



## The Bible's Cutting Room Floor: The Holy Scriptures Missing from Your Bible

*Joel M. Hoffman*

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The Bible you usually read is not the complete story. Some holy writings were left out for political or theological reasons, others simply because of the physical restrictions of ancient bookmaking technology. At times, the compilers of the Bible skipped information that they assumed everyone knew. Some passages were even omitted by accident.

In *The Bible's Cutting Room Floor*, acclaimed author and translator Dr. Joel M. Hoffman provides the stories and other texts that didn't make it into the Bible even though they offer penetrating insight into the Bible and its teachings.

The Book of Genesis tells us about Adam and Eve's time in the Garden of Eden, but not their saga after they get kicked out or the lessons they have for us about good and evil. The Bible introduces us to Abraham, but it doesn't include the troubling story of his early life, which explains how he came to reject idolatry to become the father of monotheism. And while there are only 150 Psalms in today's Bible, there used to be many more.

Dr. Hoffman deftly brings these and other ancient scriptural texts to life, exploring how they offer new answers to some of the most fundamental and universal questions people ask about their lives. An impressive blend of history, linguistics, and religious scholarship, *The Bible's Cutting Room Floor* reveals what's missing from your Bible, who left it out, and why it is so important.

## The Bible's Cutting Room Floor: The Holy Scriptures Missing from Your Bible Details

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## **From Reader Review The Bible's Cutting Room Floor: The Holy Scriptures Missing from Your Bible for online ebook**

### **Henk-Jan van der Klis says**

The Bible you usually read is not the complete story. Depending on your denomination you may have only so-called canonical books, deuterocanonical books, apocrypha and/or other books, letters and stories. Rather than using the fact that what we call 'Bible' is an outcome of (un)intentionally cut & paste to 'proof' the unreliability of the Bible, like Bart Ehrman c.s. do, Dr. Joel M. Hoffman shares in The Bible's Cutting Room Floor first the backgrounds of bookmaking technology. With the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, Nag Hammadi writings, the Books of Enoch, Life of Adam and Eve, extensions to Esther and Daniel, and Josephus history and commentaries commentaries on the Scriptures, much more teachings and insights have become available.

Hoffman both takes his reader along the peculiar way the Dead Sea Scrolls were found, traded, researched and ultimately published. He elaborates in depth the way Josephus treats Old Testament texts, how the Septuagint, Vulgate and King James Version were created, and how difficult it is to translate Old Testament Hebrew and Aramaic. What do and don't we know of the Essenes or Qumran Sect that hid the Dead Sea Scrolls. After that there's room to you explore what you missed in the 'modern' Bibles. What happened to Adam and Eve after they were kicked out of the Garden of Eden? What was Abraham's youth like? Do we know more of Enoch's endless life? What's the roles of the Tower of Babel? And do the different biblical positions on fundamental, universal questions like good versus evil, human suffering and afterlife, angels, and God's holiness have support in these extra-biblical writings?

Hoffman's teaching respectfully with an impressive mix of history, linguistics, and religious scholarship. It may bring believers and unbelievers together, confirming the faithful, both Jews and Christians, answering pregnant questions and challenge the ones currently rejecting the Bible as mere fiction. Hoffman makes you curious to re-read certain Bible parts and read his sources for yourself.

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### **Barbara says**

Interesting trip through history and 4 extra biblical books. The author states that everyone writes with a bias and he is no exception. Everyone reads with a bias as well, and I am no exception. That said, this was interesting and informational, though briefly tedious at times. He does a great job of offering the different philosophies he has found in the Life of Adam and Eve, The Apocalypse of Abraham, the 1st Book of Enoch as well as Deuteronomy and Job. My take-away is that the jury is still out on why humans suffer, there is no good answer and probably no plan. It's an interesting look at other ideas, and certainly a great introduction to extra biblical books.

