



The Bible

KID EXPLANATION

The Bible is like a super special library. It is a giant storybook filled with adventures and lessons. It has two parts: the Old Testament (Hebrew Scriptures) and the New Testament (Christian Scriptures). The Old Testament has stories from a long, long time ago, with heroes, rules, and even talking donkeys! Then, the New Testament is all about Jesus – his miracles, teachings, and how much he loves everyone. So, the Bible is basically a fantastic story collection that helps us learn about love, wisdom, friendship, and how to be our best selves in kind and caring ways.

Why?

Whether or not you know the Bible *does not* make God love you any differently. People, however, often use the Bible as a book to create and fear and hate.

Those of us who know that is not true, don't often have some of the key pieces of knowledge to combat the misuse of the Bible.

Basic biblical knowledge, study, and research help all of us build a stronger foundation to better theologies or understandings of just how big God's love is for the world.

Bible Basics Quiz... Whatcha got?

Click on the link above or look at the next page, to see what you know about the Bible.

Do not JUDGE (it is in the Bible), and therefore, it is okay no matter what the result.

Tidbit

Find a place in your house to write one scripture a week.

(Whiteboard? Lunch Box Post-it? Dry-Erase it on a Bathroom Mirror? Post it in the Car Console?)

Here are two scriptures to get you reflecting...

Every scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for showing mistakes, for correcting, and for training character, so that the person who belongs to God can be equipped to do everything that is good. (2 Timothy 3:16-17, Common English Bible)

- Who is Timothy?
- Who is writing this?
- What does this mean to you?

*"I am about to do a new thing;
now it springs forth; do you not perceive it?*

I will make a way in the wilderness

and rivers in the desert." (Isaiah 43:19, New Revised Standard Version)

- Where is this found in The Bible
- Who is writing this?
- Who is hearing this?
- What new thing may God be doing for you or your family.

Popular Bible Translations

- FYI: The Bible was not originally written in English. (Crazy - right?)
- The version of the Bible you read will impact your experience and understanding.
- I suggest a variety. Check out biblegateway.com and you can compare different versions.
- You can also get SUPER fancy and look up the original terms: <https://biblehub.com/interlinear/>

Here are some popular versions:

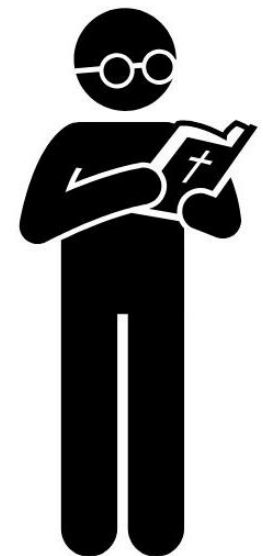
New Revised Standard Version (and all its updates)
(Accurate and inclusive version.)

The Message Bible
(Creative to read, but not accurate.)

King James Version
(The Elizabethan English version.)

New International Version
(A solid version, but not inclusive.)

The Good News Bible
(Easy to read, but not accurate version.)





What is the Bible about?

1. A library of books where each book gives very specific rules to live by.
2. A book about heaven and hell and how you get to heaven.
3. A library of sacred books that share how humans and God seek to be in relationship.

What other religions (besides Christian) have similar stories and connections to Abraham?

1. Judaism & Islam
2. Catholic & Protestant
3. Hinduism & Judaism
4. Buddhism & Islam

The Bible is divided into two parts. What are they called?

1. The New Testament and the Old Testament
2. The Gospels and the Old Testament
3. The Torah and the Christian Scriptures
4. The Hebrew Scriptures and the Gospels

Is the New Testament actually new? Yes or No

What language is the Old Testament written in?

1. Aramaic & Greek
2. Hebrew & Greek
3. Hebrew & Aramaic
4. Latin & Greek

What language is the New Testament written?

1. Aramaic
2. Hebrew
3. Greek
4. Latin

How many books are in the Hebrew/Old Scriptures?

1. 66
2. 21
3. 39
4. 27

How many books in the New/Christian Scriptures?

1. 27
2. 66
3. 39
4. 21

How many books are in the Bible?

1. 66
2. 21
3. 27
4. 39

What does the word "Bible" mean?

1. God's Word
2. Good News
3. Library
4. Sacred Texts

What are some of the different types of writings found in the Bible?

1. Myths & Poems
2. Songs & Prayers
3. History & Prophecies
4. Gospels & Letters
5. Apocalyptic
6. All of the above.

What are the first words in the Bible?

