



# Columbia Bible College Library Library Resource Guides

## Tools of the Trade

### An Overview of Biblical Studies Resources in the Columbia Bible College Library

The following will provide you with a basic overview of the kinds of reference resources available to you as you carry out research in the area of Biblical studies. Examples of each type of reference work will be listed. For more information on these tools please consult the various user guides in the library.

#### **Bible Dictionaries/Encyclopedias/Handbooks**

A Bible dictionary or encyclopedia (the two are similar) is a great place to start when beginning your research. Dictionaries or encyclopedias can be divided into two groups – single-volume and multi-volume. Use a single-volume dictionary like *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible* [REF 220.3 E26 2000], *HarperCollins Bible Dictionary* [REF 220.3 H295 1996] or *The New Bible Dictionary* [REF 220.3 N532 1996] if you want current research presented in a concise format. Use a multi-volume dictionary or encyclopedia like *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* (6 volumes) [REF 220.3 A539 1992] or *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* (4 volumes) [REF 220.3 I61 1978-1988] if you want a more detailed study of a given topic. All good dictionaries will include a bibliography, noting books and articles recommended for further research.

#### **Atlases**

A Bible atlas will supply you with information on the geographical history of Israel and the Middle East. Good atlases will contain both political and geographical maps and cover the entire history of a region. A good atlas will also have detailed maps not only of cities and towns but also of specific locations. Good Bible atlases include *The Macmillan Bible Atlas* [REF 220.91 O223 A285 1977], the *Zondervan NIV Atlas of the Bible* [REF 220.91 R225 1989], and *The Harper Atlas of the Bible* [REFATLAS 220.91 H293 1987].

#### **Parallel Bibles**

Parallel Bibles are helpful for when you want to compare a certain text from Scripture in a number of different English translations. Recent examples include *The Complete Parallel Bible with the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books* [REF 220.52 B582 C737 1993] (includes NRSV, REB, NAB and New Jerusalem Bible), *Today's Parallel Bible* [REF 220.52 B582 T633 2000] (includes NIV, updated NASB, KJV and NLT), and *The Contemporary Parallel New Testament* [REF 225.52 B582 C761 1997] (includes KJV, NASB, NCV, CEV, NIV, NLT, NKJV and The Message). Finally, there is *The Greek New Testament: UBS4 with NRSV & NIV* [REF 225.48 B582 G793 1993].

#### **Interlinear Bibles**

Interlinear Bibles are helpful for those who have little or no understanding of the original Biblical languages, but want to view the text in its original form. These include *The Interlinear NIV Hebrew-English Old Testament* [REF 221.44 B582 N61 1987] and *The NIV English-Greek New Testament: A Reverse Interlinear* [REF 225.48 B582 N734 2000].

## Bible Concordances

A Bible concordance is an index to Scripture, showing each location of every word with the words arranged in alphabetical order. There are several types of concordances. Some, usually with the word “exhaustive” or “analytical” in the title, will also index the English words to the original Biblical languages. To do this concordances feature a numbering system. The two most commonly used numbering systems are those developed by Strong and by Goodrick and Kohlenberger. The ***Strongest NIV Exhaustive Concordance*** [REF 220.5 2081C G655 N734 2004] is a good NIV concordance that indexes all NIV words and indexes the English words to the original Biblical languages.

Other concordances just give the most important occurrences of significant words. There are also Greek and Hebrew concordances arranged by the original words but with English translations for the verses. Examples are ***The Greek-English Concordance to the New Testament with the New International Version*** [REF 225.48 K79 1997] and ***The Hebrew-English Concordance to the Old Testament: With the New International Version*** [REF 221.44 K79 1998].

## Expository/Theological Dictionaries

Expository or theological dictionaries help you understand the meaning of words found in Scripture. These can be organized by the English word or the Greek/Hebrew word. The ***New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*** [REF 221.3 N532 1997] and ***The NIV Theological Dictionary of New Testament Words*** [REF 225.3 N734 2000] are both indexed using the Goodrick/Kohlenberger number and therefore can be used without a knowledge of the Biblical languages. Other well-known expository dictionaries include ***An Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words*** by W.E. Vine [REF 220.4403 V782 1985] and the ***New International Encyclopedia of Bible Words*** [REF 220.3 R516 N532 1998].

## Commentaries

There are a number of good commentary sets on the reference shelves representing various perspectives on the Biblical texts and good academic scholarship. These are of course augmented by the many additional commentaries in the circulation stacks. The commentaries are arranged on the shelves by the book of the Bible.

## Online Journal Databases

**ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials** is a periodical index that contains citations to hundreds of journal articles. **ProQuest Religion** database is another periodical index. Both contain the full-text of a number of theological journals. Searches can be performed on keywords, authors, subject words, and even scriptural references.

*If you require assistance with any of your library research please consult with library staff.*