



Understanding Your Bible in Context

A Beginning Reading List on First Century Judaism

This list was compiled by the late MRav. Stan Greene Z"l of Congregation Beth T'filah. If you ever have any questions, please email CTOMC at ctomc@eastlink.ca

If we take the time to get to know the world of the children of G-d as they knew it 2,000 to 4,000 years ago, we will more fully understand the Bible. We will be able to unfold verses of the Bible like unfolding the delicate petals of a rose to release its sweet scent.

The first rule of hermeneutics, the art and science of the interpretation of ancient documents, of which the Bible is one, is,

"A text can never mean to us what it could never have meant to its writer or his readers."

So, to fully understand what was being written (and especially not to misunderstand by trying to impose our 21st century definitions and ideas on 2,000-4,000 year old words, phrases and culture) we must diligently study the historical, linguistic, cultural, religious and political context of the times of the writers.

E. W. Bullinger put it this way in the introduction to his book *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible*:

"[ADONAI] has been pleased to give us the revelation of His mind and will in words. It is therefore absolutely necessary that we should understand not merely the meanings of the word themselves, but also the laws which govern their usage and combinations."

In short, to fully understand the Bible without understanding its roots in Judaism is virtually impossible. Especially, you cannot fully understand the K'tuvei HaShalichim (Apostolic Writings) without understanding both First Century Judaism and the Tanakh.

The following list of recommended books is grouped together in the suggested order of acquisition.

The first group has only one book. But, please read it before continuing to group 2.

Please remember, we've got to know the basics, our Aleph-Bet-Gimel's before we can jump ahead. We've got to know how to walk before we run. Have patience. It will come.

Group I: This first book is the absolute best start.

It is required if you really want to begin to understand:

- *Our Father Abraham: Jewish Roots of the Christian Faith*

Wilson, Marvin R. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.
Grand Rapids, MI. ©1999. 395p. ISBN: 0802804233. Trade paperback.

Pursue a more authentically biblical lifestyle by learning about — and celebrating — your Hebrew roots! In this delightful, groundbreaking book (inspiration for the PBS documentary *Jews and Christians: A Journey of Faith*) Dr. Wilson shares his life's work and demonstrates that understanding Jewish history, culture, and thought is crucial to understanding the New Testament.

A PIECE OF ADVICE: Please ignore the questions at the end of each chapter the first time you read through. Please, pretend they are not there.

The second time you read through, go ahead and take the time to address the questions.

If you take the time to answer the questions the first time you read through, you will never finish the book! They are very engaging and can take up a lot of time.

Group II: read any of these three in any order.

- *The Jewish New Testament Commentary*

Stern, David H. Lederer Messianic Jewish Publishers. Baltimore, MD. ©1992. 1,000p. ISBN: 9653590081. Hardcover.

Rediscover the Jewish roots of your faith! A "consciousness-raising" resource for understanding the New Testament. Using historical, linguistic, and exegetical notes; Hebrew literary parallels; First Century rabbinic

writings; and discussions of modern Jewish issues, David Stern's *Jewish New Testament Commentary* offers an exciting way for Christians to understand the New Testament from a Jewish perspective.

Stern, a Messianic Jew living in Jerusalem, seeks to bridge the spiritual and cultural gap between Christians and Jews by relating the New Testament text to the Tanakh (Old Testament) in the historical setting of the First Century.

This scholarly work promotes a messianic approach to the Scriptures and creates a forum for Christians, Jews, and Messianic Jews to discuss the essential Jewishness of the New Testament.

This book is the companion volume to *The Jewish New Testament*, below, by the same author and from the same publisher.

□ ***The Jewish New Testament***

Stern, David H. Lederer Messianic Jewish Publishers. Baltimore, MD. ©1992. 400p. ISBN: 9653590081 - Trade paperback. ISBN: 9653590065 - Hardcover.

This book is the companion volume to *The Jewish New Testament Commentary*, above, by the same author and from the same publisher.

By expressing the original and essential Jewishness of the New Testament, this modern English translation expands your understanding of Scripture and accentuates the oneness of Jews with Christians. It is handy to get this book, too, since in his Commentary, Stern has used the actual First Century Hebrew names, *Ya'akov* instead of *James* and proper Hebrew words and terms for many things, such as *mikveh* for *baptism*, *talmidim* for *disciples*, *cohanim* for *priests*, etc. Having the *Jewish New Testament* handy saves having to try to figure out what is being said in the Commentary.

