

Bible

Verse All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work. 2Timothy 3:16-17

Study Plan: By studying this badge, you will learn about the significance of the Bible to all Christians. You will also learn how fortunate you are to be able read the Bible in your own language.



Step 1: The Importance of the B-I-B-L-E

Leader's initials _____

As a little child, you may have sung this song:

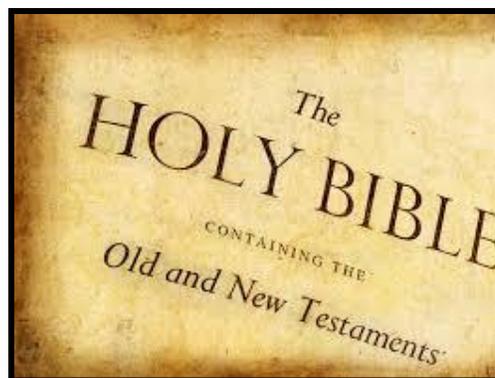
Discern

*The B-I-B-L-E!
Yes that's the Book for Me!
I stand alone on the Word of God
The B-I-B-L-E!*

How Important is the Bible? The Bible is central to our Christian faith. In the Episcopal Church we publicly read four passages of Scripture during our Sunday worship. Each week we read from the Old Testament, the Psalms, the four Gospels, and the other books of the New Testament. Over a three-year period, we read huge sections of the Bible on Sundays – we call this reading schedule a “**lectionary**.”

Episcopalians also believe that the private reading of the Scriptures is important. The Episcopal Church has a daily reading schedule called “**The Daily Office**.” The Daily Office is a two year reading schedule that covers almost the entire Bible. (You can find it beginning on page 936 of the Book of Common Prayer.)

Finally, group Bible study is a major ministry of most churches. Bible study groups usually meet once a week to read and discuss Scripture. Thus, you can see that the Bible is very important in the Episcopal Church.



In a Nutshell: The Bible tells a story and records how God has chosen to reveal Himself through human history. There are many actors or characters in the Bible. However, the central actor is God. The Bible tells us what God is like and what God has done. The Bible is divided into two parts: the **Old Testament** and the **New Testament**. The Christian churches that consider the Apocryphal books a part of the Bible include them as part of the Old Testament.

The **Old Testament** is the record of God's revelation to and relationship with the Hebrew people and the Old Covenant established at Mt. Sinai. The first five books of the Old Testament are sometimes referred to by their Jewish name, *Torah*, which means law. The Old Testament contains the sacred writings, songs, records of the history and the code of the laws of the Hebrew Nation. In these writings, we see how God chose to speak and be revealed to his chosen people Israel. It is the story of how God entered into human history at specific times and places.

The New Testament is a collection of 27 books and continues the story of God’s interaction with his creation. It describes the ultimate revelation of God’s love for us in sending His son to live as one of us and to die for us on the cross. The New Testament includes the Gospels, the letters of Paul, and other writings of the first century church.



What stories do you know from the Bible? What parts of the Bible do you know that are not “stories”?

Do you think you could read the entire Bible? Where can you find a reading schedule that would help you read almost the entire Bible over two years?

How long is the cycle over which the Bible is read during worship services?



Do at least 2 of the following activities:

1. Find and read the following readings. Note where they are found.

Book, Chapter and Verse in Bible

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------|
| The 10 Commandments | _____ |
| The Story of Rahab | _____ |
| The Anointing of David as King | _____ |
| Uriah the Hittite | _____ |
| Jonah and the Whale | _____ |
| The Magnificat | _____ |
| The Birth of Jesus | _____ |
| The Beatitudes | _____ |
| The Lord’s Prayer | _____ |
| The Parable of the Good Samaritan | _____ |
| The Parable of the Prodigal Son | _____ |
| The Parable of the Sower | _____ |
| The Last Supper | _____ |
| Our Lord’s Crucifixion | _____ |
| Paul’s Conversion | _____ |
| The GFS Motto | _____ |

2. a. Utilize the following Bible study aids to examine one of the above stories.

