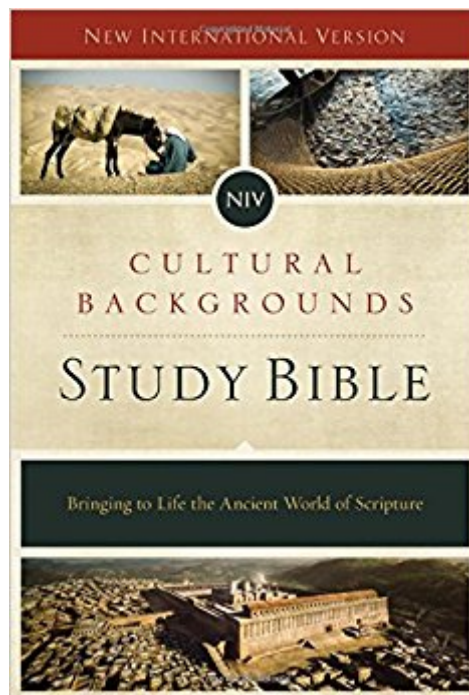




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# NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible: Bringing To Life The Ancient World Of Scripture



## Synopsis

2017 ECPA BIBLE OF THE YEAR RECIPIENT "How I wish someone had put a book like this into my hands 50 years ago." - N.T. Wright, Research Professor of New Testament and Early Christianity, University of St. Andrews, Scotland "I cannot recommend a study Bible any more than this one: Five stars!" - Scot McKnight, Julius R. Mantey Professor of New Testament, Northern Seminary

**CONTEXT CHANGES EVERYTHING** You've heard many Bible stories hundreds of times, but how many behind-the-scenes details are you missing? Sometimes a little context is all you need to discover the rich meaning behind the stories of Scripture. That's what the NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible provides. Every page is packed with expert insight into the customs, culture, and literature of Bible times. These fascinating explanations will serve to clarify your study of the Scriptures, reinforcing your confidence and bringing difficult passages of Scripture into sharp focus. Discover new dimensions of insight to even the most familiar Bible passages as you take a behind-the-scenes tour into the ancient world. The Bible was originally written to an ancient people removed from us by thousands of years and thousands of miles. The Scriptures include subtle culturally based nuances, undertones, and references to ancient events, literature and customs that were intuitively understood by those who first heard the Scriptures read. For us to hear the Scriptures as they did, we need a window into their world. The NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible, with notes from Dr. John H. Walton (Wheaton College) in the Old Testament and Dr. Craig S. Keener (Asbury Theological Seminary) in the New Testament, brings to life the ancient world of Scripture for modern readers.

**Features:** The full text of the NIV Targeted book introductions explain the context in which each book of the Bible was written. Insightful and informative verse-by-verse study notes reveal new dimensions of insight to even the most familiar passages. Key Old Testament (Hebrew) and New Testament terms are explained and expanded upon in two helpful reference features. Over 300 in-depth articles on key contextual topics. 375 full-color photos, illustrations, and images from around the world. Dozens of charts, maps, and diagrams in vivid color. Words of Jesus in red. Additional study Bible tools: cross references, a concordance, indexes and other helps.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

How I wish someone had put a book like this into my hands 50 years ago -- N. T. Wright, Research Professor of New Testament and Early Christianity, University of St. Andrews, Scotland Every line and every word in the Bible comes from a context -- historical, social, cultural, theological -- and speaks into those contexts -- sometimes against that culture, sometimes with that culture, and sometimes to expand that culture. In so doing the Bible models how we can speak from our culture and into our culture in very fresh and missional ways. The NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible not only acknowledges this but engages ordinary readers in seeing what it looks like. I cannot recommend a study Bible any more than this one: Five stars! -- Scot McKnight, Julius R. Mantey Professor of New Testament, Northern Seminary

Craig S. Keener is professor of New Testament at Asbury Theological Seminary and holds a doctoral degree in New Testament Studies and the Origins of Christianity from Duke University. He is the author of several commentaries on books of the New Testament. John H. Walton (PhD, Hebrew Union College) is professor of Old Testament at Wheaton College Graduate School. He is the author or coauthor of several books, including Chronological and Background Charts of the Old Testament; Ancient Israelite Literature in Its Cultural Context; Covenant: God's Purpose, God's Plan; The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament; and A Survey of the Old Testament.

