

The word "Bible" literally means "Book." However, the Bible is more than just a book. It is a collection of books and writings by a host of authors. In fact, the Bible was written by about forty different authors over a period of 1600 years (from 1500 B.C. to A.D. 100). This is one of the features about the Bible which makes it so unique and appealing. Many books have been the product of multiple authors, put together by a common editor; but in no other case has the project lasted for 1600 years. Even this would be unimpressive if not for the amazing unity of thought and progression of story line in the Bible. A common thread runs from Genesis to Revelation. A cohesion kept alive by a string of authors who claimed that God was directing them. A story line with one continuous theme: God's Relationship with Mankind which was Marred by Sin and Restored through God's Plan of Salvation. In the Old Testament, there was always an expectation of someone special who was coming. In the four Gospels, the story is told of someone special who had come. And the remainder of the New Testament looks expectantly forward to that someone special coming back again. Of course, that someone special was Jesus. Indeed, Jesus Christ **is** the theme of the Bible.

But ... exactly **who wrote the Bible**? I hope you understand that it is very difficult to condense into one five minute narrative the volumes of literature available about the authorship of each book of the Bible. However, suffice it to say that during the years in which God was revealing His plans to mankind, He always provided a proven representative to oversee the communication and preservation of His Word. The People of God recognized these authority figures by the mighty deeds they performed or by the office assigned them by God. There were always duly recognized prophets like Moses and Samuel, Nathan and David, Elijah and Elisha. Other great leaders, like Ezra, were also involved in the recognition and preservation of inspired literature. In the New Testament, apostles and Spirit filled prophets wrote the words of God. These writings were collected and preserved by the elders of churches who were contemporaries with the writers and could verify the truthfulness of their words. Thus, we can feel quite comfortable that reliable sources were involved in the collection process.

The actual writers of the Bible are numerous and varied. It is generally accepted that Moses wrote the first five books of the Old Testament. The authors who compiled the twelve historical books, Joshua through Esther, are unknown. It is believed, however, that they utilized a variety of inspired sources in their compilations. For instance, I Chronicles 29:29 states that the prophets Samuel, Nathan, and Gad had all written accounts of their time periods. State records, written by King David's official historians, are mentioned in I Chronicles 27:24. Samuel is said to have written the ordinances of the kingdom in a book, according to I Samuel 10:25. Other pieces of literature, like "the book of Jashar," are often quoted in the historical books of the Old Testament (II Samuel 1:18). King David wrote most of the 150 Psalms, while his son, Solomon, wrote Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon. The author of the book of Job is unknown, Lamentations was written by the prophet Jeremiah, and the remainder of the Old Testament books are prophecies, each one bearing the name of its respective author.

The New Testament books were written by eight or nine different authors. Matthew, John, Peter, and Paul were apostles and are responsible for 21 of the 27 New Testament books. The author of the book of Hebrews is unknown, though some speculate it may have been Paul. The book of Acts was written by Luke. Mark and Luke were close companions to the apostles. Some believe they served as secretaries to Peter and Paul respectively, thus reflecting the gospel accounts of those two apostles. James and Jude were younger brothers of Jesus, later sons of Mary (Matthew 13:55). These are the writers of the Bible. Their writings were accepted by the people of their day as authentic and have been preserved to this date. The story they told is the story of God's dealing with mankind. The message they recorded is a message from God.

1. The Bible was written by about \_\_\_\_\_ different authors over a period of \_\_\_\_\_ years, from \_\_\_\_\_ B.C. to A.D. \_\_\_\_\_.

2. How would you describe "The Theme of the Bible"?

3. Who collected and preserved the inspired writings of the Old Testament?

Who collected and preserved the inspired writings of the New Testament?

Who wrote the first five books of the Old Testament?

4. According to the following verses, what sources were used to record the historical books of the Old Testament?

I Chronicles 29:29 \_\_\_\_\_

I Chronicles 27:24 \_\_\_\_\_

I Samuel 10:25 \_\_\_\_\_

II Samuel 1:18 \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_ wrote most of the 150 Psalms, while \_\_\_\_\_ wrote Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon.

6. Twenty one of the twenty seven New Testament books were written by four apostles: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_.

7. Beside each of the following New Testament books, write the name of its author:

- |                          |                            |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| _____ Acts               | _____ I & II Thessalonians |
| _____ Romans             | _____ I & II Timothy       |
| _____ I & II Corinthians | _____ Titus                |
| _____ Galatians          | _____ Philemon             |
| _____ Ephesians          | _____ Hebrews              |
| _____ Philippians        | _____ I & II Peter         |
| _____ Colossians         | _____ Revelation           |

8. Some believe that Mark wrote the gospel account as told by \_\_\_\_\_ while Luke wrote the gospel account as told by \_\_\_\_\_.

9. Is it possible that James and Jude were written by other sons of Mary? (Matthew 13:55)