

A great gift

Today we are looking at one of the greatest gifts God has given us - the Bible. It is far more than an ancient book or a collection of stories. It is God's Word, revealing who He is, His love for us, and His plan of salvation through Jesus Christ. The Bible teaches, encourages, corrects, comforts and guides us as we grow in faith.

The Bible's story began long before it was written. God's people faithfully passed His mighty acts from one generation to the next. Over many centuries these stories were written by more than forty different authors. The Old Testament, written mainly in Hebrew, tells of God's covenant with His people and His promise to send a Saviour.

After Jesus' death and resurrection, the first Christians recorded His life, teachings and the growth of the early Church. Paul's letters, the four Gospels, Acts, the other letters and Revelation make up the New Testament, written between about AD 50 and AD 100. Though written over more than a thousand years by kings, shepherds, fishermen, prophets and others, the Bible tells one unified story: God loves humanity and has acted through Jesus Christ to bring salvation.

As Christianity spread, the Bible was translated into new languages.

Today we have the privilege of reading the Bible in print, on our phones and in countless translations. Yet owning a Bible is not enough. God's Word changes lives only when it is read, believed and obeyed.

So let us never take the Bible for granted. We give thanks for those who preserved and translated it, and above all we thank God, whose Holy Spirit has safeguarded His Word throughout history. As Paul writes, *All Scripture is God-breathed and equips us for every good work. 2 Timothy 3:17.* May we open God's Word often, for through its pages we meet the living God, revealed perfectly in Jesus Christ.