1. God said, "It was good."
2. In the beginning.
3. Let's start at the very beginning. A very good place to start.
4. An account of the genealogy...
- 5.

What are the first 5 books of the Bible called?

1. Psalms
2. The Torah
3. The Gospels
4. The Prophets
5. Genesis

What is a prophet?

1. Someone who works in the temple.
2. Someone who can tell the future.
3. Someone who follows Jesus.
4. Someone who speaks on behalf of God.

What are Psalms?

1. Songs
2. Prayers
3. Poems
4. All of the above.

What does "gospel" mean?

1. Another word for the New Testament
2. Another word for Bible
3. Good News
4. Jesus' Stories

Can you name the 4 gospel writers?

1. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John
2. Paul, John, Ringo, and George
3. Peter, Andrew, James and John
4. Peter, Andrew, Matthew and Mark

Who do we read about in the gospels?

1. Noah
2. Jesus
3. Moses
4. Paul

What is an epistle?

1. A letter
2. A poem
3. A New Testament prophet
4. A story told from Jesus

What is the last book in the Bible?

1. Revelation
2. John
3. Malachi



Hebrew Scriptures / Old Testament

Kid Explanation

Each story in it has its own cool history. For the Hebrew Scriptures (the ones before Jesus), the Masoretes in the 9th century CE were like language masterminds. They put together the basis for Hebrew scripture translations and added vowels to Hebrew! The oldest version of the Hebrew Scripture stories in Greek (which is not the same language as Hebrew) is called the Septuagint.

Fast forward to the 20th century (way back in the old days of the 1900s) – The Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered between 1947 and 1956 in caves near the Dead Sea. They're like ancient time capsules with biblical texts that match pretty closely with what the Masoretes had.

So, that's a bit about the epic history of the Hebrew Scriptures – the backbone of our Bible adventures!

History of Hebrew Scriptures

- Different copies of scripture were passed around from place to place. There was a group of Jews in Tiberias and Jerusalem. They were known as the **Masoretes** and in the 9th century CE they put together what is now the primary basis of Hebrew scripture translations. (These included the **Tanak** which is the additional explanation for Jewish writings.) They even added vowels to the Hebrew language.
- The oldest version of the Hebrew Scriptures in Greek is called the **Septuagint**.
- Between 1947 and 1956 CE, 900 documents were discovered in caves next to the Dead Sea. These manuscripts, **The Dead Sea Scrolls**, dated between 150 BCE and 70 CE. Many of these scrolls included biblical texts. These texts, even though much earlier than the Masoretes, almost matched what had been used.

BOOKS IN THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES

The 17 Historical Books are:

Torah/Pentateuch: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, 2 Kings, 1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, & Esther

The 5 Poetical Books are:

Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Songs (or Solomon)

The 17 Prophetic Books are:

Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi

Hebrew Scripture

Why do I call it the Hebrew Scriptures and not the Old Testament?

Growing up, I learned that labeling someone else's religion as "old" can be seen as negative in our society. Plus, understanding the Christian Scriptures requires appreciating the significance of the Jewish texts. It's like having a dynamic duo – the Christian Scriptures and Jewish texts teaming up to bring us an incredible story of faith and wisdom!

Random Facts for Fun!

- The Hebrew Scriptures has 929 chapters.
- The longest word in the Bible is Isaiah 8:1 "Maher-shalal-hash baz."
- The shortest verse in the Hebrew Scriptures is 1 Chronicles 1:25.
- The middle verse in the Bible is Psalm 97:8.
- The shortest chapter in the Bible is Psalm 117.
- The longest book in the Bible is Psalms.
- The longest chapter in the Bible is Psalm 119.

Tidbit: Here is another one to get you thinking...

But God's already made it plain how to live, what to do, what God is looking for in men and women.

It's quite simple: Do what is fair and just to your neighbor, be compassionate and loyal in your love,

And don't take yourself too seriously—

take God seriously. (Micah 6:8, The Message Version/Paraphrase)

- Where is Micah in the Bible?
- Micah was a prophet. What does it mean to be a prophet?
- What does this mean to you?





Christian Scriptures / New Testament

Kid Explanation

Once upon a time, there wasn't a magical "poof," and the Bible appeared! Nope, no original copies. Each sacred book had its own story. They were written from 50-100 C.E., but it took a while to become a book. People argued a lot, some stories got left out, and others were lost. In 367 C.E. we got the 27 books we have today.