- A Concordance
- A Bible Dictionary
- A Bible Commentary
- Teen Bible

b. Write a paragraph describing three new insights you gained by using a Bible study aid.



3. Dramatize a favorite Bible story and present it to your group or to your church as part of the worship service.

Did you know? The Bible was divided into chapters in the 13th century by Stephen Langton and into verses in the 16th century by French printer Robert Estienne and is now usually cited by book, chapter, and verse. The Bible has estimated annual sales of 25 million copies and has been a major influence on literature and history, especially in the West where it was the first mass printed book.



Step 2: Canonization of the Bible Leader's initials _____

There are 66 books in the Old and New Testaments. How did those sixty-six books come to be recognized as holy scripture? We call this process of recognition canonization. **Canonization** is the process by which a religious community determines which books are to be regarded as sacred, imbued with authority, and thus set apart from other religious writing that are either heretical or simply of devotional value. The word canon is derived from the Greek word *kanon* – “kanon” – which is translated as “straight rod” or “ruler”. It denotes a carpenter’s measuring rod. So the word “canon” is used figuratively to mean “a standard by which something is measured.”

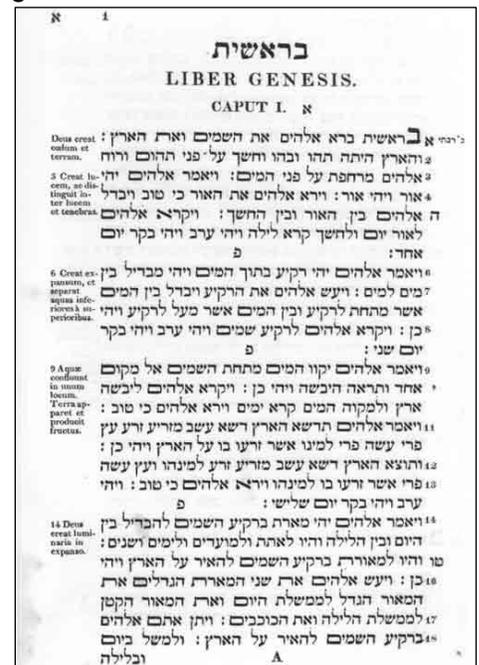
The Canonization of the Old Testament – The Old Testament recognizes the same 24 books that are in the Hebrew Bible. In addition, there are some books which are called the **Apocrypha**. They are a collection of some Old Testament books whose status as “canon” is not in agreement by all Christians. These books of Jewish religious origin were considered very important and influential, but ultimately were not canonized in the Hebrew Bible. In recent times, the Episcopal Church has begun to read some Apocryphal books as part of the **Lectionary** in worship services.

Since not all organized denominations recognize the Apocrypha as “canon”, the Old Testament can contain 39, 46, or 51 books depending on the canon. The Eastern Orthodox Bible contains 51 books, the Catholic Old Testament contains 46 books and the Protestant Old Testament contains 39 books.

The Canonization of the New Testament - The New Testament canon process was concluded in 397 A.D. Five principles were used to determine if a New Testament book was inspired by the Holy Spirit.

1. Is it authoritative—did it originate from God Himself?
2. Is it prophetic—was it written by a man of God?
3. Is it authentic—did it stand up to scrutiny?
4. Is it dynamic—did it convey the life of God to the reader?
5. Was it accepted by the people of God?

All Christian churches are in agreement about the 27 books of the New Testament.



The book of Genesis in the Hebrew Bible.



Discuss the reasons why the canonization process is necessary.
 How is it possible that words written 2000 years ago can still be relevant to your life?

Do 1 of the following:

1. Write the definitions of the following words on a separate sheet of paper and place in your notebook:



- Bible
- Testament
- Covenant
- Genesis
- Exodus
- Apocrypha
- Gospel
- Epistle
- Canon
- Torah



PROPHET JOE WAS SURE EXCITED WHEN HE FOUND OUT THAT HIS WRITINGS WERE GOING TO BE 'CANONIZED'

2. Never heard of the word canon used at church before? Look up and explain other ways the word canon is used in the church:

Musical Canon _____

A Priest can be called canon _____

Canon law _____

Canonization of a Saint _____

Have you just been too polite to ask?

