

Bible and English

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The Bible has played a very significant role in the making of the English language. There is perhaps, no other language which has received so much impetus from the Bible as English. The Bible has been translated and studied carefully and quoted plentifully in England more than in any other Christian country. Infact, the translations of the Bible, including the Authorized version of 1611 and Tyndale and Coverdale, in the 16th century have contributed immensely to the formation of modern English. The predominance of the Bible in the intellectual life of the English has proved sufficiently resourceful for the expansion of the English language. Accurate expression for sacred thoughts and ideas calls forth much ingenuity and need of new words and their application. The very fact that the Bible has been most widely read and frequently quoted for centuries has made it a fruitful source for English words and expression.

The enormous influence of the Holy Bible is patent in the very fact that a great many Biblical phrases have passed into the ordinary language of England as household words. It is not easy to make a collection of the scriptural phrases and allusions that have become the part of the modern English. A few instances may now be given to justify how great is the Biblical influence on the English language. Thus there are many scriptural phrases and allusions in modern English as 'tell it not in Gath', 'to spoil the Egyptian', 'the powers that be', 'The eleventh hour', 'to hope against hope', 'a city of refuge' and so on. Such phrases have assumed almost the character of English idioms and are little thought of as anything but native.

The influence of the Bible is particularly indescribable on the language of English poetry. The use of the '-eth' form in poetry, such as loveth, prayeth, hath is due to the Biblical influence.

'He prayeth best, who loveth best,'- 'The Ancient mariner'- Coleridge.

Moreover, the Authorized version of the Bible has exerted a tremendous influence on the technical grammar of modern poetry. Even the translations of the Bible is also important. The Bible is surely the most widely read book which exerts much influence on the vocabulary of common life as well as literature.

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