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### **David Hines says**

Many people might not realize that what we today call "The Bible" did not come into existence until Pope Damasus I convened the Council of Rome in 382 that resulted in today's "books of the Bible" later compiled into Latin by St. Jerome. Before this time there were many other religious writings and texts that were considered important. The author puts it best when he says, "The Bible used to be a representative sample of a larger set of favorite texts, while now it's perceived to be the full collection." (p. 258)

Anyone who has actually read the whole Bible realizes immediately that there are duplicated stories, references in some books to other books now not in the "Bible" such as Jude quoting the Book of Enoch which is not in the Bible, and jarring fragments that make little sense (though they do when read with books now not in the Bible). Dr. Hoffman's book reminds of this history of the Bible's development in an easy, accessible way that is enjoyable to read and easy for the non-scholar to follow. He focuses on the Dead Sea Scrolls, the early Greek translation called the Septuagint, the ancient historian Josephus, and the non-Bible books Life of Adam and Eve, the Book of 1 Enoch, and the Apocalypse of Abraham, which touching briefly on other once highly regarded religious texts that ended up on the Bible's "cutting room floor."

The author shows how a knowledge of these other texts can help inform you on what is in the Bible and he makes the interesting point that ancient readers might have been more familiar with some of these stories so they were not needed in the Bible itself. Other texts were omitted because theology changed and in the pre-printing press era, may not have been available or had already been lost.

This book is an excellent introduction to the subject, and my only complaint is I wish it was longer and had reviewed some of the other books that were "cut!" Many of the books and articles on these texts are very scholarly and hard for a regular reader to follow. Dr. Hoffman's discussions are easy to follow and very illuminating. Helpfully, the author does in his final chapter provide some suggestions for further reading. But this is an excellent, very readable, very interesting history of how the current Bible came to be and how reading some of the other early religious books that did not make it into the Bible can in fact illuminate you on the Bible!

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### **Jeff McCormack says**

Overall an interesting read, though with some issues. First, the title, while meant to engage and intrigue the reader, is kind of presenting a false assumption. He is assuming that most any biblical sounding writing should have been included in the "Holy Scriptures," regardless of its content or acceptance in culture and history. While he does not push that issue throughout the book, the implication is still there, and the book falls short of making the case for that implication.

Basically, the book examines a handful of extra-biblical historical writings, and how their inclusion in today's accepted biblical books would have added to the biblical narrative. His analysis of such writings as the Book of Adam and Eve, Apocalypse of Abraham, Book of Enoch, and writings of Josephus provided some interesting insights.

He didn't really discuss in any depth the reasons these books were rejected, but seems to just assume their contents to be historically and supernaturally accurate and therefore worthy to be consider biblical canon, so that was a let down. But his examination at least provided some insight into what these writings contain, which is beneficial for those not familiar with these writings.

I especially enjoyed the section on Josephus the most, as it provided information of a more historical aspect. Aside from that, much of the rest was hit or miss for me. While he didn't avoid or totally ignore the supernatural and God aspect, I felt throughout that he was often came across as if he was essentially ignoring God and the supernatural, and leaning more on a naturalist and human empowered approach to some conclusions.

In the end, I do not think he necessarily made a strong enough case for why these books definitely belong in the Bible, but Hoffman simply discusses what they bring to the table in adding to the story. I guess, based on the title, that I was expecting more of a defense for their inclusion, but that is not what we are given here.

I think what we do have is an interesting look into the contents of some of these extra-biblical writings, and how including them may impact today's understanding of some aspects of biblical theology.

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### **Socraticgadfly says**

A decent intro to some (but not all, from a Christian perspective!) pseudepigraphal literature associated with the Jewish Tanakh and the Christian Bible.

Good parts are that Hoffman selects from specific Old Testament pseudepigrapha to explain some things, particularly in Genesis, that don't seem to make sense as we currently have them; that he explains a bit about the Septuagint in particular and translations in general; and that he gives at least a base-level overview of Josephus.

Not-so-good parts?