At the moment, even though we use it in CTOMC congregations as a pulpit Bible, we cannot recommend Stern's *Complete Jewish Bible*. Stern admits his translation of the Tanakh portion has errors. I have been given to understand that what happened was that after the phenomenal success of his New Testament and Commentary, he was under quite some pressure to do a translation of the full Bible. He took the 1917 public domain text Jewish Publications Society Tanakh and rapidly updated the language. Unfortunately, and Stern admits this, he rushed the project. There are places where the translation is opposite what the Scripture says. We don't recommend the current edition of the *Complete Jewish Bible*. On the other hand, if he does a "re-do," that may be worth seeing. But, until then

□ ***Everyman's Talmud: The major Teachings of the Rabbinic Sages.***

Cohen, Abraham. Schocken Books. New York. ©1949. 405p. ISBN: 0805210326. Trade paperback.

This book is an elegant introduction to the definitive teachings of Biblical Judaism, the Judaism Yeshua practiced and taught. It will surprise non-Jewish readers who have never actually taken the time to investigate for themselves what Biblical Judaism really taught but rather have only relied on what others have **told them** First Century Judaism taught.

By quoting directly from what the Talmud teaches, *Everyman's Talmud* will let you see Yeshua was teaching First Century Judaism to His talmidim (disciples) who then taught others. *Everyman's Talmud* makes the wisdom of the rabbinic sages accessible to scholars, students, and laypeople. Cohen offers a lucid distillation of dominant Talmudic themes, including G-d and the universe; prayer and Torah study; the soul and its destiny; prophecy and revelation; choosing to live a righteous life; and the Messiah and the world to come.

Group III: Next, get these three and read them in any order.

□ ***God's Appointed Times***

Kasden, Barney. Lederer Messianic Jewish Publishers. Baltimore, MD. ©1993. 155p. ISBN: 1880226545

The biblical holy days are not just for Jews. They are for anyone who says they believe in the Bible. Christians, too, can receive the blessing of these glorious days, the greatest object lessons in the Bible. In this book, Barney Kasdan, leader of Kehilat Ariel in San Diego, one of the largest messianic congregations in the world, explains every holy day described in Scripture. He teaches about the major and minor holy days, ever mindful that he is writing to both Jews and Christians. Beginning with the Sabbath, he writes about Passover, Firstfruits, Pentecost, Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, the Feast of Tabernacles, Hanukkah - the Festival of Dedication, and Purim. Each chapter features historical background, traditional Jewish observance, relevance to the New Testament, prophetic significance, and a practical guide for believers, including recipes, songs, and crafts.

□ ***Yeshua: A Guide to the Real Jesus and the Original Church.***

Moseley, Dr. Ron. Lederer Messianic Jewish Publishers. Baltimore, MD. ©1996. ISBN: 1880226685.

This refreshing book by Dr. Ron Moseley opens up the history of the Jewish roots of the Christian faith. Yeshua (Jesus) used numerous Jewish

idioms in his teachings. Learn many interesting facts about Yeshua. Learn what He meant by what He taught.

□ ***Understanding the Difficult Words of Jesus: New Insights from a Hebraic Perspective.***

Bivin, David and Blizzard, Roy, Jr. Destiny Image Publishers. Shippensburg, PA. ©1994. ISBN: 156043550X. 144 pages, paper.

You'll be surprised at how the puzzling sayings of Yeshua suddenly make sense when retranslated into Hebrew. Bivin and Blizzard powerfully demonstrate how Yeshua's teachings in the Gospels originated in Hebrew, not Aramaic. You'll gain a greater appreciation for Yeshua's Jewishness.

Group IV: Fourthly, get these four books and read them in any order.

□ ***Paul and Palestinian Judaism.***

Sanders, E. P. Fortress Press. Minneapolis, MN. ©1977. 627p. ISBN: 0800618998.

This book corrects centuries of misunderstanding First Century Judaism. It is written directly out of encyclopedic Ancient sources of Yeshua's time: Josephus, Philo, the Mishnah, Talmud, Tosefta, Mekilta, Dead Sea Scrolls, Apocrypha, and Pseudepigrapha.

□ ***Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era: The Age of the Tannaim, 2 volumes.***

Moore, George Foote. Hendrickson Publishers. ©1977. 1266p. All three volumes in two hardcovers. ISBN: 1565632869.

For the first time in 25 years, you can get Moore's classic in its entirety! Drawing on his remarkable familiarity with the primary sources (Talmud, Mishnah, Midrash, and other writings), he examines the Jewish world of the New Testament: history, theology, religious observances, views toward morality and piety, and reflections on the hereafter.

This is one of the most unbiased works on First Century Judaism ever written. It does not carry forward any of the false teachings about what Judaism taught which are so commonly put forward as truth by those who call themselves experts but have never taken the time to look at the actual First Century documents of the rabbis.

Unlike these "teachers" who quote commentators who are quoting commentators who are quoting commentators, etc., etc., etc., none of whom ever quotes an actual primary source, Moore cites primary sources for everything he writes about First Century Judaism.

□ ***From Sabbath to Sunday: A Historical Investigation of the Rise of Sunday Observance in Early Christianity.***

Bacchiocchi, Samuele. The Pontifical Gregorian university Press. Rome. ©1977.

It's available from Dr. Bacciocchi's website www.bibleperspectives.com

Note: this book has far more information about the early body of Believers than just the discussion of how, contrary to the common teaching, Sunday worship did ***not*** arise in the first century, but not until the mid-Second century.

Bacchiocchi shows from primary source documents Sunday worship arose in the Gentile side of the body of Messiah about the middle of the second century as the Gentile side of the Body of Messiah in Rome sought to lessen the persecution on itself. Being both "Christians" and worshipping on Shabbat in the synagogues, the Gentile side of the body of Messiah was being persecuted as both "Christians" and as Jews (who were being newly and cruelly persecuted because of the Bar Kokhba rebellion around 135 C.E.)

Bacchiocchi documents how the Gentile side of the body of Believers in Rome, chose to look more like all the rest of the Romans by worshipping on Sunday like all good Romans, choosing to stop all that "Jewish stuff" by distancing itself from its Messianic Jewish brethren who continued to worship on Shabbat.

The book covers Rav Sha'ul's (the Apostle Paul) position on the place of Torah in the life of the Believer in Yeshua; The Resurrection - Appearances and the Origin of Sunday Observance; Rome and the Origin of Sunday worship; Anti-Judaism and the Origin of Sunday worship; Sun-Worship and the Origin of Sunday worship.

To find an answer to the question, "How did the change come about from Saturday to Sunday in early Christianity?" Dr. Samuele Bacchiocchi spent five years at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome, examining the most ancient documents available.

The investigation establishes that the change from Saturday to Sunday began approximately one century after the death of Christ, as a result of

an interplay of political, social, pagan and Christian factors. The change in the day of rest and worship was not merely a change of names or of numbers, but rather a change of meaning, authority and experience. Essentially it was a change from a Holy Day into a holiday.

□ **Messianic *Jewish Manifesto*.**

Stern, David H. Lederer Messianic Jewish Publishers. Baltimore, MD. ©1989 by David H. Stern. ISBN: 9653590022. Trade paperback.

A challenge to both Jews who honor Yeshua as Yis'ra'el's Messiah and others involved with the movement to catch the vision for its destiny, which is to heal the split between the Church and the Jewish people. Simultaneously 100% Messianic and 100% Jewish, we reject the "either-or" demanded by many Christians and Jews. Messianic Judaism is right, a radical solution, an idea whose time has come. A call to action for Messianic Jews and a source of information for others whether in favor, opposed, or just curious.

Group V: Fifth, get these two.

□ ***Jesus: The Jewish Theologian*.**

Young, Brad H. Hendrickson. Peabody, MA. ©1995. 320p. ISBN: 1575730602. Trade paperback.

Prophet, madman, Messiah -- Yeshua was all these things to the people around him. But most importantly, he was a Jew, just like them. Drawing insights and facts from First Century Jewish literature, archaeology, and tradition, Young shows you why understanding Yeshua's Jewishness is crucial for interpreting the New Testament and for understanding the nature of Messianic faith. from Hendrickson.

□ ***Paul: The Jewish Theologian*.**

Young, Brad H. Hendrickson. Peabody, MA. ©1997. ISBN: 1565632486. Trade paperback.

Paul: the Jewish Theologian reveals Sha'ul of Tarsus as a man who, all the way to the end of his life, was highly respected by the elders of the synagogues (Acts 28:17) and never left Judaism (Acts 28:18). Young disagrees with long held notions that Hellenism was the context which most influenced Paul's communication of the Gospel. Only in rightly aligning Paul as rooted in his Jewishness and training as a Pharisee can he be correctly interpreted. Young asserts that Paul's view of the Torah

was always positive, and separates Yeshua's mission among the Jews from Paul's call to the Gentiles.

Group VI: Finally, draw any and all in any order from the rest of this list (except as noted):

Note: these next three books give you theological, historical and prophetic apologia from actual first century Jewish sources.

□ ***Answering Jewish Objections to Jesus, Volume One: General and Historical Objections.***

Brown, Michael L. Baker Books. Grand Rapids, MI. ©2000.
ISBN: 080106063X. 272p. Trade paperback.

When it comes to Jewish Christian apologetics, the best answers are those that respond to actual objections. Incisive and direct, this book provides an honest, fair, and thorough discussion of 35 common objections on general and historical themes. Believers and seekers alike will appreciate Brown's spiritually focused answers, which are thoroughly documented and footnoted.

□ ***Answering Jewish Objections to Jesus. Volume Two: Theological Objections.***

Brown, Michael L. Baker Books. Grand Rapids, MI. ©2000.
ISBN: 0801063345. 352p. Trade paperback.

When Christians share their faith with Jewish friends and family, difficult questions arise. Michael Brown provides defensible answers in this second volume of a 3-volume series. An expert in Christian Jewish apologetics, he grapples with 28 weighty objections, showing how New Testament teachings on atonement, God's nature, and the Messiah's divinity are in harmony with Jewish beliefs.

