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Sommario/riassunto	The Bible, argues this book, may belong to the Church or synagogue as an instrument of religious practice. But as the object of academic study it belongs to the world as a whole. Confessional biblical studies belong to a discipline better termed 'scripture', with 'biblical studies' designating a discipline that imposes no religious conditions and includes any form of rational discourse about the bible. A basic requirement of this discipline is to speak not of 'the Bible' but of 'bibles'. A number of exegetical studies suggest how a genuinely academic discourse about biblical writings, distanci