In 382 C.E., a guy named Jerome made the first popular Latin version called the Vulgate. Monks copied it for years, and in 1456, Gutenberg's printing press made it accessible to "common people." But oh boy, were there arguments! Brave heroes like John Wycliffe and William Tyndale made sure everyone could read the Bible.

And now, ta-da! The Bible speaks in over 6,000 languages and has a whopping 80,000 versions around the world!

Adult's Need to Know (Bible History)

- The Christian Scriptures were thought to have been written from 50-100 C.E. (Common Era).
- The different writings did not come together as a book for a long time. Many times, people argued over which writings mattered. Some writings did get left out and others got lost.
- It wasn't until 367 C.E. that the group of 27 books we have today were generally agreed upon.
- In 382 C.E. Jerome was the first person to write a popular Latin version of Hebrew and Christian scriptures. It was called the Vulgate.
- Lots of people started translating scriptures and monks would copy them for many years.
- When Gutenberg invented the printing press the first book ever printed was *The Bible* in 1456. This is the first time "common people" began to have access to scripture in written form. There were huge arguments over whether the "common people" could be trusted to have access to The Bible. (Depending on the day... I still wonder.) Forty-nine of the original 180 printed copies remain.
- John Wycliffe put together the first English language Bible in the 1500s and was thrown out of the church because of it.
- William Tyndale was strangled and burned for his version.
- Two years later the Pope requested every church have a Bible.
- Now the Bible has been written in over 6,000 different languages and 80,000 versions around the world.

Christian Scriptures

I prefer to call it the Christian Scriptures instead of the New Testament. As a child, the term "new" was confusing because the stories weren't actually new. They called it the "New Testament," but the stories weren't exactly fresh out of the oven – more like ancient recipes passed down through the ages!

Growing up, I also learned that labeling someone else's religion as "old" can be seen as negative in our society. Plus, understanding the Christian Scriptures requires appreciating the significance of the Jewish texts. It's like having a dynamic duo – the Christian Scriptures and Jewish texts teaming up to bring us an incredible story of faith and wisdom!

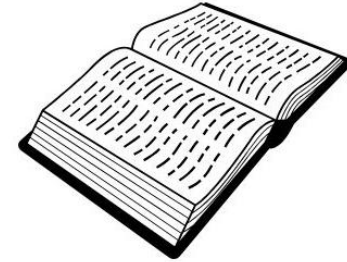
Random Facts for Fun!

- The oldest surviving Christian Scripture text is John 18:31-33 (125 C.E.)
- It is like finding a spiritual time capsule. It's basically the Bible's way of saying, "Back in my day..."
- The Christian Scripture contain more than 260 Hebrew scripture quotations.
- It is like a remix album with over 260 Hebrew scripture quotes.
- The shortest verse in *The Bible* is John 11:35.
- It is like the mic drop of verses. Short, sweet, and to the divine point!
- The longest book in the Christian Scripture is Acts.
- It is the marathon runner of Christian Scriptures
- Chapters and verses were not a part of the original texts. Chapters were added in 1231 C.E. and verses in 1551 C.E.
- They were added later, like bonus features!
- The shortest book in *The Bible* is 2 John.



Christian Scriptures / New Testament, page two

How are the Christian Scriptures Organized? Gospels, Acts, and Epistles (Letters)



Gospels (Basics)

Matthew: This gospel was written for the Jewish Community.

Mark: (Scholars think...) This is the oldest of the Gospels, and other books (like Matthew and Luke) knew about it and copied from it. There may have been another book, called "Q" that was also used. We do not have that resource.

Luke: This gospel was written for the Gentile (non-Jewish) community.

John: This book is the least like the other three. The other three are sometimes called Synoptic Gospels. John may have been part of a philosophical movement of Gnostics, called Gnosticism.

Acts (of the Apostles)

Acts: This book talks about the Apostles and their actions after Jesus ascends to heaven.

Epistles

There are 21 Epistles in the Bible. After Acts the 13 letters supposedly written by Paul begin from the longest to the shortest. Then there are individual letters and the letter of a man's revelation experience.

Paul's Letter: **Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, and Hebrews**

FYI: Not all letters attributed to Paul were probably written by Paul.

Other Letters: **James, 1 Peter, 2 Peter, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John, and Jude**

Revelation: A book of strange visions of an unknown author.

Tidbit: Find a place in your house to write one scripture a week.

"Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world but in order that the world might be saved through him." (John 3:17, New Revised Standard Version)

- Why is this verse not more popular?
- Who is writing this?
- What does this mean to you?