

A REVIEW ARTICLE

Scholar's Library: Gold

Reviewed by
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Scholar's Library: Gold. Version 3. Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2006. 1 DVD-ROM or 7 CD-ROMs. \$1,379.95. www.logos.com/gold.

Theologians must have tools. Prior to our electronic age, those tools were primarily handwritten or printed books, the kind you can hold in your hands and mark up with a writing utensil. Today it is a different story. Perhaps sometime in the near future print books will be to electronic books (or e-books) what records are to CDs, VHSs to DVDs, walkmans to iPods, or telegrams to cell phones and email. Perhaps not. What is certain, however, is that technology is changing rapidly. Every theologian—whether seminarian, professor, pastor, or serious layman—should give enough thought to the issue of e-books so that he can answer these two important questions: Should I build my theological² library electronically? If so, how? This article helps answer these questions and examines *Scholar's Library: Gold*, an e-product that would be an invaluable asset to any theologian's library.

QUESTIONS ABOUT BUILDING A THEOLOGICAL E-LIBRARY

There are many reasons that theologians hesitate to build e-libraries. Probably the most common reason is that they love print books. You can read them in your study, on the couch at home, in a waiting room, on your back porch, or somewhere out in nature. This is one reason that I still prefer print books over e-books for certain genres, such as biographies. There are several other issues, however, that I

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²I am using the word *theological* broadly, encompassing exegetical, biblical, systematic, historical, and practical theology.

struggled with before becoming convinced that building an e-library is the way to go for the majority of theological books.

Should I Buy E-Books From Only One or Multiple Software Companies?

I have chosen to buy e-books compatible with the Libronix Digital Library System.³ Libronix has a vast number of publishing partners, and, most importantly, it is compatible with all the products produced by Logos Bible Software,⁴ which provides the largest selection of and some of the best deals on theological e-books. Also, Libronix contains first-class features and unlimited free upgrades as it continually improves with the changing technology. This makes Libronix a one-stop research center for me. Rather than opening multiple programs to access various e-books, all I have to do is open up Libronix to access my e-library.

Will New Technology Make Current E-Books Obsolete?

For some companies, Yes. For others such as Logos, No. In the late 1990s, I bought the *Expositor's Bible Commentary* on CD-ROM from Zondervan, whose software is not compatible with Libronix. Zondervan will update the product only for a fee, and the product is extremely inefficient in comparison with Libronix. Logos, in contrast, gives users free upgrades to books and the Libronix engine. As a result, you will not need to worry about compatibility problems, and you will never need to buy the same e-book from Logos more than once.

What if the Software Company Goes Out of Business?

That is a valid concern. For me, the question is more specific: What if Logos Bible Software goes out of business? Logos has such a massive consumer base that if for some reason they went out of business, it is very likely that someone would purchase the company and continue the products. Logos is continuing, however, to expand its own staff, the number of available e-books, and its consumer base. It remains under the capable leadership of Bob Pritchett, Logos's co-founder, president, and CEO.⁵

³See www.libronix.com.

⁴See www.logos.com.

⁵Pritchett received the 2005 Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award and recently authored *Fire Someone Today: And Other Surprising Tactics for Making Your Business a Success* (Nashville: Nelson Business, 2006).

Are E-Books Riskier Than Print Books?

Some theologians like the security of print books. They tend to think that once they have print books, they have them for life and will be able to pass them on to later theologians (who will marvel at the way they marked them up!). Some think that print books are safer investments than e-books. However, building any kind of library—whether print or electronic—involves some degree of risk. Print books are arguably a more risky investment than some e-books since print books are in danger of theft, natural disasters, and wear and tear from usage. A few years ago one pastor loaded up all of his earthly possessions, including his print library, into a moving truck, which was stolen the very next day. If that pastor had an e-library of Logos Bible Software, he would have received his entire e-library back for free. Hurricanes, tornadoes, fires, and floods wipe out print libraries. After the recent devastation caused by hurricane Katrina, for example, Logos replaced the e-libraries of its users who suffered damage. Humidity, especially in some mission fields, deteriorates print libraries but not e-libraries.

How Is an E-Library Superior to a Print Library?

The most positive feature of an e-library is its efficiency. First, an e-library is searchable. You can search your entire e-library for all the references to certain Bible texts, words, or topics at a speed and thoroughness impossible with a print library. Researching print books often involves traveling to a library, looking up a book in a database, finding the book, taking it off the shelf, flipping through the pages, and typing out direct quotations. An e-library eliminates every one of those steps. Owning a large e-library compatible with Libronix is like having a full-time team of research assistants who have photographic memories and are able to give you an unabridged report of the contents of your entire library in a matter of seconds or minutes.⁶ In Libronix, you can also specify search boundaries by creating customized collections, such as searching within certain commentaries, theology books, or language tools. When doing research, you will certainly use a higher percentage of relevant sources in your e-library than print library because the search engine finds information in places you would not have even thought to examine. Libronix also has many other features such as advanced searching, KeyLink options, adding bookmarks and favorites, saving your workspace, remote library search,⁷ and a find

⁶The speed of a search depends on (1) the speed of the computer and (2) the number of resources being searched. The Bible Speed Search, for example, is lightning fast, but searching 5,000 e-books for a precise phrase may take a couple minutes.