1. A bit too denigrator toward the Septuagint at times, including not mentioning that it (as reinforced by testimony from the Dead Sea Scrolls) contains sometimes sharply different versions of some books (he discusses Esther, but that's not at Qumran), namely Jeremiah, that might just reflect more current exemplars than the Masoretic Text.
2. He doesn't really explain why he chose what he chose for his matters of discussion in what's a relatively small book.
3. He has nothing, including no references to in-depth books in his appendix (unlike with OT pseudepigrapha) about NT pseudepigrapha. Yes, Hoffman is Jewish, but his book is clearly pitched to Christians as well as Jews.

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### **Beth Kakuma-Depew says**

This excellent book is like a collection of short essays.

The second chapter on the Dead Sea Scrolls was a great overview! He tells the crazy story of how they were found in the 20th Century, and then sets that community into a historic context that included early Christianity and Rabbinic Judaism. I almost wanted more!

The third chapter on the Septuagint was very linguistic. He compares the Greek translations and Hebrews root words for pages. If you're into this kind of puzzle that's great but I found it tedious. He also tells the legend of how the Septuagint was created, which was more fun to read.

The fourth chapter on Josephus is historically interesting. He tells the legendary autobiography of this Romanized Jew and then, after explaining all the reasons to doubt him, explains why he's still the best most trustworthy source. I didn't realize that Josephus wrote a summary of the Books of Moses -- and that the holy books Josephus was writing about were apparently not the same as what's in the Old Testament I know!

The later chapters are on the sequel to Adam and Eve, the Life of Abraham and Enoch 1. In the introduction the author explains why he thinks these are the most relevant pseudopigrapha, but in the actual chapters there's not much analysis. He retells the story, adds some modern psychoanalysis of the main characters, and otherwise delivers a sermon. The historical context that they were written in doesn't get discussed much. The cons of these texts don't get discussed either.

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### **Nick says**

The Bible's Cutting Room Floor: The Holy Scriptures Missing From Your Bible seems to have a bit of a split personality. The first three quarters of the book focuses on the historical Middle East between 200 BC & 200 AD, and how the sociopolitical setting influenced late Jewish and early Christian holy writings. Included in this section is a short history of the region focusing on the city of Jerusalem and the Judean State, the history of the Dead Sea Scrolls discovery, a short description of the Dead Sea Scroll contents and how these scrolls helped describe the Qumran sect, a short history of the Septuagint with an introduction to comparing and contrasting it with the Torah and using this compare and contrast to understand what the translators understood, and an introduction to Josephus that includes many insights into the periods political issues. I found this portion of the book a well written introduction to biblical history, and recommend it to anyone, religious or not, who wants to understand a bit more about one of the primary collection of texts that has shaped Western Civilization. (3 stars for this portion of the book)

The second part of the book looks at some of the texts which did not make it into today's Bible - Jewish or Christian. Specifically addressed are the texts of "Life of Adam and Eve", "Apocalypse of Abraham" and "Enoch". Although the information provided was of interest, it represents a total break from what Joel M. Hoffman was focused previously. This second section seems to have been added from material the author had been working on in order to fill pages instead of elaborate on the initial topic. A short exegesis is provided on each of these texts, but what is missing is how they fit into the rest of the story initiated in the first part of the book. Yes, the selected texts provide additional detail on stories which aren't fully told in today's Bible, but why were these texts selected over many others in the apocrypha and pseudepigraphy? How did these texts shape religious thought in the Jewish and Christian traditions? What do scholars have to say about their origin/when they were written? Why were they not included in the Jewish or Christian Bible? (The author does not address the historical account of how the Christian Bible was formed, nor is the Jewish tradition covered in much detail.)

I believe Joel M. Hoffman missed a real opportunity to tell a greater story about the creation of today's Bible which he summarizes in the final chapter by not tying these last few texts into the greater story being told in this book. (2 stars for this portion of the book only because how out of place it was with the first and how the texts were summarily handled)

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### **Nathan Shumate says**

Half of this is a great book.

