



Westcott House: Recommended Bible Commentaries

Buying Commentaries

We are often asked to recommend commentaries to build up a theological library. Of course, to some extent this depends on what you need the commentary for: one that gives useful hints and tips for preaching is less likely to help you with the detailed nuance of a particular Hebrew verb. Most commentaries form part of a series, and each series has its own flavour. There are too many series to list all of them (clearly there's something in this for the publishers!), but some of the most important are listed below. You are unlikely to want to buy a whole series, since even the best can be a little patchy and some authors fulfil the series aims better than others.

One exception to the rule above might be the *New Interpreter's Bible* (Abingdon) since each of 12 volumes contains several commentaries, written by mainstream American and British authors, with a focus on usefulness for preaching. This is much more thorough than a one-volume commentary if you want to have something on every book of the Bible.

Dr Andrew Mein, Tutor in Old Testament

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Commentary Series

Lightweight

Abingdon Old Testament Commentaries/Abingdon New Testament Commentaries (Abingdon) - recent; mainstream American authors; aimed at 'theological students and pastors'.

New International Bible Commentary (Hendrickson) - mostly evangelical authors; aimed at 'general readers and serious students'.

Westminster Bible Companion (WJK) - short mainstream/critical commentaries aimed at lay people; often accessible and insightful.

Interpretation (John Knox, then WJK) - 'a bible commentary for teaching and preaching'; discusses whole passages, often with contemporary application; mainstream, mostly American.

Epworth Commentaries (Epworth) - British series based on REB; Methodist publisher; aimed at ministers, preachers, and teachers

Middleweight

Old Testament Library (WJK, previously SCM or Westminster) - good critical commentaries; mainstream; older volumes gradually being updated

New Century Bible (various publishers) - now defunct, but useful if you want a middleweight commentary that concentrates on particular words and phrases; mainstream

Apollos Old Testament Commentary (IVP); new series; evangelical authors; aims to be 'scholarly but accessible to non-specialists'

Berit Olam: Studies in Hebrew Narrative and Poetry (Michael Glazier/Liturgical); Roman Catholic publisher, with a mixture of authors; commentaries focus on literary readings of the OT

Smith & Helwys Commentary Series (Smith & Helwys); very promising new series; aiming to bring critical scholarship to bear on the needs of contemporary Christians; mainstream authors; easy-to-use multimedia format, with lots of art and accompanying CD-ROM.

New Cambridge Bible Commentary (CUP) - new series with only a few volumes so far; critical scholarship for 'a wide range of intellectually curious individuals'; showcase for contemporary methods more than theological reflection - well worth a look.

Brazos/SCM Theological Commentaries This new commentary series offered by a number of leading theologians tends to betray the particular research interests and concerns of the author. A stimulating resource for preaching and bible study.

Blackwell Bible Commentaries (Wiley-Blackwell)- series focuses on history of interpretation/reception rather than the original meaning of the text, so rather different from the norm. Aimed at students rather than preachers, but an excellent source of readings from the mainstream to the weird and wonderful.

The Church's Bible These *catenae* of early Christian commentary bring the rich classical tradition of biblical interpretation to life once again. Compiled, translated, and edited by leading scholars, these volumes draw extensively from early and medieval commentators, illuminating Holy Scripture as it was understood during the first millennium of Christian history.

The Two Horizons Commentary Series This series seeks to bridge the perceived gap between biblical studies and systematic theology. Contributors include a number of biblical scholars and theologians.

Sacra Pagina Commentary Series This series of commentaries on the New Testament, compiled by an international team of Roman Catholic Biblical scholars, seeks to provide 'sound, critical analysis without loss of religious meaning.' A good resource for preaching and teaching.

Ancient Christian Commentary Series Another set of *catenae* published by IVP and drawing on early and medieval commentators.

Heavyweight

International Critical Commentary (T&T Clark) - heavy-duty philological commentaries, assuming Hebrew and Greek; some are very old now, but they are gradually being updated

Anchor Bible (Yale UP, formerly Doubleday) new translation, text-critical notes, and commentary; ecumenical and critical. Older volumes a bit thin, but more recent ones very useful.

Word Biblical Commentary (Word) in format similar to AB - translation and textual notes then some comment; mostly evangelical, with some theological reflection.

