mary. When St. Jerome came on the scene he began to question these books because they were missing from the Jewish Canon. But if you look back in history Justin Martyr says that the Jews removed them deliberately because they spoke so clearly of Jesus. Whether that is true is up for debate, but what it illustrates is that the earlier witness was that these books belonged in the Bible. Wisdom of Solomon ch.2 12-20 for example is one of the clearest Messianic prophecies in the whole of the OT. It was not until Luther that these books were seriously considered for elimination once again. He could not remove them altogether as this would have caused an uproar so he moved them to the center between the Testaments and then around 1890 they were so little regarded that they were removed completely by the Bible Societies, who shipped Bibles around the world, for economic reasons. Once this happened they quickly disappeared from the public view and consciousness of most Evangelical and Protestant denominations. So that today we have many conservative Christians not only rejecting their status as the Word of God, but some even going so far as to claim they are demonic in nature. Jesus and the Apostles quoted or at least alluded to these books numerous times. And the argument that the NT writers never mentions them wouldn't stand anyway since if that was the criteria of an inspired OT book, Esther would have to be excluded too. Also these books are included in the Septuagint (the Greek version of the OT which was translated about 300 or so years before Christ). And the Septuagint is the Bible most NT writers quote from, not the Masoretic which the KJV is based on. Hebrews 10:5 is THE example for this. Check the OT cross-reference in your modern Protestant Bible back to Psalm 40:6. Paul says "A body thou hast prepared for me", Psalms says "Mine ears thou hast opened". Was Paul so wrong? No, he was quoting from the Septuagint. I used to be fearful of the dreaded Apocrypha. That was until I realised that the Early Christians almost unanimously accepted it as part of their OT. It's true, in spite of what Evangelical apologists would have you believe. Just read the writings of Polycarp and Justin Martyr. Extremely early examples among many. They speak of the Apocrypha as Scripture, and Justin goes so far, as I've said before, as to accuse the Jews of taking these books out of their Bible because they speak of Christ (Wisdom 2:12-20). Even if you never come to regard

these books as inspired your spiritual life will be enriched by them. They've surely got to be better than the latest best seller by John Eldridge or Rick Warren? I mean Evangelicals avoid these books like the plague. Like they'll be damned to an eternal hell just by looking at one. Yet throughout most of Church history these books were regarded as Scripture - and at the very least were honoured as the highest among non-inspired texts. What has changed our modern views? I believe anyone reading these books with an open mind will be deeply blessed. The men who wrote these books were Godly Jews, who loved God. It is evident that this is the case almost as soon as you begin reading. You will meet a few surprises along the way, but consider that as part of the journey. BTW there are many things the Early Christians believed that we modern Christians do not. It would surprise you to know what they are. Here's a link to a book that I found helpful: [Will the Real Heretics Please Stand Up: A New Look at Today's Evangelical Church in the Light of Early Christianity](#)

Very well done. The only warning I would give is that the annotation is not from a faith perspective like some annotated biblical texts are so if you are looking for Christian faith perspective maybe find a different version but this is worth reading regardless for the historical and factual annotations.

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