Hoffman starts out with several chapters detailing the socio-religious background of the Middle East within a couple of centuries of Christ -- the time in which the Old Testament canon was starting to solidify. Describing the tensions exhibited by the mainstream Jerusalem establishment, the Qumran community, and

the nascent Christian movement, he shows how the differing emphases of each movement led to different priorities in holy writ. He then details what the variant translations in the Septuagint can tell us about scriptural understanding among the translators. Add to that a good chapter on Josephus and how his writings help elucidate social issues that went unspoken in the New Testament texts, and you've got a good basic grounding in the construction and amalgamation of the Bible.

Then it takes a bewildering turn, as Hoffman presents in depth the contents of "The Life of Adam & Eve," "The Apocalypse of Abraham," and "The Book of Enoch" (aka 1 Enoch). The inclusion of the first two is puzzling, in that Hoffman nowhere explains why those particular pseudepigraphic works are worthy of study instead of dozens of others. (1 Enoch is an important text from the intertestamental era, so its inclusion is more understandable.) Worse, aside from an unhighlighted mention that each text was composed about two thousand years ago, Hoffman treats each as the "continuation" of the canonical story, without any mention that both are obviously late-period compositions, written roughly a thousand years after the accounts in Genesis were set down. Rather than appropriately treating them as intertestamental reworkings/expansions of the earlier accounts meant by their anonymous authors to give a grounding of legitimacy to late-period theological concerns, Hoffman bizarrely treats them as historical sources, at least as trustworthy for factual data on their subject matter as the Genesis accounts. I'm still trying to wrap my head around how this kind of approach is supposed to increase anyone's understanding of either those books in particular or the formation of canon as a whole.

Despite the title, Hoffman gives absolutely no rationale either for the exclusion of "Adam & Eve" or "Abraham" from the canon (could it have been because the early Christians or pre-rabbinic Jews saw them as very obviously of late and untrustworthy composition), or for why they "should" have been included. For 1 Enoch, he simply asserts that it was excluded for theological grounds, with no real support for his contention.

My advice: Read the first few chapters, through his account of Josephus. Then toss it.

(This book was received for free in exchange for an honest review.)

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### **Ian Wood says**

This is the complete review as it appears at my blog dedicated to reading, writing (no 'rithmatic!), movies, & TV. Blog reviews often contain links which are not reproduced here, nor will updates or modifications to the blog review be replicated here. Graphic and children's novels reviewed on the blog will generally have some images from the book's interior, which are not reproduced here.

Note that I don't really do stars. To me a novel is either worth reading or it isn't. I can't rate a novel three-fifths worth reading! The only reason I've relented and started putting stars up there is to credit the good ones, which were being unfairly uncredited. So, all you'll ever see from me is a five-star or a one-star (since no stars isn't a rating, unfortunately).

I rated this novel WORTHY!

**WARNING! MAY CONTAIN UNHIDDEN SPOILERS! PROCEED AT YOUR OWN RISK!**

My blog is nearly all fiction, but once in a rare while, I take a look at a non-fiction work because it really interests me, and this book is one such exception. To me, the Bible itself is a work of fiction: a collection of

fairy tales. The only difference is that there is some factual material included, so I guess it's more like a work of historical fiction or historical fantasy than anything else. There is supportive evidence for many of the factual aspects of the Bible, but none for the supernatural aspects, and the Bible is simply flat-out wrong when it tries to assert, for example, that the universe is only some 6,000 years old or that there was a global flood some 4,000 or so years ago.

One thing about the Bible which most believers simply do not get is how unreliable and contradictory it is, and this is why I was interested in Joel Hoffman's book, which delves into these aspects of it *inter alia*. The author is quite evidently a knowledgeable scholar who is intimately familiar with the material he discusses, and for as much as I've read on this topic, I confess he raises issues with which I had not been familiar.

The first couple of chapters are an historical overview of Biblical times and a relation of how the Qumran (or Dead Sea) scrolls came to be unearthed. I largely skimmed these because the material is not unfamiliar to me, and they were not what I was interested in. Frankly I was a bit surprised to find the first chapter there at all in that form, but if you want historical details, these chapters are replete with them.

