

Some interesting and fun facts:

- The Bible appears numerous times in the Guinness Book of Records. For example, it was the **FIRST** book to be: _____.
- The advent of the _____ in _____ meant the bible could be mechanically produced, but even then, only about _____ copies were produced. To date, only _____ known copies of the _____ Bible remain in existence.
- There are currently _____ living languages in the world. As of 2020, the full Bible (which includes both the old and new) has been translated into _____ of those languages – that is about _____ billion PEOPLE!
- The New Testament alone, however - has been translated into _____ languages.
- Individual books and smaller sections of the Bible have been translated into _____ additional languages – this includes _____ language!
- Even so, there are an estimated _____ million people who speak languages that the work of _____ into their vernacular or everyday language hasn't even begun, yet.

The word “bible” comes from the medieval _____ word *biblia*. It is a word derived from the Greek meaning “_____.”

So, the Bible is not just ONE book, but rather an anthology or _____. How MANY books this portable library contains – depends on which Bible you are holding. The Bible of a _____ person is different from the Bible of a _____ Catholic _____, which is different from the Bible of a _____ Christian – or yours and mine.

Written over the course of a thousand years, primarily in Hebrew the Jewish Bible is the equivalent of Christianity's _____. For our Jewish sisters and brothers, there is NO New Testament; they only recognize the scriptures that WE call the Old Testament – although they are

arranged and numbered in a different order.

What are some differences between the Jewish, Roman and Protestant Bibles?

Now opening your Bible – a Protestant Christian’s Bible - in turning to your Table of Contents, you’ll notice that it is divided into two major parts – first, is the Old Testament which contains _____ books. Simply put, these _____ books tell the story about God’s chosen people: the _____. The Old Testament takes us from the beginning of creation, through the tragic time, centuries later, when they were conquered and taken as prisoners in Babylon, to the time when they returned home from _____.

Then there is a break of about _____ years before the New Testament begins. This Intertestamental Period is often referred to as the _____ Years. Even though the Bible is silent about these _____ years, there are many other historical or extra-biblical books from this time period that tells us it was a very _____ time in history, with many upheavals that affected religious belief. After this 400-year time period passes...

Then we come to the “sequel” – a second act – which we call the New Testament. It begins with the birth of Jesus. The _____ books of the New Testament tell the story of Jesus – a man we believe was the Son of God. It tells the story of his life, and about his followers – most of them devout Jewish men and women, who established the Christian church and the Good News of Jesus, as the Promised Messiah, after his death and resurrection.

Some people say it with certainty that the Bible is the divinely inspired Word of God. That phrase “divinely inspired” literally means that God dictated the books of the Bible - _____ - to a

select group of men, who “wrote it down” _____ as God had spoken them.

Even though the books of the bible tell the story of God’s people since the beginning of time, we remember they are NOT put together in _____ order or according to a historical timeline. We remember that NOT every Christian’s Bible is the same. Instead, this library of _____ books, is organized like any other library or bookstore for that matter – and that is by _____ or _____ matter.

The Old Testament is divided into 4 major genres:

- The first _____ books are called the PENTATEUCH, which means “five _____.” The _____ contains an introduction to the creation of the world and the growth of civilization on earth. It contains the history of God’s people between the leadership of these two Old Testament ancestors of our faith: Abraham and _____. It also contains the _____ Commandments and detailed instructions about daily living and how to best live in community with one another. This portion of our scriptures, are shared in common, with our _____ sisters and brothers, who call it, NOT the _____, but rather “The book of the _____” or “The Torah.”
- The next section contains _____ books of HISTORY. This section picks up with the military leader, _____ and takes us through the Israelites military defeat by the Babylonians and _____ AND their return from exile, about _____ years later.
- Next – are the _____ books of poetry and _____ literature. These books contain some of the world’s best-known writings. Here we find the book of Job, which is a drama. The Psalms - are poetry - and _____ for worship. Then we have _____ and Ecclesiastes which contain _____ sayings and then at the end of this section is the Song of Songs – also known as the Song of _____ - which is a _____ poem.
- At the end of the Old Testament are _____ books called the

_____. These books contain messages that were twofold. First, they encouraged people to _____ – AND they served as _____.

- How many are MAJOR prophets? _____
- How many are MINOR prophets? _____
- What makes someone a major prophet? What makes one a minor prophet?

- Now for your bonus trivia points - the 5 major prophets are these: _____, _____, _____, (which some scholars say was also written by Jeremiah), _____, and _____. The remaining _____ are counted among the minor prophets.

The New Testament is divided into _____ genres, although different ones than the Old Testament.