□ ***Back to the Sources: Reading the Classic Jewish Texts.***

Holtz, Barry W., ed. A Touchstone Book Published by Simon and Schuster. New York. ©1986. ISBN: 0671605968. Trade paperback.

How does the modern reader go about finding out what the basic natures of the great texts of Judaism are? Many people have read the Torah, perhaps the entire Tanakh. But, few people could accurately tell you what

the Talmud or the Midrashim are. Perhaps even fewer know enough about the medieval commentators such as RaMBaM, Rashi or Ibn Ezra, to understand why they are important. Then, there is Kabbalah -- most folks know what they know about Kabbalah from the internet. Feh! New Age nonsense! What about our liturgy, the Siddur -- how many people are truly filled in on what that is actually all about?

Barry Holtz has had nine Jewish scholars create an overview “survey class” of Judaism’s classic texts for the modern reader. By bringing in the cultural and historical contexts of the times they were written, this book brings understanding to the classic Jewish texts. Holtz has explained, “We have tried to ask: ‘How might they speak to a modern reader?’ Our goal is to fascinate, to illuminate, and in a modest sense, to inspire, by revealing something of the marvelous edifice of the Jewish textual tradition.”

□ ***History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ.***

Schürer, Emil. (edited by Geza Vermes, Fergus Millar, Martin Goodman, and Matthew Black). T. & T. Clark. ©1987. ISBN: 567054901.

Note: this is a four-volume set. Be advised, it costs about \$225.00, but it is worth it.

For more than 100 years, Schürer’s critical presentation of the whole evidence concerning Jewish history, institutions, and literature from 175 B.C. to A.D. 135 had been invaluable. However, it had grown increasingly out of date. This edition by Geza Vermes, Fergus Millar, Martin Goodman, and Matthew Black offers a fresh English text and a full revision. Much new archaeological, epigraphical, numismatic, and literary evidence is included, and the bibliographies are updated. Four hardcovers, from T. & T. Clark.

HOWEVER, DO NOT BUY:

The History of the Jewish People in the Time of Jesus Christ 5 Volumes. Emil Schürer. Hendrickson Publishers. 1994. ISBN: 1565630491.

Do not be fooled into thinking this is a great \$50 alternative to the revised, 1987 version just above this 5 volume set. It is not. This set of 5 books, just above, is 100 years out of date, hideously anti-Judaic and anti-Torah, and full of falsehoods about Judaism. The one listed just above it has been updated and much corrected. Although the 4-volume set still has some anti-Judaism left in it, the discerning reader who has read the majority of the books in this list above should, by this time, be able to cull the grain from the chaff.

ALSO, DO NOT BUY:

The Jews in the Time of Jesus: An Introduction. Stephen M. Wylen. Paulist Press. Mahwah, NJ.

This book is decidedly anti-Judaic and anti-nomian (anti-Law). It perpetuates many centuries-old misconceptions and down-right lies and has very few, if any, actual insights into First Century Israel.

DO BUY THESE NEXT FOUR by Alfred Edersheim .

Edersheim was a 19th-century minister, biblical scholar, and leading authority on the practices of Judaism preceding and during the early Christian era. Although these last four books by Edersheim are anti-Judaic and anti-nomian (anti-Law, anti-Torah), they are chock full of valuable cultural, historical, linguistic and religious contextual material.

Again, the discerning reader who has read the majority of the books in the list above should, by this time, be able to cull the grain from the chaff.

The printed books have been proofed and edited. However, you can also find the full OLDER, public domain texts from the late 1800s of these four books on the 'net. A Google search on "Edersheim" will net about 18,000 sites where you can get the older text of these books.

For instance, all four of the 1800s texts can be found at:

www.philologos.org/online.htm

Three of the four (Bible History: Old Testament is missing) can be found at:

www.ccel.org/e/edersheim/

If you want the printed texts, you can get the whole set of four books, *Bible History: Old Testament; The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah; Sketches of Jewish Social Life; and The Temple: Its Ministry and Services*; four hardcovers, from Hendrickson for about \$50.00 at Christian Book Distributors (you save about \$10.00 by buying them as a set).

If you want to read a little about each, or you want to purchase them individually, you can continue, below:

Bible History: Old Testament, Updated Edition.

Edersheim, Alfred. Hendrickson. Peabody, MA. ©1995. ISBN: 15653165X. 1040p. Hardcover.

Get a look at “the big picture” of G-d’s story in the Tanakh; Complete and unabridged, Edersheim’s 1890 classic draws on criticism, biblical geography, and archaeology to examine the time from creation to the captivity of Israel and Judah. Newly updated, this edition features additional maps and easy-to-read Arabic numbers instead of Roman numerals.