Where this book really shone for me was in the remaining chapters, where Hoffman himself shines relating information, detail, overview, and fascinating snippets with a sly sense of humor and an exert eye. Rather than try to précis the content, I'm going to list the chapter headers here:

Jerusalem: An Eternal City in Conflict

The Dead Sea Scrolls: How a Lost Goat Changed the World

The Septuagint: How Seventy Scholars Took Seventy Days to Get It Wrong

Josephus: The Only Man to be a Fly on Every Wall

Adam and Eve: Falling Down and Getting Back Up

Abraham: Humans, Idols, and Gods

Enoch: The Beginning of the End

The Big Picture: Finding the Unabridged Bible

The book also includes an appendix with suggestions for further reading, but there is plenty for thought right here. How many people know, for example, that the Septuagint, long considered an authoritative text, is riddled with error - and for good reason?

You will note Josephus is the topic of one of the chapters and his work is cited by many believers as powerful evidence for the existence of a real Messiah named Jesus who was a miracle-working son of a divinity. How many of those people know how unreliable and fanciful Josephus is, and that the passage they love to cite is not an original but a later interpolation?

How many people are aware that Genesis doesn't tell the whole fable of Adam and Eve (a first couple now categorically disproved by modern science). There is another book which was excluded from the Bible, which continues the story.

The central theme here - not necessarily the author's theme, but one to which I subscribe - is that the Bible is not the word of any god. It's an arbitrary collection of tales written and put together by very fallible humans, nearly all of whom were men, and all of whom had one agenda or another. Until and unless people understand that and appreciate it for what it means, they're never going to grasp what the Bible actually is on the bottom line.

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## **Tom Duff says**

The Bible's Cutting Room Floor: The Holy Scriptures Missing From Your Bible

Joel M. Hoffman

This title intrigued me, so I gave it a read... The Bible's Cutting Room Floor: The Holy Scriptures Missing From Your Bible by Joel M. Hoffman. It's an interesting look at some writings that aren't part of the "normal" Bible as many people know it. It adds some additional perspective to what and how we got here in our understanding of scripture and history.

Contents:

Introduction - The Abridged Bible; Jerusalem - An Eternal City in Conflict; The Dead Sea Scrolls - How a Lost Goat Changed the World; The Septuagint - How Seventy Scholars Took Seventy Days to Get It Wrong; Josephus - The Only Man to Be a Fly on Every Wall; Adam and Eve - Falling Down and Getting Back Up; Abraham - Humans, Idols, and Gods; Enoch - The Beginning of the End; The Big Picture - Finding the Unabridged Bible; Appendix - Suggestions for Further Reading; Index

Hoffman is a Jewish scholar who has focused on history and religion. He examines material and additional books (such as the Dead Sea Scrolls) with a bent towards examining their story and place in history. For most people (like myself), things like the Book of Enoch consists of strange stories that kept it from being included in the Old Testament. But when placed against the backdrop of the times, it starts to make a bit more sense. It's also interesting that there are references to Enoch and his prophesies in the New Testament. It's very likely that material was familiar and accepted at one point, and at some point further down the line, others decided it was less accepted. Our perceptions are shaped by those decisions. He also does a good job in discussing how the same words in the Hebrew texts ended up being translated completely different in various places, often by minute alterations or shaping of certain letters.

I can see how some people would have a hard time reading this, as it forces you to challenge some of the conventional wisdom that's been handed down over centuries. But it also adds depth and color where it's lacking. If this is a topic of interest, it's worth reading.

Disclosure:

Obtained From: Library

Payment: Borrowed

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## **Janet says**

Not recommended reading. It will irritate believers, confuse seekers and turn away unbelievers.

This book starts strong with history but falls quickly by presenting conjecture as fact. The author also presents his opinion and commentary as fact on scripture he clearly doesn't understand.