- The first _____ books of the New Testament are called the _____ – a term which simply means “_____.” The aim of the gospel writers was to tell the story of _____ before all of those who had actually seen and known him died. The gospel writers wanted the world to have an accurate record - based on eye-witness accounts.
- An interesting side-note about the gospel writer, Luke, is that he also wrote the book of _____ which tells the story of how the church grew.
- That book called _____ of the _____ is the only book in the next section called “New Testament _____.”
- So again, the next genre is _____ and contains only the book of Acts.
- Next, come the _____ or the EPISTLES. This is a

collection of _____ - _____ letters written by Christian leaders to the churches that were springing up all over the Middle East. These letters contain teaching, encouragement, as well as _____ about where the Christians were getting things wrong.

- Out of the _____ - _____ letters, Paul wrote _____ of them!
- Lastly, we come to a _____ book, which stands alone in this next section. That book is _____. This genre is known as _____ literature.

TWO questions for further reflection:

The first being this: ***Should Christians study the New Testament more than the Old Testament or should we study them equally?*** This question is born out of the teaching that we are saved by grace, not by our ability to follow the LAW as recorded in the Old Testament. In other words, if Jesus saved us by his gracious act on the cross because it is simply not humanly possible for us, as sinful people, to follow the “rules” perfectly enough to save ourselves – and Jesus did it for us – then why do we still need the Old Testament? (Come back to this section after my thoughts and write down what YOU believe)

Kenneth Davis says, that while “many Christians think this means that they can simply throw out the _____ books and stick with the _____ and skip over all the boring _____ stuff – the _____ Testament does _____ replace the _____. Instead the _____ supplements, expands and completes the _____.” He points to the sports world for a good analogy saying, “In the sports world, they call it a contract extension; the old agreement is renewed with more profitable terms.”

The Gospel of _____ even begins with an _____ Testament _____ that makes sense only to those who are familiar with the people and events to which it refers. As Christians in the United Church of Christ, we believe that _____, together, reveal the same holy, merciful, and righteous God, as fulfilled in _____.

The SECOND question is this: *Is there one part (or parts) that are more important than others?* What do YOU think?

First, we remember how around 30,000 years ago, our prehistoric ancestors painted scenes on walls of _____. As civilization developed, these drawings of objects evolved into picture writing. About 5,000 years ago, the _____ developed hieroglyphic scripts which we still see today in their ancient tombs and monuments. The _____ developed the pictures into more precise shapes which they pressed into soft _____ with a _____. We call this _____ writing.

The next big step seems to have been made in Canaan where a scribe hit on the idea of an _____. He reduced his language into around _____ simple sounds – all _____. Each sound was given a sign – usually chosen from a word beginning with that sound.

_____ were not written at first. THIS IS IMPORTANT in our study of the biblical languages - there were only symbols for _____. This first alphabet was so successful that it spread rapidly, and by _____ BC many people had adapted it to their own language, including the Hebrews of the Old Testament.

As communication progressed, humanity moved from writing on walls and small clay tablets to writing on _____, which was paper made from the stems of the _____ plant. These were eventually beaten into

long strips and rolled into _____ for easy storage. THESE were the books of the Old Testament. The writing on the _____ was done with _____ brushes and used black “ink” made from _____ or _____ from _____. Eventually came the use of _____, which was made from the soft _____. These too, was rolled into scrolls. Then, about the second century AD scrolls were replaced by the _____.

Are you ready for this – the _____ were pages of written material folded and fastened together at one side, sometimes with a cover! Christians were the pioneers of the _____. The earliest complete _____ or written transcript of the NEW TESTAMENT was discovered in the _____ century. The complete transcript was written in Greek and is called the _____.

Parts of the Bible were written in _____, some in _____, and still others in _____, which was the ordinary language of Palestine, a language which Jesus would have known and spoken.

In the year _____, Napoleon led an expedition to _____ where one of his men accidentally unearthed a large stone covered in writing. It was probably the single most important discovery in the history of _____, because it held the key to crack the code of the _____ language. The writing turned out to be a royal decree written three times – two forms were in _____ and one was in _____! This was the Rosetta Stone!

Another discovery in the year: _____, happened while the British still occupied _____. A man by the name of _____ ed Dib was tending goats near the northern _____ shore, a salty lake in the middle of a desert, the lowest and hottest point on the face of our planet. _____ stumbled across a _____ that contained some ancient _____ filled with _____ and scraps of old leather

covered in mysterious writing. These mysterious works came to be called the _____.

What jobs did ancient scribes hold?

What rules did the scribes use to ensure accuracy of copied manuscripts?

There were copies of EVERY Old Testament book except _____ found in the Qumran caves.