□ ***The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah.***

Edersheim, Alfred. Hendrickson. Peabody, MA. ©1993.
ISBN: 0943575834. 1264p. Hardcover.

This is a well-known reference on the life of Messiah and is now available in one unabridged volume. This storehouse of New Testament background information features text reset in modern print and several new maps and illustrations. In addition, Roman numerals have been changed to Arabic numbers, Greek and Hebrew words transliterated, and the indexes corrected and updated.

□ ***The Temple: Its Ministry and Services.***

Edersheim, Alfred. Hendrickson. Peabody, MA. ©1994. ISBN: 156531366.
332 p. Hardcover.

Y’rushalayim’s temple represented the glory of Yis’ra’el’s past and the splendor of its future when the Messiah would reign. Edersheim captures the significance of the temple for both the Jews and early Christians. You’ll see the grandeur of Herod’s temple and feel the anguish of its destruction. This edition portrays Edersheim’s knowledge of the temple with more than 75 illustrations and photos.

□ ***Sketches of Jewish Social Life.***

Edersheim, Alfred. Hendrickson. Peabody, MA. ©1994. ISBN: 156531382.
274p. Hardcover.

Now Edersheim’s classic work on the cultural world of Yeshua and the apostles is available in an easy-to-read edition that makes studying more enjoyable and rewarding. This invaluable resource reflects Edersheim’s encyclopedic familiarity with ancient Jewish sources, and helpful black & white photos and maps of Yis’ra’eil enhance the text.

Highly Recommended Reference Books

Concordances, Analytical Concordances, Lexicons, Expository Dictionaries, Grammars

The Strongest Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, 21st Century Edition

Strong, James, S.T.D., LL.D. Fully revised and corrected by Kohlenberger, John R., III and Swanson, James A. Zondervan Corp. Grand Rapids, MI. © 2001 ISBN: 0310233437. 1808p.

You will **not** use Strong's definitions. You will **only** use Strong's to find out what the actual underlying Hebrew, Aramaic or Greek word is at any point in the Bible so that you can know what word to study in the other references, below. **NEVER** rely on Strong's definition of any word.

Also, do **not** get one of the "condensed" Strong's. Get this "Exhaustive Concordance." It has every word in the Bible. If you get a "condensed" version, you will invariably be looking for a word which the editors chose not to include. (Well . . . at least that's the way it works for me.)

That all being said, this "Strongest" version of Strong's is probably the most accurate, and most up-to-date Strong's concordance on the market. The compilers used the latest available scholarly biblical databases of the words in the Bible and current computer technology, to fill in the many omissions and many errors found in the original Strong's.

All the other "latest" versions are merely cosmetic patch-ups of the original and merely make the original Strong's errors look very pretty, clear and clean.

This twenty-first century edition is far more accurate and complete than any other Strong's on the market. In fact, it's claim to be the only truly exhaustive concordance to the KJV, is probably true.

Since this concordance is based on the KJV text, you will also need a KJV Bible. For whatever word you are studying in your modern translation (NASB, NIV, NKJV), you will look up the corresponding verse in the KJV, then look that word up in this concordance to find out what the underlying Hebrew, Aramaic or Greek word is for further study.

- ☐ **Reference Book Four-Pack:**
- ☐ *Brown-Driver-Brigg's Hebrew and English Lexicon*
- ☐ *Wigram's Englishman's Hebrew Concordance*
- ☐ *Wigram's Greek Concordance*
- ☐ *Thayer's Greek Lexicon*

The four-book set costs about \$75.00, while if purchased singly the four books total about \$80.00.

If you're serious about studying Scripture in its original language, then this resource will be of great help to you. These four classic references are coded to Strong's numbering system, so you don't have to know Hebrew or Greek. You just start with your Strong's Concordance to find the Strong's number for the word you are studying and then come here.

This set includes:

- ***The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon***

Brown, Francis; Driver, S. R.; and Briggs, Charles A.
Clarendon Press. Oxford. © 1978. 1216p. Hardcover.

This is **THE** classic Hebrew Lexicon, commonly called, "Brown-Driver-Brigg's" or simply, "BDB." It is, perhaps, the most useful Hebrew lexicon available to the English-speaking student. This classic 1906 edition is a Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Tanakh with an appendix containing the Biblical Aramaic based on the Lexicon of William Gesenius. It is coded to Strong's, allowing even those who do not know Hebrew ready access to this valuable tool. Definitions and Tanakh usage are given for each word including the differing definitions of verbs in their various stem forms.

- ***The Englishman's Hebrew Concordance of the Old Testament***

Wigram, George V. Hendrickson Publishers. © 1996.
ISBN: 1565632087. 1682p.

Another concordance? Yes. With an important difference. This concordance groups the Hebrew verbs according to their stems. That is, it tells you the actual form and usage of each Hebrew verb as found in each verse. This and BDB may be your most important tools of exegesis, reading the meaning out of words in a verse.