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## **Michele says**

If you have ever wondered, either casually or with a more scholarly bent why certain stories were included in the Bible and others weren't, or why there seemed to be gaps in what we get out of the text compared to the

ancients, this is the book for you. The Bible's Cutting Room Floor by Joel Hoffman will hold your interest. Hoffman's work assumes a knowledge of the Bible and the ancient world. However, by no means do you need to be an Old Testament or Rabbinic scholar to understand it. Each chapter follows the pattern of stating his thesis, supporting it, restating it, and finally the conclusion. The final chapter wraps it all up nicely.

The book clearly explains the political situation in Jerusalem leading up to the time of Jesus, and following. This is a real help since the Bible itself lacks a lot of material on this. Its is understood that the reader just knows this stuff. Kind of like we understand 20th century American history. The following chapters discuss the Dead Sea Scrolls and their impact on scholarship and what we know of the historicity of certain events, following is a good discussion of the Septuagint (Greek "Bible"). Added to the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Septuagint, and the Torah writings, we then add Josephus' work.

Working through the earliest patriarch's of the Torah which forms the Old Testament in our current Bibles and is the Jewish sacred book, Hoffman examines the lives of Adam and Eve, Abraham and Enoch. Here he references books of the Apocrypha and other Wisdom literature found in the early traditions. In an accessible fashion he points us to the story and meaning behind our Sunday School reading and teachings. These are the big questions of life: why is there evil? If God created the world, why did Adam and Eve sin? What of angels? Free will? Illness and suffering?

If you have an interest in the development of the people of the Near East and or an interest in Biblical scholarship you will enjoy this book. It is always intriguing to learn what was excluded from such important texts and (possibly) why. There is an appendix pointing the reader to further study and resources. Because the Roman and Greeks worlds intersected with the Jewish community this information is helpful to those looking for a greater understanding of the world of the Roman Empire. I absolutely recommend this book.

This is an unbiased review in exchange for an ARC.

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## Ron says

Anyone who has read through the whole Bible knows that books are mentioned that are not available today. Anyone who has looked at various versions of the Bible has encountered books such as the Maccabees that appear in Catholic Bibles, but not Protestant Bibles. If you have read about the extended process of creating the Bible, you would know that not all books that some believed to be scripture made it into the Biblical canon.

Readers may find the subtitle (The Holy Scriptures Missing From Your Bible) to be misleading as this book does not provide a listing of scriptures missing from the Bible. Rather, Joel Hoffman provides, in the first chapter, background on the social/political and cultural milieu during the writing of Scripture. He next provides a chapter on locating the Dead Sea Scrolls and the impact on Biblical understanding. This is followed by a chapter on the Septuagint and its influence on the Bible we have. He does a similar examination on how Josephus' writings interact with Scripture. Joel Hoffman then has three chapters that

critique The Life of Adam and Eve, The Apocalypse of Abraham, and The Book of Enoch in relation to what these titles reveal that is not found in the rest of Scripture. He finishes with a look at the big picture of missing Scripture. He also includes an appendix of recommended sources for further investigation

Overall, the book is worth reading more for the broad picture Joe Hoffman paints regarding the multiple sources that inter-played in the creation of the scriptural canon than the look at individual books.

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### **Jennifer Clausen-greene says**

This was an interesting read. I am always intrigued to see what people think was left out of the Bible that should have been included, or on the other hand what made it's way in that they feel should have been excluded. Hoffman, a Jewish scholar, covered a vast amount of topics that gave a pretty indepth overview for both the biblical scholar and the newbie alike. Using history, religion, and language barriers Hoffman examines the stories and history that kept books out of Bible, such as the Book of Enoch, while allowing others to be included. This book did a nice job of explaining the political times of the Jewish people leading up to Jesus, which was fascinating. Politics play a dynamic role in everything we touch, so the importance of understanding the political issues at this time hold great value.

I was intrigued with the Hebrew language and how delicate it really is. The variations in how the text was translated by different people and small differences in placement of characters within the Hebrew language alter greatly the meaning. This book reminded me of another one I read recently: The Bible's Yes to Same Sex Marriage; which goes deep into fragmation theory.

