

Apostles, for example. The epistles are in order of writing, beginning with 1 Thessalonians and ending with Philemon. 'Nothing wrong with that', we might say; but then we might wonder, 'What about the epistles to Timothy and Titus? Surely they were the last to be written'. The answer is that Mr. Bricto relegates these to an appendix

because many scholars deny they are the authentic letters of Paul.

It gets worse, however. The author sees fit to make additions to the text, extensive in some cases, like the books of Ruth and Esther, others shorter, like adding "taking advantage of her innocence" to the account of the Fall. It is true that these

additions are indicated as such, but there can be no excuse for adding bits to the text of Scripture. The 'people' deserve better than this, and for those who feel they cannot cope with the 400-year-old language of the AV there are modern versions produced with a genuine respect for the Bible as God's Word.

Tony Benson

An introduction to Judaism

John Nicholls



**Judaism, D. Charing,
Dorling Kindersley
Eyewitness Guides,
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DID YOU KNOW that the flag of Israel is based on Biblical ideas? The six points of the star represent the six days of Creation, the two broad blue horizontal bands represent heaven and serve as a reminder of God's ways, and the white background symbolises purity and peace. Did you know that in the Middle Ages (seventh to fifteenth centuries) life was generally better for Jewish people under Muslim rule than it was under Christian rule? Are you aware that the modern-day Jewish scribe must train for seven years, and that it may take him over one year to copy accurately every word of the Torah (the first five books of the Bible)? Even then the copy must be checked several times for accuracy before being used in a synagogue.

These are some of the fascinating facts to be found in a recently published book entitled *Judaism*. Dorling Kindersley are renowned for producing beautifully illustrated colour guides to a wide range of subjects. This book is in the Eyewitness Guides series, several of which touch on Biblical themes.

The book under review is intended for older children, but it has much for adults of all ages who are interested in Jewish religion and culture. It has twenty-five short chapters, and traces

the origin of the Jews from the time of Abraham through the sojourn in Egypt, and redemption in the Promised Land, right through later Bible times to the Romans. It then moves to the Middle Ages and the pogroms and the birth of Zionism. After a couple of chapters on the rise of Hitler and the Holocaust, it deals with synagogues, prayer, Jewish values and practices, kosher food and the festivals. It ends with a very modest account of the contribution of the Jews to the arts, politics, inventions, science and medicine.

This is a lavishly illustrated book, and, for the Bible reader who understands that Israel is the channel through which God's purpose runs, it is full of interest throughout. Judaism, of course, is an incomplete religion because there is no acknowledgement of the work of God in sending Christ. In the book the reviewer found one brief mention of the Messiah: "Jews believe in the coming of the Messiah who will pave the way for God's rule". He could find nothing on Jewish beliefs about life after death or any hope at all beyond this life. We await the coming of the redeemer to Zion to turn away ungodliness from Jacob (Isa. 59:20). Only then will the nation recapture the faith their forefathers had when they left Egypt and crossed the Red Sea, and then went on in the same faith to conquer the city of Jericho (Heb. 11:29,30).

This book is recommended because it helps to keep before us the enduring witness of the Jew to God's existence and purpose. It is reasonably priced, and, for UK readers with children of school age in the family, it is a supporting text for National Curriculum studies in Religious Education.