Knowing the verb stem form lets you go the right section of the BDB definition. Knowing the verb stem form is important because it lets you know whether, in Sh'mot (Exodus) 3:6, Moshe "is afraid to look towards God" (Qal stem) or whether Moshe "is afraid he 'will be caused' to look towards God" (Hiphil stem), which should cause us to ask, "Caused by Whom?" and what does that tell us about Moshe's attitude toward the G-d of his father?

Knowing the stem form of a specific verb tells us whether it should be translated "ate," or (intensive, Piel-form) "consumed," or whether someone merely "dropped" something or "dashed it to pieces" (intensive, Piel-form).

Looking at the form of the verb stem tells us that whenever ADONAI speaks a prophecy, He does so in what we would call the past tense (Perfect) and He does so in the most intense form possible (Piel). In other words when ADONAI speaks, it is a done deal. Period.

Every Hebrew and Aramaic word of the Tanakh is listed in Hebrew alphabetical order, and coded to Strong's. This allows even those who do not know Hebrew to use this work.

- ***Wigram's Englishman's Greek Concordance of the New Testament***

Wigram, George V. Hendrickson Publishers. © 1996.
ISBN: 1565632079. 1020p. Hardcover.

If you have to make a choice to buy only one Greek concordance, and you also have Greek New Testament, you might not want to purchase Wigram's Englishman's Greek Concordance of the New Testament at this time, but rather, purchase Perschbacher's New Analytical Greek Lexicon, below. If you can afford two, Wigram's has certain features Perschbacher does not, and vice versa. You can always get Wigram's later.

What? **Another**, another concordance? Yes and yes. Also with an important difference: every Greek word in the New Testament is listed in Greek alphabetical order with verse references (along with a brief rendering in English of every verse in which that word appears). This allows you to **easily** compare the various ways the word was translated into English. Entries are coded to Strong's Concordance for additional assistance and each Greek word is

defined and used in context. This is the Greek concordance for non-specialists.

- ***Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament***

Thayer Joseph H. Hendrickson Publishers. © 1996.
ISBN: 1565632095 726p. Hardcover. .

This is the affordable first choice for cash-strapped Greek students. This edition of Thayer's is coded to Strong's numbers, facilitating ease of entry for beginners. Based on the German lexicon by C.L.W. Grimm, it adds comprehensive extrabiblical citations and etymological information, expanded references to other works, increased analysis of textual variations, and discussion of New Testament synonyms. Thayer's limitation is that it is somewhat dated being a pre-papyri lexicon.

- ***Perschbacher's New Analytical Greek Lexicon***

Perschbacher Wesley J. Hendrickson Publishers. © 1990.
ISBN: 0943575338. 449p. Hardcover.

Every single entry in Perschbacher's New Analytical Greek Lexicon is completely parsed, that is, the grammatical form of each entry, nouns and verbs are identified consistently. The lexicon is keyed to Strong's numbering system, and is in Greek alphabetical order.

What Perschbacher does **not** do is to list every verse reference for each Greek word. It does list every form of every Greek word used in the Greek New Testament, but to use this analytical concordance effectively you must also have a Greek New Testament so you can see the form of the Greek word you are studying.

Analytical Key to the Old Testament, 4 Volumes

Owens, John Joseph. Baker Book House. Grand Rapids, MI. © 1989.
Four Volumes. Hardcover Total number of Pages: 3558.

Although this is expensive (about \$160.00), this is **THE** grammatical aid for the Hebrew Bible. It covers **every single Hebrew word** in order as found in the text of the Hebrew Bible. Owens moves word-by-word, verse by verse, through Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia (BHS) to grammatically parse **every single word** and phrase (not just verbs, but nouns, prepositions, adjectives, adverbs, pre-fixes, suffixes, conjunctions, everything).

Owens also lists the page number of each word in the Brown-Driver-Briggs lexicon. Root forms are also supplied for all verbs. There is also a parallel translation into English. This is an excellent tool for students at any level.

Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, 2 vols.,

Harris, R. Laird, Editor; Archer, Gleason L. Jr., Associate Editor; Waltke, Bruce K., Associate Editor. Moody Press. Chicago, IL. © 1980. ISBN: 0802486495. 1152p. Hardcover.

This extensive, scholarly work includes discussions of nearly every Hebrew word of theological significance in the Tanakh, plus brief definitions of all other words found in Brown, Driver and Briggs Hebrew Lexicon. Keyed to Strong's Concordance, this book has been a longtime favorite of serious students of the Bible. The same material which was in the former two-volume set is now reprinted in this one volume for easy usage.