Hermeneia (Fortress) - some translations of classic German commentaries, some more recent Anglo-American work; all immensely thorough and critical.

New International Commentary on the OT (Eerdmans) - heavy-duty evangelical scholarship; very thorough.

One Volume Commentaries

J Barton & J Muddiman (eds) *Oxford Bible Commentary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.

R E Brown, J A Fitzmyer, R E Murphy (eds) *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary*. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice & Hall, 1990)

C A Newsom & S H Ringe (eds) *The Women's Bible Commentary*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1991.

Old Testament Commentaries

Genesis

C Amos *Genesis 1-11*. Epworth Commentaries. (Peterborough, Epworth, 2004)
W Arnold *Genesis*. New Cambridge Bible Commentary. (Cambridge, CUP 2010)
W Brueggemann *Genesis*. Interpretation (Atlanta: John Knox, 1982)
C Westermann *Genesis*. 3 vols. Continental Commentaries. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1984-1986.

Exodus

B S Childs *The Book of Exodus*. Old Testament Library (Louisville: WJK, 1974).
T E Fretheim *Exodus*. Interpretation. (Louisville: WJK, 1991).
S Langston *Exodus Through the Centuries*. Blackwell. (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006)
C M Meyers *Exodus*. New Cambridge Bible Commentary. (Cambridge: CUP 2005)

Leviticus

S Balentine *Leviticus*. Interpretation. (Louisville: WJK, 2003).
E S Gerstenberger *Leviticus: A Commentary*. Old Testament Library (Louisville: WJK, 1996).
J Milgrom *Leviticus: A Book of Ritual and Ethics* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2004).

Numbers

D Olson *Numbers*. Interpretation. (Louisville: WJK, 1996);
K D Sakenfeld *Journeying with God: A Commentary on the Book of Numbers*. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995)

Deuteronomy

M Biddle *Deuteronomy*. Smith & Helwys. (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2003).
P D Miller *Deuteronomy*. Interpretation. (Louisville: WJK, 1991)

- R D Nelson *Deuteronomy*. Old Testament Library. (Louisville: WJK, 2002).
- Joshua**
R D Nelson *Joshua*. Old Testament Library. (Westminster John Knox, 1997)
L D Hawk, *Joshua*. Berit Olam. (Collegeville, MN, Liturgical Press, 2001)
- Judges**
J C McCann *Judges*. Interpretation (Louisville: WJK, 2002)
D M Gunn *Judges*. Blackwell. (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005).
- Ruth**
E F Davis *Who Are You, My Daughter: Reading Ruth through Image and Text*
& M A Parker (Louisville: WJK, 2003)
K Nielsen *Ruth: A Commentary*. Old Testament Library. (Louisville: WJK, 1997).
K D Sakenfeld *Ruth*. Interpretation. (Louisville: WJK, 1999).
- 1-2 Samuel**
W Brueggemann *First and Second Samuel*. Interpretation (Louisville: WJK, 1990)
R P Gordon *1 and 2 Samuel*. (Carlisle: Paternoster, 1986)
- 1-2 Kings**
R D Nelson *First and Second Kings*. Interpretation (Louisville: WJK, 1987),
I M Provan *1 and 2 Kings*. New International Bible Commentary (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1995)
W Brueggemann *1 and 2 Kings: A Commentary*. Smith & Helwys. (Macon, GA: Smyth and Helwys, 2000).
- 1-2 Chronicles**
S Japhet *I & II Chronicles: A Commentary*. Old Testament Library (Louisville: WJK, 1993)
H G M Williamson *1 and 2 Chronicles*. New Century Bible (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982)
- Ezra-Nehemiah**
H G M Williamson *Ezra, Nehemiah*. Word Biblical Commentary (Waco, TX: Word, 1985)
M Throntveit *Ezra-Nehemiah*. Interpretation. (Louisville: John Knox, 1992).
- Esther**
J D Levenson *Esther: A Commentary*. Old Testament Library (Louisville: WJK, 1997)
J Carruthers *Esther Through the Centuries*. Blackwell (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007)
- Job**
C Newsom 'Job', in the *New Interpreter's Bible*, Vol. 4. (Nashville: Abingdon, 1996).
S E Balentine *Job*. Smyth and Helwys. (Macon, GA: Smyth and Helwys, 2006).
N Habel *Job*. Old Testament Library. (Louisville: Westminster, 1985).
- Psalms**
J Goldingay *Psalms*. 3 vols. Baker Commentary on the Old Testament Wisdom and Psalms. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006, 2007, 2008)
J L Mays *Psalms*. Interpretation. (Louisville, WJK, 1994)
J C McCann 'Psalms', in the *New Interpreter's Bible*, Vol. 4 (Nashville: Abingdon, 1996).

- W Brueggemann *The Message of the Psalms*. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1984.
- Proverbs**
- E F Davis *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs*. Westminster Bible Companion. (Louisville: WJK, 2000)
- R J Clifford *Proverbs*. Old Testament Library. (Louisville: WJK, 1999)
- Ecclesiastes**
- W P Brown *Ecclesiastes*. Interpretation. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2000).
- J L Crenshaw *Ecclesiastes: A Commentary*. Old Testament Library. (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1987)
- C L Seow *Ecclesiastes*. Anchor Bible. series (Garden City, NY: Doubleday)
- Song of Songs**
- E F Davis *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs*. Westminster Bible Companion. (Louisville: WJK, 2000)
- J C Exum *Song of Songs*. Old Testament Library (Louisville: WJK, 2005).
- Isaiah**
- J Blenkinsopp *Isaiah 1-39: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. Anchor Bible. (New York: Doubleday, 2000).
Isaiah 40-55: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary. Anchor Bible. (New York: Doubleday, 2002).
Isaiah 56-66: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary. Anchor Bible. (New York: Doubleday, 2003).
- B S Childs *Isaiah*. Old Testament Library. (Louisville: WJK, 2001).
- J Goldingay, *The Message of Isaiah 40-55: A Literary-Theological Commentary* (London: T & T Clark, 2005)
- P D Hanson *Isaiah 40-66*. Interpretation (Louisville: WJK, 1995).
- C R Seitz *Isaiah 1-39*. Interpretation. (Louisville: John Knox, 1993).
- Jeremiah**
- L C Allen *Jeremiah*. Old Testament Library. (Louisville: WJK, 2008).
- W Brueggemann *A Commentary on Jeremiah: Exile and Homecoming* (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1998)
- T E Fretheim *Jeremiah*. Smyth and Helwys. (Macon, GA: Smyth and Helwys, 2002).
- Lamentations**
- A Berlin *Lamentations : A Commentary*. Old Testament Library. (Louisville: WJK, 2002).
- F W Dobbs-Allsopp *Lamentations*. Interpretation. (Louisville: WJK, 2002),
- K M O'Connor, 'Lamentations' in the *New Interpreter's Bible*, vol. 6 (Nashville: Abingdon, 2001)
- Ezekiel**
- P M Joyce *Ezekiel: A Commentary* (New York: T & T Clark, 2007).
- M S Odell *Ezekiel*. Smyth & Helwys. (Macon, GA: Smith & Helwys, 2005)
- S S Tuell *Ezekiel*. New International Biblical Commentary. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2009).
- Daniel**
- J J Collins *Daniel*. Hermeneia. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993

D L Smith-Christopher 'Daniel', in the *New Interpreter's Bible*, Vol 6. (Nashville: Abingdon, 2001)
W S Towner *Daniel*. Interpretation. (Atlanta: John Knox, 1984).

Minor Prophets

J Limburg *Hosea-Micah*. Interpretation. (Atlanta: John Knox, 1988)
J Barton *Joel and Obadiah: A Commentary*. Old Testament Library. (Louisville: WJK, 2001).
J Jeremias *The Book of Amos: A Commentary*. Old Testament Library. (Louisville: WJK, 1998).
J L Mays *Amos: A Commentary*. Old Testament Library. (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1969).
W P Brown *Obadiah Through Malachi*. Westminster Bible Companion. (Louisville: WJK 1996).
J Limburg *Jonah: A Commentary*. Old Testament Library. (Louisville: WJK, 1993).
J L Mays *Micah*. Old Testament Library. (London: SCM Press, 1976)
J M O'Brien *Nahum*. Readings. (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002)
J JM Roberts *Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah*. Old Testament Library. (Louisville: John Knox, 1991)
C StuhlmueLLer, C.P. *Rebuilding with Hope: Haggai and Zechariah*. International Theological Commentary. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998).
D L Petersen *Haggai and Zechariah 1-8*. Old Testament Library. (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1984)
D L Petersen *Zechariah 9-14 and Malachi*. Old Testament Library. (Louisville: WJK, 1995).
E Achtemeier *Nahum-Malachi*. Interpretation. (Atlanta: John Knox, 1986).

