

SHARING SCRIPTURE

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The Uniqueness of the Bible

For use: March 29 - April 4

Texts: Deuteronomy 32:45-47; Genesis 49:8-12; Isaiah 53:3-7; 1 Corinthians 15:3-5, 51-55; Romans 12:2

It's not very often that you stumble across a book in your local library that's worth over \$3 million. That's what happened a few weeks ago in a library on the Mediterranean island of Corsica. The director of conservation at the Fesch public library in Ajaccio, the capital of Corsica, was reading through an index of the library of Lucien Bonaparte (brother to the famous Napoleon Bonaparte). That's when she spotted the unique volume—a rare first edition of Isaac Newton's groundbreaking book on the three laws of motion titled, "Philosophiae Naturalis Principia Mathematica" (*Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy*), written in Latin in 1687.

"I found the Holy Grail in the main room, hidden in the upper shelves," she told Agence France-Presse (AFP). "The cover has a little damage but inside it's in excellent condition — this is the cornerstone of modern mathematics." [1]

First editions of "Principia Mathematica" are rare. These unique books are highly sought after by collectors, and a similar copy was sold in 2016 by Christie's in New York for \$3.7 million to an undisclosed buyer. That sale was "the most expensive printed scientific book ever sold at auction," Christie's reported.

In this week's Sabbath school lesson, we begin a study on a book that Christians regard as far more unique than Newton's rare tome. Unlike Newton's incredible study, the Bible, we believe, was inspired by the One who has the power to change people's lives for eternity.

For the next three months we'll tackle, "How to Interpret Scripture," and begin this week by understanding "The Uniqueness of the Bible." After reviewing some incredible facts about the book of books, we grapple with the unusual power of the Bible as the living Word of God. It's a source of light, hope, and blessing to all who humbly pursue learning its message.

The Scriptures were written by people inspired by the Holy Spirit to communicate, in human language, messages from heaven. Whether they were high government officials, shepherds, prophets, fishermen, or priests in the temple, many types of authors were

moved by God to pen these inspirations. The variety of messages include history, poetry, law, health practices, stories, prophecy, teachings, letters to churches, and even musical lyrics.

Whether you are lonely, curious, discouraged, looking for advice to a problem, or simply want to learn how to walk with God, the Bible is the first and best place to begin. When you prayerfully open the Word of God, seeking to learn with an open mind, you'll find this rare volume will touch your life beyond the best scientific book in the world.

~Curtis Rittenour

[1] <https://www.livescience.com/isaac-newton-first-edition.html>

For Reflection

Connecting: Other than the Bible, what is the rarest book you own (or that you have ever personally seen or touched)?

Sharing: Read Hebrews 4:12. What does this passage tell you about the Bible?

1. It is living and powerful. God's Spirit makes the words of Scripture life-changing.
2. It is sharper than any two-edged sword, cutting past useless trivia and getting to the heart of the matter.
3. It has the power to separate truths from falsehoods.
4. The Scriptures, through the Holy Spirit, can speak to our minds and convict us of sin.
5. The Bible tackles the most important issues we must face in our lives.
6. Other...

Applying: Using a Bible concordance (often found in the back of many Bibles), look up verses that talk about the Bible itself as God's Word. Choose one verse that most clearly captures the power of Scripture in your life. Share that verse with your group or another person.

Valuing: How has your time in the Word been lately? Is the Spirit convicting you to spend more time with it? Pray with one other person for you to be open to the Spirit's continuous guidance when reading the Scriptures.

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Three decades ago, we created this resource for small groups and Sabbath school classes, and it continues to bless so many people worldwide. Thank you for your continued interest in these biblical themes and what they mean to your life and those

people with whom you share it.

Paul Richardson
Executive Director

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