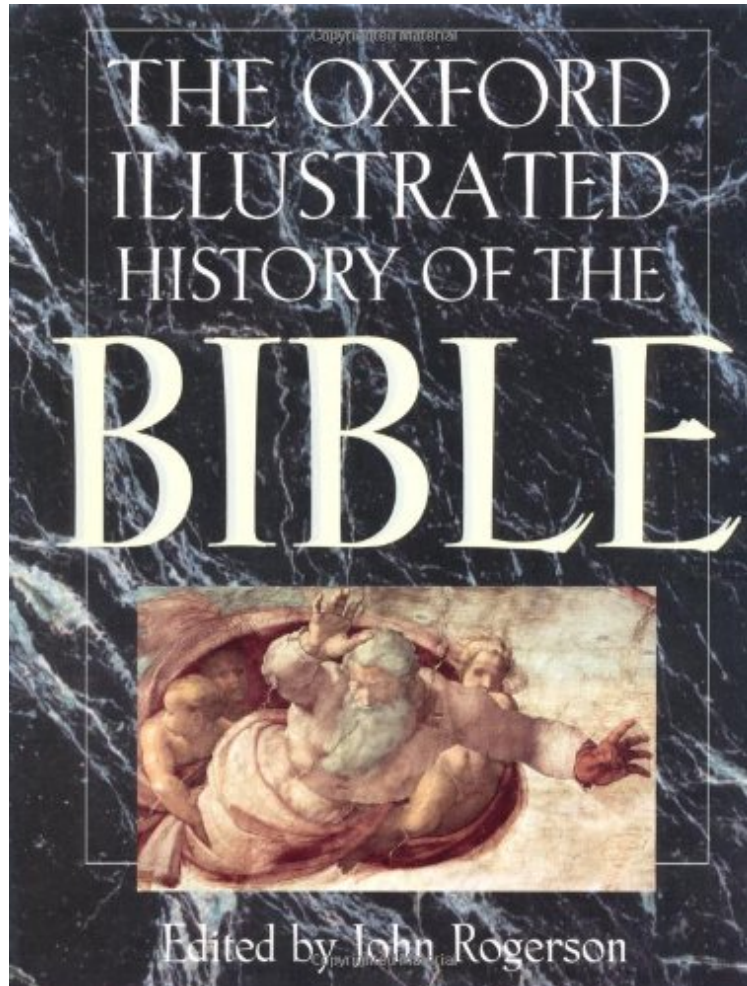


[Library ebook] The Oxford Illustrated History of the Bible

## The Oxford Illustrated History of the Bible

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this new Oxford history, a distinguished team of scholars presents an authoritative account of that story, richly illustrated, and based on the latest research. Readers will learn how a collection of writings in Semitic languages and in Greek--writings that we now call the Books of the Bible--developed over a period of about 800 years and how, even before the Bible existed as one volume, its constituent parts were interpreted and subjected to a scrutiny that no other writing has had to endure. The contributors trace the routes by which the canon of Scripture was determined, shedding light on the many controversies over which writings should be regarded as authoritative and which should be considered Apocrypha and hidden from public use. They describe how over centuries the writings were copied, translated, and printed, and how they were interpreted in Judaism and in the churches in the East and West. It concludes with surveys of how the Bible is used today in feminist criticism, and in the movements for theological liberation in Latin America, Africa, and Europe. The volume also features an index and a guide to further reading. Written by an international team of 17 renowned biblical scholars, and handsomely illustrated with over 150 black-and-white illustrations and 24 pages of color plates, *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Bible* is an essential resource for everyone interested in the origin and interpretation of the Word of God.

From Publishers Weekly Many people are familiar with the concept of "biblical history," but they are less acquainted with the notion that the Bible itself has a history. In *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Bible*, readers will not discover maps of biblical times or charts of the first kings of Israel. They will instead find a detailed series of essays about the canonization process (how these particular books, letters and histories found their way into the Good Book), articles on the study of the Bible through the ages, information about various translations and sections on contemporary approaches to the Bible, including feminist and liberation theologies. Oxford reference books are nothing if not thorough, and this is no exception. Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal Attempting to cover in one modest volume the same ground and then some that the *Cambridge History of the Bible* (1976) covers in three is a daunting task. But what this volume offers is a single-source overview of the origins of the Bible we know (consisting of the Old and New Testaments and the Apocrypha), the transmission and translation of the texts, and the historical and contemporary interpretation and influence of the Bible. Enhancing this overview are numerous color and black-and-white illustrations. One volume obviously cannot treat all details and viewpoints, and this one does a relatively good job of surveying the middle ground. However, readers coming to it first or exclusively will not learn of the more conservative approaches, particularly regarding inspiration, preservation, and canonization. Also, the discussions of such things as Hebrew accents and vocalization and the proto-Masoretic text may be more than some lay readers are able to digest. Thus, though this is a worthy addition to academic and public libraries, it should be supplemented by other references and texts. Craig W. Beard, Univ. of Alabama Lib., Birmingham Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist This hugely ambitious book is intended to introduce every conceivable aspect of the history of the Bible, from its writing, preservation, and canonization to the historical interpretations and contemporary theology concerned with it, all in relatively short articles--a daunting task. Although plenty of gaps could be noted, the results overall are admirable. The two sections on the historical background and the creation of the Bible suffer from the typical flaws of generalized studies; there are plenty of tantalizing hypotheses, but no new information and little scholarly agreement are presented. The other two sections, however, concerned with the Bible's significance throughout history and contemporarily in feminism and liberation theology, provide rare detailed analysis of that historic significance and the many cultural revolutions it has inspired, including the invention of the printing press and Latin American social reform. Although new historical observations are not to be found in it, having so much information so copiously illustrated, albeit mostly in black-and-white, in one volume is gratifying. John Green Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved