

How Did We Get THE BIBLE?

Tracy Sumner



HOW DID WE GET,
the BIBLE!

HOW DID WE GET the BIBLE ?

Tracy Macon Sumner

VALUEBOOKS

An Imprint of Barbour Publishing, Inc.

© 2009 by Barbour Publishing, Inc.

Print ISBN 978-1-63058-675-1

eBook editions:

Adobe Digital Edition (.epub) 978-1-63409-162-6

Kindle and MobiPocket Edition (.prc) 978-1-63409-163-3

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted for commercial purposes, except for brief quotations in printed reviews, without written permission of the publisher.

Churches and other noncommercial interests may reproduce portions of this book without the express written permission of Barbour Publishing, provided that the text does not exceed 500 words and that the text is not material quoted from another publisher. When reproducing text from this book, include the following credit line: "From *How Did We Get the Bible?* published by Barbour Publishing, Inc. Used by permission."

All scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are taken from the New King James Version®. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Published by Value Books, an imprint of Barbour Publishing, Inc., P.O. Box 719, Uhrichsville, Ohio 44683 www.barbourbooks.com

Our mission is to publish and distribute inspirational products offering exceptional value and biblical encouragement to the masses.



Printed in the United States of America.

Contents

Preface	7
1. God's Transmitters—The People Who Wrote the Bible	11
2. Keeping the Bible “On Message”— How God Has Preserved His Written Word	28
3. Why <i>These</i> Books?—The Compilation of the Canon of Scripture	39
4. Different Languages, Same Message— The Work of Translating the Bible.	50
5. The Power of the Printing Press— Johannes Gutenberg's Contribution to Bible Distribution	65
6. The Rise of the All-Time Bestseller— The King James Version and Other Modern Translations	77
A Final Note	91

Preface

If you're a Bible-believing Christian, you no doubt know that the Bible is no ordinary book. It is the very Word of God Himself, which He spoke and then had recorded, protected, preserved, and compiled for the benefit of His people. As such, you can know that every word of the Bible is truth; that you can count on it as your guide for your life of faith; and that God will make good on every promise recorded in its pages.

But how did He do it? How did God inspire people and arrange events so that the words He spoke through His Holy Spirit were accurately recorded and compiled, then preserved and passed down from generation to generation throughout the centuries?

The word *amazing* doesn't begin to describe the process God used to give us His written Word. From the time the actual writing began, some thirty-five centuries ago, until now, God has miraculously used imperfect people to give the world the one perfect book. God gave people—people He specifically chose to do the work of bringing forth the books of the Bible—the words He wanted them to write, then set in motion the events that led to the compilation and translation of the sixty-six books we have in the Bible today.

Though a book that lays out all the details of

HOW DID WE GET the BIBLE?

how we got the Bible could easily run to thousands of pages and include hundreds of names, dates, and events, this little book gives the reader a briefer, more concise overview of the people God used and the events He ordained to give us the most important book ever written.

This book will first give you snapshot accounts of the men (and possibly a woman or two) that God used to record His written Word. From there, it will tell you how He protected and preserved that written Word, moved people to compile the books we have in our Bible today, and made provision for us to have available a printed copy of that Word in our own language.

Most Christians have at least a basic grasp of the message of salvation that is presented throughout the Bible. Most also have some knowledge of the stories contained in its pages: from the story of Adam and Eve, to the account of Israel's exodus from Egypt, to the eyewitness testimonies of those who saw the deeds and heard the acts of Jesus Christ during His earthly ministry, to the men Jesus chose to spread His gospel message throughout the world. Comparatively few, however, understand how the stories, promises, warnings, and encouragements contained in the Bible came to be recorded for us to read today.

As you read through this book—even if you have a good grasp of the actual contents of the Bible—you may find yourself saying, “I hadn’t thought of that before!” But God did! Looking forward from eternity past, He knew His people would need the Bible as their handbook for a life of faith, and He did everything necessary to make sure we, as well as believers before us and after us, could have access to everything He has to say about a victorious, growing life of faith in Him.