

## Bible Basics - Why is the Bible Important

### Overview

As Americans, we share a rich Judean-Christian civilization. Our language, many of our customs and often our outlook on life, love, good and evil are conditioned by the Judean-Christian heritage in which we are rooted – especially in the bible. A few examples will clearly show this:



**(1) Customs and practices:** We observe a seven-day week and take an oath with one hand on the Bible. We number the years as B.C. or A.D. and we celebrate Christmas and Easter as holidays. You may not have noticed it lately but we print the words "In God we trust" on our money. Most Americans regard monogamy as a value and accept a woman as a companion equal to man. Additionally – in spite of the media coverage - most Americans believe that marriage consists of the joining of a man with a woman.

**(2) Sayings of everyday life:** Our language and culture has many things that we "say" that are rooted in the bible.

- We say "The patience of Job," because of the bible book story about the main character called Job and the trials he went through.
- When you use the expression "He has seen the handwriting on the wall" read

the book of Daniel and the account about the King and what Daniel's interpretation was.

- We say "a doubting Thomas," from Thomas' doubting Jesus until he put his hands in the wounds of Jesus.
- Saying a person is "a Judas," infers the ultimate traitor.
- When we "as old as Methuselah." This also comes from the bible.

**(3) Popular songs:** "Tain't Necessarily So" in Porgy and Bess, "Miracle of Miracles" in the Broadway musical Fiddler on the Roof.

**(4) Spirituals and classic Oratorios:** "Let My People Go," and The Messiah by Handel.

**(5) Classical literature:** "Paradise Lost by Milton", "East of Eden" by Steinbeck.

**(6) Art:** Paintings and statues by Rembrandt, El Greco, Rubens, Michelangelo, Rodin.

**(7) Movies:** The Ten Commandments, The Robe, Samson and Delilah. None of these are really understandable without an acquaintance with the literature of the Bible. From our roots, we come to understand ourselves.

### Being truly Christian

However, besides being an American, you are also a Christian. For Christians, the Bible is inspired by God. God chose that time (2,000-3,000 years ago), those people (the Jews) and that culture (Hebrew) to reveal Himself. Guided by God, the Hebrew genius interpreted history, war and peace, birth and death, famine and abundance, happiness and frustration, success and failure, in the light of God's presence to His people.