On page 3 we said that the Old Testament is the same as the Hebrew Bible, which has 24 books. Later, we wrote that the Protestant Old Testament contains 39 books! How can that be? Is it 24 or 39?

The Protestant Old Testament splits up some of the books of the Hebrew Bible. For example, Chronicles is split into Chronicles I and Chronicles II. The book of Twelve in the Hebrew Bible is divided into twelve different books in the Protestant Old Testament. A few more splits, and you end up with 39 books instead of 24!!!

Step 3: History of the English Bible Leader's initials _____



Would you believe that, long ago, men were persecuted and executed for translating the Bible into English? The following excerpts from *English Bible History Article & Timeline* ©2012 by author & editor: John L. Jeffcoat III are reprinted by permission of WWW.GREATSITE.COM.

The fascinating story of how we got the Bible in its present form actually starts thousands of years ago. Our starting point in this discussion of Bible history, however, is the advent of the scripture in the English language translated by John Wycliffe.



John Wycliffe

The first English language Bible manuscripts were **hand-written** in the 1380's AD by **John Wycliffe**, an Oxford professor, scholar, and theologian. Wycliffe was well-known throughout Europe for his opposition to the teaching of the organized Church, which he believed to be contrary to the Bible. Wycliffe produced dozens of English language manuscript copies of the scriptures. They were translated out of the Latin Vulgate, which was the only source text available to Wycliffe. The Pope was so infuriated by Wycliff's teachings and his translation of the Bible into English, that 44 years after Wycliffe had died, the pope ordered Wycliff's bones to be dug-up, crushed, and scattered in the river!



In 1428, at Pope Martin V's command, Wycliffe's corpse was exhumed and burned and the ashes cast into the River Swift.

John Hus, one of Wycliffe's followers, also believed that people should be permitted to read the Bible in their own language. Hus was burned at the stake in 1415, with Wycliffe's manuscript Bibles used as kindling for the fire. The last words of John Hus were, "*in 100 years, God will raise up a man whose calls for reform cannot be suppressed.*"



John Hus was burned at the stake in 1415, with John Wycliffe's Bibles used as kindling.

Almost exactly 100 years later, in 1517, **Martin Luther** nailed his famous 95 Theses of Contention (a list of 95 issues of heretical theology and crimes of the Roman Catholic Church) into the church door at Wittenberg. The prophecy of Hus had come true!

Martin Luther went on to be the first person to translate and publish the Bible in the commonly-spoken dialect of the German people in 1517. In that same year, seven people were burned at the stake by the Roman Catholic Church for the crime of teaching their children to say the Lord's Prayer in English rather than Latin.

In the 1450's even before Martin Luther nailed up his 95 Theses, **Johann Gutenberg** invented the printing press. The first book to ever be printed was a Latin language Bible. Gutenberg's Bibles were beautiful, as each printed page was later colorfully hand-illuminated. Gutenberg's invention of the movable-type printing press meant that Bibles and other books could finally be produced in large quantities in a short period of time.

Note: We will now fast forward now past Thomas Linacre, John Colet, and Erasmus, all of whom went back to the original Greek and Hebrew texts to provide accurate translations of the Bible.

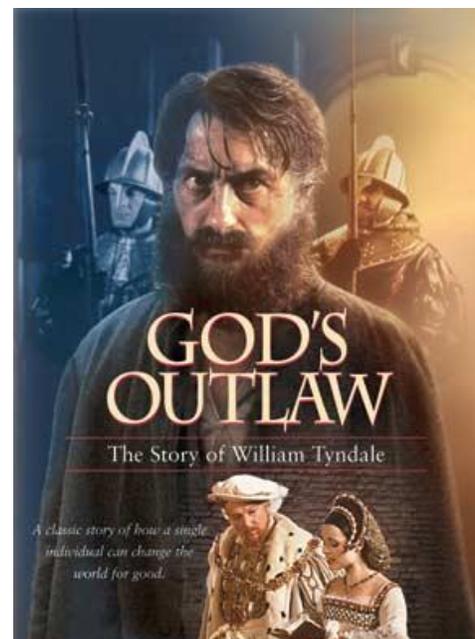
With the printing press available, **William Tyndale** holds the distinction of being the first man to ever print the New Testament in the English language. Tyndale was a true scholar and a genius, so fluent in eight languages that it was said one would think any one of them to be his native tongue. Printings of the Tyndale New Testament in the 1530's were often elaborately illustrated. The Bibles were burned as soon as the Bishop could confiscate them, but copies trickled through. The more the King and Bishop resisted the distribution of the Bible, the more fascinated the public at large became. The church declared it contained thousands of errors as they torched hundreds of New Testaments confiscated by the clergy, while, in fact, they burned them because they could find no errors at all. One risked death by burning if caught in mere possession of Tyndale's forbidden books.

