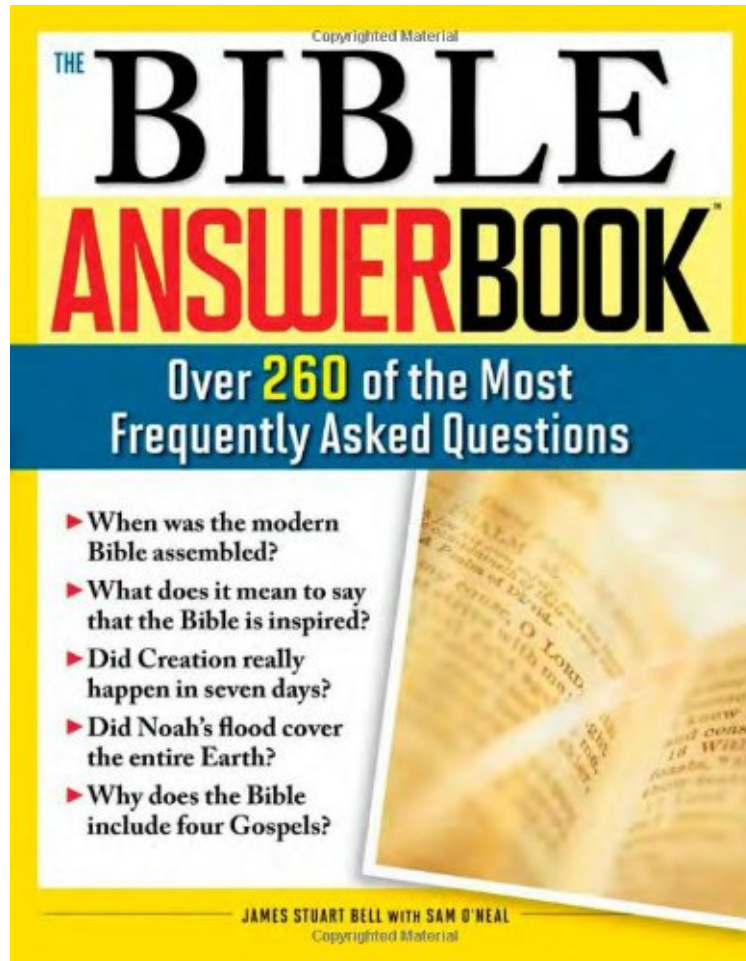


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The Bible Answer Book: Over 260 of the Most Frequently Asked Questions

James Bell, Sam O'Neal
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James Bell, Sam O'Neal : The Bible Answer Book: Over 260 of the Most Frequently Asked Questions before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Bible Answer Book: Over 260 of the Most Frequently Asked Questions:

Did Creation happen in 24-hour literal days? What was the role and function of a prophet? Why did Jesus use parables so often? What is the purpose of Communion? Are Christians required to read the Bible every day? The Bible is a source of faith and enlightenment for millions of people around the world. It is one of the most revered books of all time, but the ancient language and confusing writing style of its stories can often make it hard to decipher their most

important meanings. The Bible Answer Book is an authoritative reference guide designed for both frequent Bible readers and those discovering the text for the first time, and it addresses the most common, confusing, and controversial questions that Christians encounter as they study the Bible. What is the purpose of baptism? Who were the disciples and apostles? What was significant about the Ark of the Covenant? What is apocalyptic literature? What are the different types of psalms? Who was John the Baptist? What does the Bible say about divorce? What will heaven be like? Written in an easy-to-read, question-and-answer format by Bible expert James Stuart Bell, The Bible Answer Book is a reliable tool that will give you insight into the origins, history, and practices of the Bible and the Christian faith.

About the Author James S. Bell, Jr., owner of Whitestone Communications, has served as executive editor of Moody Press and director of religious publishing at Doubleday. He is the author of *The Complete Idiot's Guide to the Bible*. Excerpt. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. From the Introduction: Given that you're reading this book, it's a fairly safe bet that you're interested in the Bible, and you should be! The Bible is the bestselling book of all time, after all, with millions of copies produced every year. (It's the most quoted book of all time, too.) Beyond that, the Bible serves as the foundation of Christianity, Western literature, and modern law. Thousands of people have spent their entire lives studying the Bible, and millions of people base the most important decisions of their lives on what the Bible says. But if that's true, then why does the world need something called The Bible Answer Book? If the Bible is that pervasive, shouldn't everyone have a good understanding of it by now? The answer is no, of course, because popularity does not always lead to understanding. Recognition does not lead to knowledge. It's kind of like those fancy DVD players that people take home from Best Buy or Target—the kind with all the different bells and whistles. Almost everyone has one at home (some people have several), and a great many people use them regularly, but how often have you encountered someone who has really explored what those DVD players can do? How often have you explored them yourself? Do you know what makes a progressive-scan DVD player different from other kinds? Do you look at digital pictures through your DVD player, or play MP3s? Can you even set the clock to the right time? No, most of us keep things on the surface. We put a DVD in the slot, use the remote to press Play, and take the DVD out when the movie is over. Anything else just seems too complicated—the rewards don't match the effort involved. A lot of people feel the same way about the Bible. They take it off the shelf, carry it to church or to a Bible study, and then put it back on the shelf when they are finished. Even when people make an effort to read the Bible regularly on their own, they often feel confused about what it says or unsure about what to do. Or they just feel bored. These feelings shouldn't be surprising. The Bible was written over a period of two thousand years by more than forty authors. It was written in three separate languages by people from cultures that look nothing like ours, and it has been translated over and over again through the centuries. In other words, the Bible is a confusing book! It's also a supernatural book, though, a holy book, and a book that can help us change into the people we were meant to be. It's a book that is worth the effort of digging deeper and one that will reward us for our effort. The Bible Answer Book can help you in that process. The chapter following this introduction will give you a better understanding of the ancient world and the cultural assumptions and expectations of the biblical authors. Chapter 2 will help you answer the question that we all need to address at some point in our spiritual walk: Can the Bible really be trusted? In the middle chapters of this book, you'll take a whirlwind tour through the pages of scripture that will help you answer fundamental questions about the Bible's authors, main characters, main places, and main events. Those chapters divide the Bible into its various literary genres, as follows: The Pentateuch The first five books of the Bible, also known as the Books of the Law. The Histories These historical narratives describe God's continued interaction with the Jewish people and the establishment of Israel as a nation. Wisdom and Poetry Written much differently from the historical books, this section delves into the heart and emotion of God's interaction with humanity and our interaction with God. The Prophets Throughout Israel's history, God often spoke to his people and the people of other nations through human representatives. These books contain their words and deeds. The Gospels and Acts The first four books of the New Testament record the life and ministry of Jesus through the insight and experience of four people. The Book of Acts serves as their sequel and tells the story of the birth of the church. The Letters of Paul The apostle Paul was a leading figure in the early church, especially among the gentiles. These letters contain fruitful words of warning and instruction for Christians of all ages. The General Epistles Other leaders of the early church—including Peter, James, and John—contributed instruction for the first Christians, and sometimes correction for harmful practices and beliefs. The Apocalyptic Books The literature of Apocalypse was a specific genre in the ancient world, with specific rules and structures. The Book of Daniel and the Book of Revelation follow these rules and need to be interpreted accordingly. The final chapters of this book are focused on application. They explore the Bible's influence in the doctrine of Judaism and Christianity, as well as its contributions to modern ethics. The last chapter will help you learn several ways to use and connect with God's Word every day.