Features:

- More than 1,400 articles written by 43 OT scholars
- 400 sub-entries giving definitions only
- Virtually exhaustive bibliographies of published material
- Special section of Aramaic words used in the Tanakh

Figures of Speech Used in the Bible

Bullinger E.W. Baker Book House. Grand Rapids, MI. © 1968. ISBN: 0801005590. 1104p. Hardcover.

In this resource, Bullinger describes 217 distinct Scripture figures of speech, defined as a word or sentence in a peculiar form, different from its original or simplest meaning or use. Each figure includes the pronunciation and etymology, as well as passages of Scripture in which it appears, and a full explanation. Nearly 8,000 passages are cited; helpful indexes.

Dictionary of Judaism in the Biblical Period

Neusner, Jacob & Green, William Scott eds. Hendrickson Publishers. © 1999. ISBN: 1565634586. 700p. Hardcover.

This dictionary utilizes the writings of Judaism from the time of the prophet Malakhi to the completion of the Babylonian Talmud (450 B.C.E.--600

C.E.). You'll find definitions of concepts, beliefs, events, people, places, customs, religious rites, theological terms, and essential vocabulary relevant to the formative age of both Judaism and Christianity. The book appears to include many Christian as well as Jewish scholars. It is the work of seventy, or so, contributors from institutions such as Princeton Theological Seminary, Hebrew University, Notre Dame, Jewish Theological Seminary, Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley, and Tel Aviv University.

Although this book is of use in understanding many of the basics of the time, there are some things to be aware of. The book takes a very liberal view on many things. For instance, it holds that the time of the Torah's "final formation" not until about 450BCE. Also, the book basically does not have a grasp on Messianic Judaism, nor, in some ways, even the true Judaic background of the B'rit Chadashah and it shows through in places. Such as when it refers to the Gospels as "...part of an anti-Jewish polemic" (p.334).

Nelson's Illustrated Manners and Customs of the Bible

Vos, Howard F. Thomas Nelson Publishers. © 1999. ISBN: 0785211942. 661p. Hardcover.

Of the many, many "Manners and Customs" books out there, this is the one to get.

A little while ago, I (Stan Greene) decided to see what all the different "Manners and Customs" books had to say for themselves and purchased nearly a dozen different ones. This comprehensive and readable guide puts the Bible into cultural context by studying the effects of geography, government, family, and more. In my NSHO, this one is the most complete, the most up-to-date, the most modern in language and the best organized.

It is organized in three ways.

First, it is arranged in twenty "one century" chapters in biblical order covering the time from Abraham to the First Century.

Second, each chapter is broken into sections on "The Land," "Government," "Religion," "Warfare," "Housing and Furniture," "Diet and Foodstuffs," "Dress," "Family Life" and "Work, Travel and Commerce." At the end of each section there are pointers to the page where you would find the same topic in both the previous and the next century.

Third, it has an extensive index. So, you can easily find any particular subject.

So, you can pick a particular century and fill yourself in on the entire cultural, historical, religious picture of that one particular century. Or, you can choose a topic, "Family Life," say, and follow it through the twenty centuries from Abraham to the end of the First Century.

This book will help you better understand how the people of the Bible really lived. It includes over 30 pages of color photographs, informative sidebars, and comprehensive indexes.

Hebrew Grammars

English language text

□ ***A Grammar for Biblical Hebrew, Revised Edition.***

Seow, C. L. Abingdon Press. Nashville, TN. © 1995. ISBN: 0687157862. 308p.

A Grammar for Biblical Hebrew is an introductory Hebrew grammar for college level students and above. It covers the fundamentals of Hebrew grammar and helps beginning students read the Hebrew Bible. This grammar is intended to be used in the classroom. It contains: every Hebrew word that occurs 100 or more times in the Bible, and several that occur 50 times or more. The book has several chapters on Hebrew poetry and prose, portions from every book of the Old Testament, and presentations of the standard dictionaries and their use. All examples in the book are from the Bible itself. C.L. Seow is assistant professor of Old Testament at Princeton Theological Seminary.

Spanish language text

□ ***Nociones Esenciales del Hebreo Biblico.***

Yates, Kyle. Casa Bautista. El Paso, TX. © 1984. ISBN: 0311420567.

This may be the best Spanish language introductory text on Biblical Hebrew. It is a very clear, simply presented introductory Hebrew grammar on the essential concepts of Biblical Hebrew for beginning students. Even if you are not fluent in Spanish, there are useful tables in the book.

This text can only be purchased through the publisher for \$14.75. Their website is: www.casabautista.org

Currently they are working on their website and you cannot find this book on the site. However, you can call them toll free at: (800) 755-5958

Living Judaism Daily

How did Yeshua and His talmidim live their faith daily? The books below should help you understand this better and approach that daily living as a goal. The books by Rabbi Donin describe Modern Jewish daily living, but the reader who has read through the should have developed sufficient discernment to recognize First Century daily living customs and traditions and also be able to see the value of many customs developed later.

