

THE GOOD BOOK

A Study on the Authenticity and Power of Scripture

By
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The world's best-selling and most widely distributed book is the Bible, with an estimated 6 billion copies sold since 1815. That is 87,000 copies every single day.

There are about 6,800 distinct languages in the world, and the Bible has been translated (at least in part) into around 3000 of those languages – far more than any other piece of literature. The *London Times* says –

"Forget modern British novelists and TV tie-ins, the Bible is the best-selling book every year. If sales of the Bible were included in best-seller lists, it would be a rare week when anything else would achieve a look-in. It is wonderful, weird . . . that in this godless age . . . this one book should go on selling, every month, (year after year)."

From another web site –

“Is there any other book in daily use by millions of people, around the world, parts of which were written over 3000 years ago, yet which still speaks to us today? There are other writings as old as this, but they are all in museums, and have no relevance to the world today!”

From another web site –

"No one really knows how many copies of the Bible have been printed, sold, distributed, or given away. Then there are the millions of times the Bible has been accessed online, or reproduced on CDs, and the like. Since printed copies first appeared in the 15th century, it is thought that more than 6 billion Bibles have been published in more than 3,000 languages and dialects. Whatever the precise figure, the Bible is by far the bestselling book of all time."

The next best-seller has been Chairman Mao Tse-tung's *Little Red Book*, which could scarcely fail to become a bestseller, since between the years 1966 and 1971 it was compulsory for every Chinese adult to own a copy.

Text

“When you walk, it will lead you. When you sleep, it will watch over you. When you awake, it will talk with you.” (Proverbs 6:22, WEB)

What a mazy wilderness life is! How hard it is to find any direction or purpose! But in the Bible we discover a marvellous guide for life’s journey. It can lead us in three ways –

“WHEN YOU WALK, IT WILL LEAD YOU

Out of the thickets of the past into the present.
Out of the morass of the present into the future.
Out of the shadows of the future into a glorious destiny.

As the Psalmist exulted – *“Your word is a lamp to guide me and a light for my path.”* (Psalm 119:105)

But a lamp is worthless until it is lit, and a map will guide no one unless it is opened!

WHEN YOU SLEEP, IT WILL WATCH OVER YOU

What an extraordinary quality of *LIFE* our text gives to the Bible! Can we truly believe this? What evidence is there? There are three lines of evidence –

(A) AN INCREDIBLE UNITY

The Bible was written over a period of 1600 years. More than 40 authors of every sort – kings, peasants, fishermen, poets, government officials, teachers, prophets, rabbis, farmers, shepherds! The writers were certainly men, but may also have included women, since several of the books are anonymous.

It was written in three languages – *Hebrew*, *Aramaic*, and *Greek*, and on three continents - Asia, Africa, and Europe.

A second indicator of the wonderful life that arises from scripture is –

(B) AN INCREDIBLE HISTORY

No other book has been so savagely attacked, by empires and armies, critics and censors – *yet the Bible has triumphed over them all!*

No one has yet managed to prove that the Bible is anything other than what it claims to be (in its original form) –

- written by its stated authors
- at the time it says
- depicting events that happened
- in a wholly truthful manner!

A third indicator of the wonderful life that arises from scripture is –

(C) AN INCREDIBLE VITALITY

There is an almost scary realism about the Bible. It has impact ! It is called “*the Sword of the Spirit*”.

It “watches over” those who believe!

WHEN YOU AWAKE, IT WILL TALK WITH YOU

What a striking expression! The Bible is not so much a book of dogma as it of discussion!

That is why we are told to “*listen*” as we read – to meditate on what we hear – to enter into dialogue with the Voice of God.

This goes right back to the very beginning of human relationships with the Lord (Gen 3:8) – *“In the evening Adam and Eve heard the Voice of the Lord God walking up and down in the Garden of Eden”*

No book talks like the Bible! No other can offer such wisdom, such comfort, such truth, such direction, such strength, such life!

But there is a deeper meaning to this “talking book” – *for the guidance it offers each new morning simply points toward the final great morning of the resurrection.*

This Good Book shows us that death is not the end! On resurrection morning, when we AWAKE and rise to meet the Lord as he comes, *the Book will still be speaking its marvellous promise of endless life!*

So, let us then rejoice in the Living Word of the Living God, this Bible, this Book of books. As Christ himself said, *“Heaven and earth will pass away, but my Word will never pass away!”* (Mark 13:31) And let us boldly affirm our

confidence in the authenticity and authority of the living Bible, the Sword of the Lord!

And to all the above, let me add one further striking passage, from the amazing apocryphal book, *The Wisdom of Solomon* – ***“Your all-powerful Word leaps from your royal throne in heaven and falls upon a doomed land like a relentless warrior, bearing the sharp sword of your irresistible decree!”***
(18:15-16)