5 stars for content 2.5 stars for print quality I eagerly awaited the publication date for this study bible. I own both John Walton's *Backgrounds* and Craig Keener's *Bible Background Commentaries* and found them both very helpful. A study bible with this kind of info tickled my fancy. I have grown to become particular on the print Bibles I purchase. As a graphic and web designer, I know how much print quality effects the ease of reading. So I did my research and found a sampler PDF by Zondervan of

the print Bible. Everything seemed good (notes were dark enough because of being viewed on a monitor) but you never know how the final product will look. Factors like paper quality, ink quality etc. really determine the final outcome. On receiving the bible I have to admit I am very disappointed. Many things were okay but when I looked at the note sections of the bible I was not a happy camper. Zondervan used a thin-weight sans-serif font, very small (5 or 6pt ?) that is very difficult to read. Because of the thin weight of the font, the print color looks like a medium gray. In bright light the glare off the paper competes with it but without some sort of direct light it is very difficult to read. Also, the paper is thin enough that the occasional colored illustrations on the reverse side of the page bleed (ghost) through and make legibility even more difficult. The content of the notes and articles are top notch. No complaints there. But if you can't read the notes without squinting, what's the point? My hope is this study bible can be redone at some point to increase the legibility. Other things of note, I also wish the size of the NIV text was a tad larger. Bumping it up to 9.5 or 10pt font size would be ideal. Yes, I know that would increase the size of the book but as is, this study bible is on the large and heavy size already. You'll probably not be toting this around to church or the office. I could do without the red lettering myself. I know many people like it so I'll back off on that. Red lettering is often hard to read in large doses (try John 14-17) and sometimes turns to a dark pink. So what to do? For the note section, having the Kindle version may be better. often does a thing called MatchBook where if you buy the print version of a book you can get the Kindle version greatly reduced. No such luck here so many buyers will need to choose between the Kindle version or the hard-to-read print bible. I looked at the sample Kindle version and can say I am not impressed. Kindle bibles have notoriously ugly text. The main culprit is the superscript verse numbers which are often not formatted correctly and thus increase the line spacing (leading) of the lines they are on. The text then becomes choppy and irregular with the mishmash of different line spacing. You'll get that here. The notes, however, are in different sections and layout perfectly fine. So you will be able to bump the text size to whatever is readable for you. Plop that besides you while reading your bible and you'll be good to go. In conclusion, I wish Bible publishers hired better print and layout designers for their bibles. This trend of small font sizes, thin bible paper and compact bible sizes doesn't make for very readable bibles these days. Update: sent back the print version study bible before my allotment time is up. On pages where there are predominantly notes, not the biblical text, I just plain can't read the mass of medium gray text without a magnifying glass. I have what I have suggested below (the comment section) and is working great.

Excellent Bible. Lot's of good resources and information that help understand why things happened the way they did. I nearly didn't buy the book because of some of the comments concerning the print color for the notes being too light and difficult to read. I did find it very light and they perhaps could have made it darker but basically, if you are reading in a good light then the print is not a problem.

I am an older reader and the print is just too light to be comfortably read. Content may be excellent, but why or why did you ruin it with the light print? I had planned on purchasing several copies, but after looking at the ink, there will be no extra purchases. I have told my friends about the light print and they all agree that they will avoid the purchase. Sorry, but it ruined the whole thing for me...and my friends.

Content is excellent! I must warn though--the Notes are in a very light silver-gray font and hard to read. If they come out with a Kindle edition I am sure there will be no problem but this is the only drawback. Margins, illustrations and other texts, pictures, etc., are excellent. A resource I will use often in spite of this minor issue.

I bought this Bible for my boyfriend and ended up loving it. The notes add a wonderful history lesson to scripture readings.

Great reference source to understand the culture of the times.

At 65, I have been a student and teacher of the Bible for almost 50 years. I wish I had had this for all those years! The issue and complaints of lighter print on the page notes almost kept me from buying it. But much to my surprise, with my older eyes, I can read it just fine. Do not let that keep you from buying this gem. One aspect the author brings out is the comparison between man's mythical beliefs of the day and God's work. Lately there have been many books bringing out Hebrew culture in Jesus' day and giving further understanding to the New Testament. It is said best on the back cover "see the cultural background behind each story". This version does the same for the Old Testament as well as New. I have recommended this to all my friends

If you want to know what scripture really means then get this bible! You will be so enlightened!

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