James B. Pritchard - although an archaeologist specializing in especially mid-2nd millennium materials and has a book on Ancient Near East Texts (and biblical parallels), he was the editor of the Harper-Collins Atlas of Bible History. Standard church histories and thus historians, and also some historians who focus in on the early church include. I don't know precisely how closely the biblical accounts match up to veridical history, but there are definitely real historical facts here that can be corroborated by writings in other cultures, or archeological evidence; so for this period, the Bible seems to be a source of valid historical data (read carefully and critically, of course, like any source). Detailed biblical references, timelines, and suggestions for further reading accompany each period of biblical history, conveying a tangible sense of the land, events, and people portrayed in the world's most famous book. With more than 100 full-color maps, timelines, and expert explanations, this superlative reference work will enable readers to more fully appreciate and understand the Bible and its stories. The HarperCollins Atlas of Bible History features: Over 100 full-color geographical and topographical maps. The latest archaeological information, floor plans, city plans, illustrations, ... Timelines that place each section of the Bible in its historical context. Web site recommendations for further interactive study. Christianity. Collins Atlases.