Tyndale had been forced to flee England, because inquisitors and bounty hunters were constantly on Tyndale's trail to arrest him and prevent his project. Tyndale's flight was an inspiration to freedom-loving Englishmen who drew courage from the 11 years that he was hunted. Books and Bibles flowed into England in bales of cotton and sacks of flour. Ironically, Tyndale's biggest customer was the King's men, who would buy up every copy available to burn them... and Tyndale used their money to print even more! In the end, Tyndale was caught: betrayed by an Englishman that he had befriended. Tyndale was incarcerated for 500 days before he was strangled and burned at the stake in 1536. Tyndale's last words were, "Oh Lord, open the King of England's eyes".

This prayer would be answered just three years later in 1539, when **Thomas Cranmer**, the Archbishop of Canterbury, hired Myles Coverdale at the bequest of King Henry VIII to publish the "**Great Bible**". This Bible became the first English Bible authorized by the King for public use. It was distributed to every church, chained to the pulpit, and a reader was even provided so that the illiterate could hear the Word of God in plain English. It would seem that William Tyndale's last wish had been granted...only three years after his martyrdom. Cranmer's Bible,



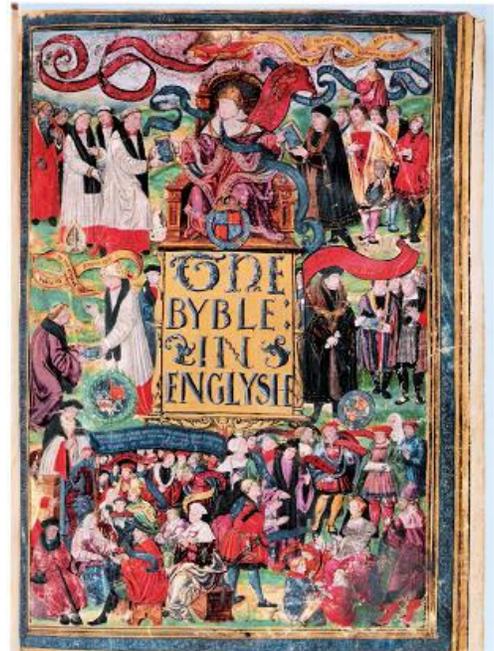
An illuminated page from a Gutenberg Bible.



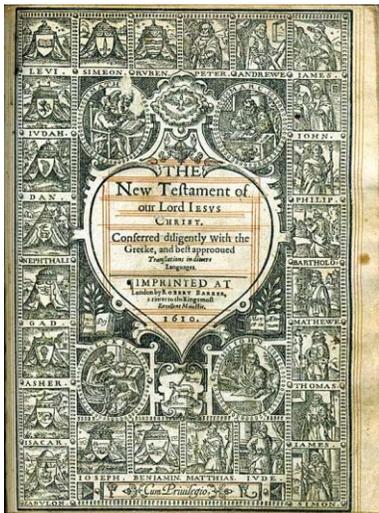
The Story of William Tyndale is available on video: *God's Outlaw*

published by Coverdale, was known as the Great Bible due to its great size: a large pulpit folio measuring over 14 inches tall. Seven editions were printed between April of 1539 and December of 1541.

