



World Kids

Fun for kids!



True stories!



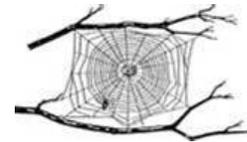
PAL Project

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If we were to ask someone in the West to name a "holy" or sacred book, they would probably first think of "The Bible", but did you know that there are many other books around the world that are considered by many people to be "holy"? This month we want to look at some of these books that are used by millions of people as their source of knowledge and belief, and as a guide to follow in life. Here are some facts about these books as well as some of the famous stories that are told to children whose families follow these beliefs.

The Qu'ran (or Koran) - the holy book of Islam

It is said that the angel Gabriel appeared to Muhammad in 610 A.D. and began to give him special messages from God (Allah) and these became the basic teachings of the new religion of Islam. After Muhammad's death, they were written down and formed into the Qu'ran as it is known today, and it is considered essential by most Muslims to read it only in Arabic. It speaks of Biblical characters including Jesus, but also has many other teachings that are interpreted by Muslims in many different ways - sometimes peace-loving but sometimes to fight against and even kill those who do not accept Islam.



Story about Muhammad and the spider

While traveling, the prophet and his companion were told some men from Mecca were coming to harm them, so they hid in a cave. While they were inside, a spider spun a web across the entrance. When the men got to the cave they saw the spider's web at the entrance and so they thought that no one could have gone in as the web had not been broken. Inside, the prophet was standing in prayer while Abu Bakr watched, worried. The prophet said "Abu Bakr, don't be afraid, God is with us". The people from Mecca then left without harming them - Allah had protected Muhammad and his companion from harm once again.

Buddhist story - the Elephant and the Blind Men

Six blind men lived in a village and one day they heard an elephant had been brought there. They had no idea what an elephant is so decided to go and feel it even though they could not see it. They all went up to the elephant and touched it. "Hey, the elephant is a pillar," said the first man who touched his leg. "No, it is like a rope," said the second man who touched the tail. "It's like a thick tree branch," said the third man touching the elephant's trunk; but the fourth man who touched its ear said: "It is like a big hand fan". "It is like a huge wall," said the fifth man who touched the belly of the elephant. "No, it's like a solid pipe," said the sixth man who touched the elephant's tusk. They all began to argue about it and each insisted he was right. A wise man passing by saw this, and heard them all arguing, and then calmly explained, "You are all right. The reason each of you is telling it differently is because you all touched a different part of the same elephant!" Then they were all happy as each and every one of them was right!

The Dharma and Sutras - holy books of Buddhism

The Dharma (teachings of Buddha) were passed down by mouth after Buddha's death, and then written down later, probably around 400 A.D. As with the Sutras, it includes stories and thoughts on seeking understanding and the meaning of life by looking at nature around us.



The Vedas and Upanishads - holy books of Hinduism

The four Vedas are the main Hindu writings that have also influenced Buddhism and other Eastern religions. The Rig Veda is the oldest, composed about 1500 B.C. and handed down by mouth until it was written down about 300 B.C. The Vedas contain hymns, incantations and rituals from Ancient India, and their teaching is continued in the Upanishads, which were written 800-400 B.C. They speak of how the soul can be united with truth through meditation and "karma" is the total effect of a person's actions.



Hindu story - Prince Rama and Sita

Prince Rama and his beautiful wife Sita were really gods in human form. Instead of living in the palace they were forced to live in the forest - where the demon king Ravana also lived (he had 20 arms and 10 heads!). When Ravana saw Sita he immediately made a plan to kidnap her; but as she was being carried away, Sita left a trail of her jewelry behind for Rama to follow. Rama was helped by a white monkey king, who led an army of 23 million monkeys and their friends, the bears, who came from all over the world to hunt for Sita. Finally they found her on an island and there was a great battle. Prince Rama killed Ravana and freed Sita, and everyone in the world rejoiced.

The Book of Mormon - holy book of Mormons (LDS)

The Mormon Church (Church of Latter Day Saints) is sometimes considered to be Christian because of similarities in the Book of Mormon and the Bible, especially regarding Jesus. But Mormons believe a group of people called Nephites came to America around 500 B.C., and wrote their scriptures on metal plates. These were later shortened and inscribed on gold plates by Prophet Mormon who hid them on a hill in New York State. In 1823 it is said that Joseph Smith was led by an angel to find them and translate them into the Book of Mormon.



Mormon story - Lehi and the Promised Land

Lehi's family crossed the ocean in a ship to a new land where they found many kinds of animals, and also gold, silver, and copper. God told Nephi to make metal plates and write about his family and their travels, and the words of God. Lehi grew old but taught his sons to obey God, but after he died Laman and Lemuel (Nephi's older brothers) became angry and wanted to kill him as they did not want him to be their leader. The Lord told Nephi to lead the righteous people into the wilderness to a land they named Nephi. The people who followed Nephi obeyed God, and worked hard and were blessed. Laman and Lemuel's followers called themselves Lamanites. They became a dark-skinned people and God cursed them for their wickedness. They became lazy and would not work and they hated the Nephites and wanted to kill them.

Today often people like to read the different holy books and see which religion appeals to them most. But as Christians, we believe that the Bible is more than just a holy book - it is the Word of God, as taught through His prophets and fulfilled by Jesus Christ, the Son of God.



It is estimated that the Bible is by far the best-selling and most translated book in the world, with over 6 billion copies sold!

See if you can change the vowels in these bible verses to discover two important truths about the Bible:

"DA NIT ODD TA WHIT A CUMMEND YEA, IND DE NAT SEBTROCT FRIM AT, BAT KIOP THO CAMMINDS IF THO LARD YEAR GAD THOT A GOVA YEA."

"BAT THOSU ERA WROTTIN THUT YEA MOY BALOAVI THIT Joses AS THO CHRUST, THA SIN IF GAD, IND THUT BY BOLAUVUNG YEA MOY HIVA LAFI ON HAS NOMU"

'Til next time, your friend,

Shirley

Facts from sites inc: <http://www.bl.uk> www.sacred-texts.com <http://www.lds.org> Answers to puzzles: Deuteronomy 4:2; John 20:31

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