ATLA: An Introduction

(Part One: The Beginning)
Remember:
ATLA, like the ark, is bigger on the inside than it looks on the outside

Folio 25v "The building of the ark."
Rüdiger Schopf, Episodes from the Story of Noah German, 1396, Basel, Switzerland, Universitätsbibliothek MS. A II 1
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Are you sure we’re gunna fit TWO of every kind of animal in here?

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On the outside, it looks like just another search box . . .

(please curb your enthusiasm, though I know: it is awesome)
But once you get inside, you will find it an incredibly powerful tool (it’s more than just a box)
When you need good results, it is essential to use the right tool (just ask Noah).
When you need good results, it is essential to use the right tool (just ask Noah).

* *sigh* I guess I’ll use the dove this time. Stupid raven.

Noah Releases the Dove, St. Mark’s Venice (12th-13th c.)
ATLA is the most important tool for finding scholarly journal articles in religion and theology.

Basketweave boat. Medieval Manuscript Images, Pierpont Morgan Library, Old Testament miniatures (MS M.638). MS M.638 fol. 2v
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• Scholars tend to be introverts, so written communication is how they speak with each other.

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• Scholars tend to be introverts, so written communication is how they speak with each other.

• Thus, reading journal articles allows you to enter into the ongoing scholarly conversation.
Don’t miss out

Because ATLA is an index that includes most major scholarly journal articles and essays in religion and theology, using ATLA will ensure you are not missing out on important information in your research.

Don’t worry! I am quite certain the ark doesn’t leave until next Tuesday.
Like the animals entering the ark, the results in ATLA come in two kinds: clean and unclean.
Like the animals entering the ark, the results in ATLA come in two kinds: clean and unclean full-text and not full-text.
For some results, there is a link to a PDF of the full-text of the article.
Others results tell you that an article exists, and where to find it.
“NO FULL TEXT” IS NOT A SIGN OF THE APOCALYPSE OR A GOOD REASON NOT TO USE A SOURCE
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Some of these will be available in print; others we may be able to obtain through InterLibrary Loan (sometimes in a couple days)
Be sure also to check Google Scholar, or other libraries

Note publication types. ATLA indexes articles and essays, books, and book reviews.
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Noting the type of publication will help you locate the source, and anticipate the kind of information you can expect.
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(e.g. an essay will be found in a book, so you will likely need the book’s title and call number; a book review can be an excellent source, especially if you plan to use the book, but you may find reviews for books we do not have).
Questions? Pleas for help? Want further instructions?

Noah’s Ark, Italianate mural painting, mid-16th century studiolo
ASK (FOR HELP), AND YE SHALL RECEIVE

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Contact us any time at libraryiq@austinseminary.edu with any questions.