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Bible Works 10 (Resource Review)

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Resource Review



BibleWorks 10. Copyright 1992–2015 BibleWorks, LLC. Programmed by Michael S. Bushell, Michael D. Tan, and Glenn L. Weaver. \$389. USB Flash Drive / Download. Version 10.0.5.420.

To say BibleWorks is adequate for Bible study and research is insufficiently laudatory. To say BibleWorks is the best Bible software is an unproven superlative. The recommendation of this review tends to the superlative.

The purpose of Bible software is to provide in one package those tools necessary for Bible study and research. Those tools include texts and versions of scripture in Hebrew, Greek, and English; lexicons and grammars for the biblical languages; and search capabilities that exceed the abilities of printed concordances. BibleWorks fulfills this purpose, and more.

BibleWorks provides English texts of Bibles, Old Testament, Apocrypha, New Testament, Josephus, Gospel of Thomas, Targums, the Pseudepigrapha, Philo, Mishnah, the Apostolic Fathers, and the Peshitta, among others. There are numerous Greek texts with and without morphology plus forty-two options for manuscripts including Sinaiticus and Alexandrinus. Latin texts include the Apostolic Fathers, Josephus, and editions of the Vulgate. Hebrew texts include editions of the Old Testament with and without morphology, Targums, Modern Hebrew, Syriac, unpointed Hebrew Old Testament, the Peshitta, and the Leningrad Codex. The textual apparatus of the New Testament is available and in a searchable form. Facsimiles of manuscripts can be viewed with and without scripture references. There are lexicons, grammars, dictionaries, and other supporting reference works. There are scriptures in 34 additional modern languages from Afrikaans to Vietnamese.

BibleWorks opens with three windows: search window, browse window, and analysis window. The browse window displays the text which has been selected or a multiple version mode containing few or several selected versions. Whenever the mouse cursor hovers over a Hebrew or Greek word, information about that word appears in the analysis window providing definition, parsing of form, and additional information. The analysis window contains eighteen sub-menus with which one may create notes attached to texts. One may look at resources, cross references, context, the Analytical Greek New Testament, the Leningrad Codex of the Hebrew OT, verse related information, statistics of word usage, Greek manuscript information, and ePub resources. It is also possible in the analysis window to create one's own lexicon.

Search capabilities are extensive. A KWIC (Key Word In Context) list can be generated for any word from the browse or search windows. Within the browse window, a right click on a word provides options including to search on the form of the word, search on the form in KWIC, search the lemma, or send the word to the search command line. Help screens provide dozens of examples of search strategies for the command line. The graphical search engine can transpose a command line search into graphical representation or build a search from scratch. Search capabilities are formidable.

Help screens are context sensitive. “Ernie” is the name given to the External Resources Manager provided with software. BibleWorks can display Hebrew and Greek in linked parallel windows. There is also a Hebrew to Greek, Greek to Hebrew search function. This reviewer remembers how difficult it used to be to find the Greek words used to translate a given Old Testament Hebrew word.

There are numerous keyboard shortcuts that replace key clicks and mouse movements.

There are extensive capabilities in this software. In spite of diligent effort, this reviewer has no confidence that every capability was sampled. The BibleWorks web site contains reviews providing much more information than this one, including screen shots. See <https://www.bibleworks.com/reviews> for examples.

The program is complete, everything works, instructions are clear, and options on how to proceed are intuitive. Help screens are case sensitive. Tutorials on their web site are specific, clear, and helpful.

As a librarian and as a student and teacher of the Scriptures with facility in biblical languages, BibleWorks provides the tools for substantive study and research of the scriptures.

There might be judgments of “look and feel” which influence preference of one software over another, but BibleWorks is at least the equal of any.

Reviewer

Michael Bain, Point University