



The Rise and Fall of the Bible: The Unexpected History of an Accidental Book

Timothy Beal

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In this revelatory exploration of one of our most revered icons, a critically acclaimed author and professor takes us back to early Christianity to ask how a box of handwritten scrolls became the Bible, and forward to see how the multibillion-dollar business that has brought us Biblezines and Manga Bibles is selling down the Bible's sacred capital. Showing us how a single official text was created from the proliferation of different scripts, Beal traces its path as it became embraced as the word of God and Book of books. Among his surprising insights:

- Christianity thrived for centuries without any Bible—there was no official canon of scriptures, much less a book big enough to hold them all. Congregations used various collections of scrolls and codices.
- There is no “original” Bible, no single source text behind the thousands of different Bibles on the market today. The farther we go back in the Bible's history, the more versions we find.
- The idea of the Bible as the literal Word of God is relatively new—only about a century old. Beal's is an inspiring new take on the Bible. In calling for a fresh understanding of the ways scriptures were used in the past, he offers the chance to rediscover a Bible, and a faith, that is truer to its own history—not a book of answers but a library of questions.

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