Due to some of the challenges of this book I can see why it could be difficult to accept some of what the author says, but at the same does it does what it is sets out to do-Challenge US! To think,, to discover and to research on our own for truth! Topics that are covered are:

Contents:

Introduction

The Abridged Bible

Jerusalem

An Eternal City in Conflict

The Dead Sea Scrolls

How a Lost Goat Changed the World

The Septuagint

How Seventy Scholars Took Seventy Days to Get It Wrong

Josephus

The Only Man to Be a Fly on Every Wall

Adam and Eve

Falling Down and Getting Back Up

Abraham

Humans, Idols, and Gods

Enoch

The Beginning of the End

The Big Picture

Finding the Unabridged Bible

Appendix; Suggestions for Further Reading; Index

This book is definitely worth the read, even if you do not agree with the premise. You cannot argue against something if you do not know anything about it!

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### **Louise says**

This book presents material that would enhance our understanding of the Bible if it had been included. It begins with a history of Jerusalem followed by discussions of the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Septuagint and the works of Josephus. The author pulls from multiple sources to tell a fuller story of Adam and Eve, the Apocrypha to tell more about Abraham and concludes with the book of Enoch and a chapter on “The Big Picture”.

The book was hard to follow. In some places it seemed like a collection of facts. It would have been better (for me) with the last chapter reworked as an introduction. The book has a web site that gives a sense of its organization. (It is noted in the Appendix where I found it when I was done). This review is by chapter, because, until the “Big Picture” chapter that loosely ties them up, chapters read like independent units.

The first 43 pages, or almost 20% of the book, is a history of Jerusalem for which connections to the later material are never made.

The next Chapter tells how the Dead Sea Scrolls were found, bought/sold, preserved and assembled. Their content is shown by isolated examples such as the differences between the Damascus Document and Community Rule, how some of its psalms are those included in the Old Testament, and some of the elements of the War Scroll.

The third chapter on the Septuagint was full of detail. After three pages on the etymology of “r’am”, “migdal”, “eshet chayil” and the Greek word for snow, I skimmed the rest and went to Wikipedia. Like the chapter on the Dead Sea Scrolls, there is no overall view of its content or its meaning as a “cut” part of the

Bible.

In the fourth chapter on Josephus there is finally something of the concept of “cut” material and an overview of content and meaning. Here the author shows how some of Josephus’ historical work has credibility problems but also has many areas where inclusion in the Bible would have added depth to it.

The chapter on the “post-apple” lives of Adam and Eve combines Greek, Latin, Gregorian, Slavic and Old Irish sources to tell a fascinating story. The couple seems to be in a fog (PSD?) and unable to adjust. They blame each other, build huts, pray, think of ways to back to their former life. The snake is punished too. Eve has what appears to be a flirtation with the devil, has a prophetic dream and more. There is no discussion of the specific sources or how or why they were “cut”.

Like the Adam and Eve sources, the story in the story of Abraham in the Apocrypha enriches our knowledge of him. Not only was he a lousy parent (which we know from the Bible) the Apocrypha shows him to be a rebellious son. The father of the founder of the world’s largest monotheistic religions was an idol maker! He sent his son, Abraham, out on a donkey to sell them. Abraham observes that the idols do not have the power to save themselves from breakage or fire. How and why this aspect of Abraham’s spiritual development was cut from the Bible is not explained.

One section of the chapter on Enoch epitomizes my problem with this book. There are several jolting pages of stars mating with cows and producing elephants and lions, leopards feeding on sheep, snow white creatures binding up stars and casting them to the abyss and other less dramatic visions. There is no context until the end when the author explains Enoch’s message and how the visions are metaphors for history (i.e. the snow white calf is Adam and the female calf is Eve, etc.). At least in this section, the content is explained. While other episodes in the book are not so abstract, you are often left on your own a lot.

The Appendix is an annotated bibliography. It shows that there is little on this topic available for the general reader.

The author knows his material. I’m thinking that these were once separate lectures that were assembled into a book with a tight deadline.

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