After the reign of King Henry VIII, freedom ebbed and flowed in England depending on the beliefs of the monarch. Queen Mary wanted to return England to the Roman Church and burned reformers by the hundreds at the stake. Many reformers fled to Geneva, Switzerland, where they were determined to produce a Bible that would educate their families while they lived in exile. Their work resulted in the “**Geneva Bible**” in 1560.



Cover of the Great Bible
The Bible in Englyshe



A Geneva Bible.

In 1560 the **Geneva Bible** became the Bible of choice for over 100 years of English speaking Christians. The Geneva holds the honor of being the first Bible taken to America, and the Bible of the Puritans and Pilgrims. It is truly the “**Bible of the Protestant Reformation**”.

With the death of Queen Elizabeth I, Prince James VI of Scotland became **King James I** of England. The Protestant clergy approached the new King in 1604 and announced their desire for a new translation...This "translation to end all translations" (for a while at least) was the result of the combined effort of about fifty scholars. The scholars took into consideration: The Tyndale New Testament, The Coverdale Bible, The Matthews Bible, The Great Bible, The Geneva Bible, and even the Rheims New Testament. In 1610 the work went to press, and in 1611 the first of the huge (16 inch tall) pulpit folios known today as "The 1611 King James Bible" came off the printing press. Starting just one year after the huge 1611 pulpit-size King James Bibles were printed and chained to every church pulpit in England; printing then began on the earliest normal-size printings of the King James Bible. These were produced so individuals could have their own personal copy of the Bible.



King James

The King James Bible remained the preferred translation of the Protestant Bible for over 200 years. Today, we have additional translations available to us, such as the **New Revised Standard Version (NRSV), the American Standard Version (ASV), the Living Bible, and the Message**. As Christians, we must be very careful to make intelligent and informed decisions about what translations of the Bible we choose to read. Some translations are more accurate and helpful than others. Above all, we must remember all those who fought and died for the right to print the Bible in the common, spoken, modern English.



1. Draw a line to complete each sentence.

John Wycliff

for teaching their children to say the Lord's Prayer in English.

The first person to translate the Bible into German was

King Henry VIII.

Seven people were burned at the stake in 1517

produced the first hand-written English Bibles.

The Great Bible was authorized by

in 1611.

The "King James" Bible was first printed

Martin Luther.

2. There is one copy of the Gutenberg Bible on the West Coast. It is at the Huntington Library in San Marino. Plan a visit to see this Bible. Alternatively, arrange a visit to a collection of rare or old manuscripts at a local university or other large library. (optional)

3. Write a half page reflection on the history of the English Bible. How does this history cause you to view the Bible?

Just for Fun!

1. Make edible Bible snacks

Start with a fig newton, and trim off one long side with a sharp knife. This makes it look like your “book” has the edges of paper showing on 3 sides, and binding on the fourth side. Shorten them a little so they are a good shape.

The “bookmarks” are made from red fruit roll ups. Cut them in the shape of a bookmark with a sharp knife, then stick them into the ‘fig goo’ with a toothpick.

Finish the bible by decorating the cover and binding with icing.



2. Make a Scripture Cake (King James Version)

Ingredients:

½ cup Judges 5:25 (last clause)

2 cup Jeremiah 6:20

2 Tablespoon I Samuel 14:25

6 Jeremiah 17:11

2 tsp Amos 4:5 (baking powder)

1 ½ cup I Kings 4:22

To taste II Chronicles 9:9

A pinch Leviticus 2:13

½ cup Judges 4:19 (last clause)

2 cups Nahum 3:12

2 cup I Samuel 30:12

2 cup Numbers 17:8

Directions: Pre-heat oven to 300 degrees. Grease a 10 inch tube pan. Beat together the Judges (5:32) and Jeremiah (6:20. Add the I Samuel (14:25). Beat the 6 Jeremiah yolks, (save the whites) and add the I Kings, Amos (baking power), II Chronicles (nutmeg, cinnamon, allspice), and the Leviticus alternately with the ½ cup Judges (4:19). Add Nahum, I Samuel (30:12), and Numbers and fold in the rest of the Jeremiah (17:11) whites, beaten stiff. Bake in a greased 10 inch tube pan in 300 degree oven for an hour to 1 ½ hours Test with a toothpick.