Remember, a tradition is only empty if you make it so. Judaism does not advocate you to perform empty, ritualistic traditions. Rather that you must understand what you do, and do what you do with kavannah, intention of the heart, or it is of no worth.

By reading the books below, you will see what the meanings are and have been behind the deep, rich traditions of the faith Yeshua and His talmidim practiced all day, every day.

- ***God's appointed Customs***

Kasdan, Barney. Lederer Messianic Jewish Publishers. Baltimore, MD. © 1998. ISBN: 1880226634. 170P. Trade Paperback.

Are the Hebrew traditions described in Scripture just for Jews? Since Yeshua himself observed them, learn how G-d's Appointed Customs can be part of any believer's lifestyle! Messianic congregation leader Barney Kasdan offers fascinating historical background on traditional Jewish observances, demonstrates how they relate to New Testament teaching, and provides a practical guide for Christians wishing to observe these customs within the context of a biblical lifestyle.

- ***The Complete Idiot's Guide to Understanding Judaism***

Blech, Rabbi Benjamin. Alpha Books. © 1999 ISBN: 0028631919. 352p. Trade paperback.

This book can be found at many Judaica stores and at Amazon.com.

From the teachings of the Torah to the meaning of the holidays, this work offers an introduction to Judaism. It offers an account of Judaic history from the time of the Pharaohs through painful events like the Holocaust and triumphant ones like the creation of modern-day Yis'ra'eil.

You're no idiot, of course. You know that in the Bible, Yom Kippur is the Day of Atonement and that Saturday, known as the Sabbath, is the day of rest. But when

it comes to understanding Jewish traditions, rituals, prayers, and holidays, you may feel like you're parting and crossing the Red Sea without God's help.

Understanding Judaism, its roots, its beliefs, and its traditions is crucial to understanding its people, its leaders and the whole Bible itself.

The Complete Idiot's Guide to Understanding Judaism, written in a warm, conversational style by Rabbi Benjamin Blech, is a fun and easy-to-understand primer to every aspect of the ancient faith Yeshua practiced.

- ***To Pray As a Jew: A Guide to the Prayer Book and the Synagogue Service***

Donin, Hayim Halevy. Basic Books. Reissue edition. © 1991. ISBN: 0465086330. Trade paperback.

This book can be found at many Judaica stores. It can be found at Amazon.com for about \$14.00.

The Jewish prayer book, or siddur, remains the standard text from which children in Jewish schools learn to read. Yet many adult Jews are unfamiliar with the siddur and are confused by prayer services. Others know the prayer book's Hebrew texts by rote but do not really comprehend them. Judaism, though, demands that you do what you do with kavannah, intention of the heart.

Rabbi Hayim Halevy Donin writes for both kinds of readers in this classic devotional guide, reviews the basic shape of a Jewish prayer service and then begins his survey of prayers (all of which are quoted here in both Hebrew and English) with the Shemoneh Esrei, the core of every service. One of the most appealing qualities of the book is the author's penchant for reminding readers to be mindful of the practical dimension of prayer life:

"Unless prayer is also accompanied by the traits of character and ethical behavior that Judaism demands, prayer is no indication of piety at all. One need only stop to consider that in real life, evil men pray too."

- ***To Be a Jew: A Guide to Jewish Observance in Contemporary Life***

Donin, Hayim Halevy. Basic Books. Reissue edition. © 1991. ISBN: 0465086322. 338p. Trade paperback.

This book can be found at many Judaica stores and at Amazon.com.

To Be a Jew, Rabbi Hayim Halevy Donin's classic guide to Jewish life, philosophy, and law has guided generations of Americans, Europeans, and Israelis to discover the treasures of their own religious traditions.

First published in 1972, the book still stands as a reliable, practical and versatile resource for everyone from young girls preparing for bat mitzvah to old men returning to their spiritual roots. The book begins with an overview of Judaism's basic credo (including chapters on Israel's people, land, G-d, and Torah), moves on to describe the laws governing Jews' daily lives, the Jewish calendar, and "The Special Occasions of Life" from birth to death and mourning. One great strength of *To Be a Jew* is its blending of folk wisdom and scholarly learning.

Rabbi Donin not only describes what right belief and righteous action look like but provides a rationale for these observances that engages and embraces the basic conditions of modern life.

- ***To Raise a Jewish Child: A Guide for Parents***

Donin, Hayim Halevy. Basic Books. Reissue edition. © 1991. ISBN: 0465086357. 232p. Trade paperback.

This book can be found at many Judaica stores and at [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com).

In a society with so many distractions, how can American Jewish parents teach their children to know and appreciate what it means to be a Jew? Updated with current resource material, this practical book provides help in finding and evaluating a Hebrew school, in dealing with secular peer pressure, and in planning observances in the home.

A wise and useful book for Jewish parents on how to help their children find meaning and satisfaction in their Jewish identities and traditions.