

BibleWorks 6: Software for Biblical Exegesis and Research. www.bibleworks.com. P.O. Box 6158 Norfolk, VA 23508. \$299.95 + BDAG/HALOT Package \$197.00 + Qumran Sectarian Manuscripts w/morph tags \$80.00.

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By any standard of measure, *BibleWorks 6* is impressive. This review will first describe what comes with the basic package for \$299.95 before discussing the two “add-ons” listed above and the software’s capabilities.

Whereas with some Bible software one must pay extra for each original language text and each major translation, *BibleWorks 6* comes with a breathtaking list of original language texts and translations. For the Greek New Testament, not only does *BibleWorks 6* come with the standard NA²⁷/UBS⁴ text, it also comes with the Stephanus Greek NT, the Robinson-Pierpont Greek NT, and Scrivener’s Greek NT (all following the Textus Receptus). But this is not all, also included are Westcott and Hort’s Greek NT and Tischendorf’s Greek NT—with Tischendorf’s text-critical apparatus!

For OT studies, the software comes with the BHS Hebrew text, the LXX with the Apocrypha, and Brenton’s English translation of the LXX. Forgive my arcane excitement, but the software also comes with the Aramaic Targums on the OT, and these are parsed, lemmatized, and linked to a Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon(!). Included as well is the Aramaic New Testament (a.k.a. the Peshitta) with the James Murdock English translation. All of this comes at the base price of *BibleWorks 6*, and yet there is more. The base price also brings the Latin Vulgate, the Apostolic Fathers, and the Complete works of Josephus in the original Greek and Latin along with the Whiston English translation. With some software programs each modern translation of the Bible will cost anywhere from an additional \$15 to \$30 (the KJV is always free, and generally one modern translation will be thrown in on the deal), but the *BibleWorks 6* base price includes every modern translation one could desire (NKJV, NASB, NASB 1995, RSV with Apocrypha, NIV, NRSV with Apocrypha, NAB, NLT, NJB, JPS 1917 and Tanakh 1985, ESV, and the 1534 Tyndale NT—and this list is not exhaustive).

Among much else, the software also comes with Ernest Dewitt Burton’s *Syntax of Moods and Tenses in New Testament Greek* and Gesenius’ *Hebrew Grammar* (GKC). One also has access to an editable Synopsis of the Gospels—the Synopsis can be underlined on the computer. Another helpful feature is an impressive timeline of ancient history extending from before the flood through the early church, the middle ages, the reformation, and to the contemporary era. This is also editable so that dates can be adjusted according to one’s conclusions and events and figures can be added to the timeline for additional detail. *BibleWorks* comes with an easy to use diagramming tool so that untangling complex Greek sentences can be done on one’s computer (though writing the text out by hand has its value). All this is but a cursory survey of what comes with *BibleWorks 6*.

This review also extends to two important “add-on” modules. First are two most necessary lexica for Bible study: BDAG and HALOT. These may be purchased separately at \$125 and \$159 respectively, or bundled together for an impressive bargain of \$197. *BibleWorks* is able to make

these tools available for less than it would cost to buy them from the publishers. Further, as much as I like having the books themselves, and as much as I think one should possess the books themselves for serious study, having these tools on the computer so that the click of a mouse brings up a full entry is incomparably faster than thumbing through a large lexicon.

The second “add-on” is that of the Qumran Sectarian Manuscripts (commonly referred to as the Dead Sea Scrolls). While this module is morphologically tagged, it only comes with the original Hebrew or Aramaic text. This limits its usefulness to those who know the languages. For those wise enough to study Hebrew and Aramaic in seminary, this is a powerful tool. Point, click, and on the screen appear every occurrence of “righteousness” or “faith” or any other term from the Dead Sea Scrolls. By making these texts available in this way, *BibleWorks* has opened up exciting possibilities for students of Second Temple Judaism (the same goes for the text of Josephus, which is also searchable).

As far as search capability is concerned, *BibleWorks 6* is as capable as any other program and arguably more user-friendly. The program comes with a series of helpful video tutorials that make learning one’s way through the program easy.

When we come to compare *BibleWorks* to other available Bible software, it seems to me that the advantages of the three most popular programs can be compared as follows. The strength of the Logos system is its digital library, but the numerous digital texts come at a higher price. *BibleWorks* does not set out to replace the traditional library of bound books, and for lovers of actual books, this is a virtue. And yet *BibleWorks* does make a core set of texts which are useful for Bible study available. At the other end of the spectrum, with fewer available texts (and thus also a lower price) is the Gramcord software. In my judgment *BibleWorks* strikes the happy balance between encouraging people to build libraries of actual books while making available resources that are either extremely expensive and hard to find or multi-volume and generally inaccessible outside a research library (e.g., the Tischendorf critical apparatus, the Targums, Josephus in Greek, etc.). Every serious student of the Bible can be grateful to *BibleWorks* for this outstanding product.

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