New Testament Commentaries

General Introductions to the New Testament

R E Brown *An Introduction to the New Testament* (London: Doubleday, 1997)
L T Johnson *Writings of the New Testament*. Third Edition. (London: SCM, 2010)

Matthew

S Hauerwas *Matthew*. Brazos/SCM Commentary. (London: SCM, 2006)
I H Jones *The Gospel of Matthew*. Epworth (Westminster: Epworth, 1994)
U Luz *Matthew*. Hermeneia (3 vols). (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001, 2005, 2007)

Mark

M E Boring *Mark. A Commentary*. New Testament Library (London: WJK, 2006)
A Y Collins *Mark*. Hermeneia. (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007)
M D Hooker *The Gospel according to St Mark*. Black's NT Commentaries. (London: A & C Black, 1992)

Luke

L T Johnson *The Gospel of Luke*. Sacra Pagina. (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2006)
L Kreitzer *Luke through the Centuries*. Blackwell. (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005)
J Lieu *The Gospel of Luke*. Epworth. (Westminster: Epworth, 1997)

John

- R E Brown *The Gospel according to John*. Anchor. (London: Doubleday, 1966)
M Edwards *John through the Centuries*. Blackwell. (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003)
A T Lincoln *The Gospel according to St John*. Black's NT Commentaries. (London: Continuum, 2005)

Acts

- J Pelikan *Acts*. Brazos/SCM Commentary. (London: SCM, 2005)
L T Johnson *The Acts of the Apostles*. Sacra Pagina (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2006)

Romans

- R Jewett *Romans*. Hermeneia. (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2006)
J Ziesler *Paul's Letter to the Romans*. TPI. (London: SCM, 1989)

1 Corinthians

- J L Kovacs *1 Corinthians*. The Church's Bible. (Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2005)
A Thiselton *1 Corinthians: A Shorter Exegetical and Pastoral Commentary* (Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2006)
J Murphy-O'Connor *1 Corinthians* (Oxford: OUP, 1997)

2 Corinthians

- V Furnish *2 Corinthians*. Anchor. (London: Doubleday, 1984)

Galatians

- J Dunn *The Epistle to the Galatians*. Black's NT Commentaries (London: A & C Black, 1993)
J Riches *Galatians through the Centuries*. Blackwell. (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008)

Ephesians

- A Lincoln *Ephesians*. Word Biblical Commentary. (Dallas: Nelson, 2010)

Philippians

- M Bockmuehl *The Epistle to the Philippians*. Black's NT Commentaries (London: Continuum, 2006)
S E Fowl *Philippians*. A Two Horizons Commentary (Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2005)

Colossians

- J D G Dunn *The Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon*. NIGTC. (Cambridge: Eerdmans, 1996)

1 & 2 Thessalonians

- I H Jones *Thessalonians*. Epworth. (Westminster: Epworth, 2005)
C A Wanamaker *Commentary on 1 and 2 Thessalonians*. NIGTC. (Cambridge: Eerdmans, 1990)

The Pastoral Epistles

- J L Houlden *The Pastoral Epistles*. TPI. (London: SCM, 1989)
R Saarinen *The Pastoral Epistles with Philemon and Jude*. Brazos/SCM. (London: SCM, 2008)

Hebrews

H Attridge &

Hebrews. Hermeneia. (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1989)

H Koester

L T Johnson

Hebrews: A Commentary. NT Library. (London: WJK Press, 2006)**James**

R Bauckham

James. New Testament Readings (London: Routledge, 1999)**1 Peter**

J Green

1 Peter. A Two Horizons Commentary. (Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2007)**2 Peter and Jude**

R Bauckham

2 Peter and Jude. Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Nelson, 1983)**The Johannine Epistles**

R E Brown

The Epistles of John. Anchor. (New Haven: Yale, 1995)**Revelation**

J Kovacs &

Revelation through the Centuries. Blackwell. (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004)

C Rowland

C Rowland

Revelation. Epworth. (Westminster: Epworth, 1993)

J Sweet

Revelation. TPI. (London: SCM, 1990)