

The Blessed Book

The Bible is the most remarkable book ever written. It is also one of the most well-known and popular pieces of literature ever produced. It has spawned other writings from the production of theologies and commentaries to literary history and poetry. It can safely be said that the Scriptures became the central theme that dominates the story of Western civilization. Though one wishes that the Bible had more influence over the hearts of humankind and the moral course of nations, still it has had a greater spiritual impact on a larger number of people on earth than any other book in history. Josh McDowell has compiled some fascinating trivia information about the makeup and development of the Bible.¹

Bible Facts

• The Bible was written:

Over a fifteen-hundred-year period.

By more than forty authors from every walk of life: kings, military leaders, peasants, philosophers, fishermen, tax collectors, poets, musicians, statesmen, scholars, and shepherds.

In different places: wilderness, dungeon, hillside, inside prison walls, while traveling, exiled on an island.

On three continents: Asia, Africa, and Europe.

In three languages: Hebrew, Aramaic (portions of Jeremiah, Daniel, and Ezra), and Greek.

On stone, on a wall, parchment, and animal skins.

In a variety of literary styles:

Allegory

Autobiography

Biography

Didactic treatise

Historical narrative

Law

Memoirs

Parable

Personal letters

Poetry

Prophecy

Romance

Song

• The Bible was one of the first major books ever translated, around 250 B.C., from Hebrew to Greek.

• It has been translated into more than 2,200 languages.

• In all translations, it has touched more than 90 percent of the world's population.

• The Bible has been rejected and criticized by kings, peasants, cults, other religions, fanatics, and scholars; yet it remains one of the most trusted and reliable books ever penned.

• About 40 percent of the Bible is prophecy.

• Around 300 of its prophecies were fulfilled through the person of Jesus Christ.

• Past fulfilled predictions and future prophecies that will take place in time and history make the Bible one of the most unique religious books ever written.

• Some of the works of Shakespeare are far more uncertain and corrupt than the New Testament texts.

• In its translation activity, no other book in history compares with the Bible.

What Others Say About the Bible

Nothing has spoken so clearly and forcefully to the problem of "man according to God" as the Bible. — *Puritan William Ames*

Faith, as it points to the thing to be believed, must finally depend on the authority of God or divine revelation. — *William Ames*

I have found in the Bible words for my inmost thoughts, songs for my joy, utterance for my hidden griefs, and pleadings for my shame and feebleness. — *English poet Samuel Taylor*

The textual critic [who tries to destroy] the New Testament, is embarrassed by the wealth of his [manuscript] material. — *Princeton Bible professor Bruce Metzger*

The ancient Jews preserved their ancient writings of the Old Testament like no other manuscript has ever been preserved. — *Bernard Ramm*

Despite attacks upon it, the Bible is still loved by millions, read by millions, and studied by millions. — *Bernard Ramm*

The hammers of infidels have been pecking away at the Bible for ages, but the hammers are worn out, and the anvil of the Word still endures. — *H. L. Hastings*

Other books claim divine inspiration. But none of those books contain predictive prophecy. — *Norman L. Geisler and William E. Nix*

The Bible is not such a book a man would write if he could or could write if he would. — *Lewis S. Chafer*

The Bible as a book focuses on reality, not fantasy. It presents the good and bad, the right and wrong, the best and worst, the hope and despair, the joy and pain of life. — *Josh McDowell*

Western literature has been more influenced by the Bible than any other book. — *Literary critic Northrop Frye*

This Jesus of Nazareth, without money and arms, conquered more millions than Alexander, Caesar, Mohammed, and Napoleon. — *Historian Philip Schaff*

Is it possible that a book [such as the Bible], at once so simple and sublime, should be merely the work of man? — *Philosopher Jean Jacques Rousseau*

The unity and harmony of the book, written during the space of more than 1,500 years, . . . are remarkable, Law, history, poetry, prophecy, doctrine, worship, and practical exhortations, with the character, illustrations, and arguments which they contain all unite in making the story of Redemption the most fascinating and up-to-date story of all literature. — *H. S. Miller*

God, the Maker of the world, is manifested to us in Scripture, and His true character expounded, so as to save us from wandering up and down, as in a labyrinth, in search of some doubtful deity. — *John Calvin*

The human mind, though often brilliant in what it can achieve, suffers limitations and darkening. Human experiences, even religious ones, lack reliability as sources of the true knowledge of God unless they conform to the Word of God. — *Charles C. Ryrie*

Dr. Mal Couch

For Further Study

Apologetics

McDowell, Josh. *The New Evidence That Demands a Verdict*.

Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1999.