⁷Libronix's remote library search feature allows the user to search the databases

feature (like the feature in Firefox) that is especially handy for quickly finding a word or phrase in an open resource as you type.

Second, an e-library is versatile. You can carry your entire e-library on your laptop's hard drive. When I moved from Greenville, SC, to Deerfield, IL, this past summer, my wife and I were especially thankful that my e-library was not also in print!⁸ You can even change the text's font and size, highlight the text with scores of different highlighter styles and graphical symbols, add your own editable notes, and copy and paste the text (including the footnotes and usually pagination as well) into a word processor. Logos's user interface is easy to use and customizable. Someone with no knowledge of the software can use it by simply entering a Scripture passage or topic and clicking "Go." It is really that easy. Thousands of hyperlinks connect the e-books so that with one click you can bring up another resource (such as a Bible, lexicon, or theological dictionary) when the e-book you are using references another in your e-library. Also, when you pull up a resource, you may choose to show the table of contents on the left side of the screen. This allows you to see the layout of a resource, expand or collapse certain sections of the table of contents by clicking on the plus and minus symbols, and jump immediately to other sections in that resource. Also, since you can copy the text of e-books into a word processor, you can create audio files using other software⁹ in which a human-sounding automated voice reads the text aloud. This is an invaluable feature, especially for people whose work or routine activities (e.g., driving) allow them to listen to audio books at the same time.

Does Logos Bible Software Work with Macs or Only PCs?

Logos Bible Software is currently developing a Macintosh version of Libronix, and this new program should be released in the first

(e.g., by author, title, keywords—not the complete content of books) of seven national libraries (including the Library of Congress) and over fifty theological libraries (including Dallas Theological Seminary, Duke University, Fuller Theological Seminary, Oxford University, Princeton Theological Seminary, the University of Chicago and Divinity School, and the University of Notre Dame). This is a helpful feature for discovering what books are available for a particular topic, locating where certain books are available, and finding bibliographic information.

⁸I should clarify that I still own hundreds of print books and will continue to buy them, largely because many of them are not yet available electronically. But Logos is working on that!

⁹I would recommend downloading TextAloud from www.nextup.com (\$29.95) and then adding the Kate and Paul 16khz NeoSpeech voices (\$35). Paul's voice is probably the clearest, best-sounding voice of all the AT&T and NeoSpeech voices.

quarter of 2007.¹⁰ Some Logos users currently use the PC version of Logos on Intel Macs via a dual-boot setup or Parallels Desktop software.¹¹

THE CONTENT OF *SCHOLAR'S LIBRARY: GOLD*

Now let us survey the content of what is unquestionably the finest Bible software package available today: *Scholar's Library: Gold*.¹² Retailing at \$1,379.95, *Scholar's Library: Gold* is not cheap, but the theologian who makes this investment will not be disappointed. This product becomes even more affordable with the deep discounts that Logos offers degree-seeking students, full-time faculty and staff, and school libraries and computer labs.¹³ *Scholar's Library: Gold* contains over 700 volumes, primarily Bible reference materials, worth over \$11,700 in print. As print books, this library would take up about one hundred feet of shelf space. It is the largest e-library package ever,¹⁴ and what follows highlights some of those resources.¹⁵

¹⁰For details, see www.logos.com/mac.

¹¹See www.parallels.com/en/products/desktop.

¹²Logos sells seven major packages: *Christian Home Library*, *Bible Study Library*, *Leader's Library*, *Original Language's Library*, *Scholar's Library*, *Scholar's Library: Silver*, and *Scholar's Library: Gold*. Only *Gold* contains all of the titles offered in these packages. See www.logos.com/comparison.

¹³For more information on the Logos Academic Discount Program, email: academic@logos.com.

¹⁴This massive e-library may be much further expanded since Logos publishes over 5,000 volumes representing over 100 publishers. Additional resources not included in *Scholar's Library: Gold* include The Theological Journal Library, volumes from the Journal for the Study of the Old and New Testament Supplement series, Calvin's commentaries, The Word Biblical Commentary, The International Critical Commentary, Hendrickson and Kistemaker's Baker New Testament Commentary, The Pillar New Testament Commentary, The Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, J. M. Boice's commentaries, The IVP New Testament Commentary Series, IVP reference works, systematic theologies by Grudem, Reymond, and Ryrie, and collected works by Martin Luther, John Calvin, C. H. Spurgeon, Francis Schaefer, R. C. Sproul, John MacArthur, and D. A. Carson. Logos is constantly publishing new books and initially makes them available through pre-publication specials (see www.logos.com/prepub and www.logos.com/newswire).

¹⁵For a complete listing of the contents of *Scholar's Library: Gold*, see www.logos.com/gold. The Logos website also contains a list of one hundred new features in the Logos 3 series (www.logos.com/logos3/100), tutorial videos (www.logos.com/videos), and the Logos blog, which discusses syntax resources and other features (blog.logos.com).

English, Hebrew, and Greek Bibles

Twenty-one English translations. Two Hebrew and five Greek interlinear Bibles. Several Hebrew texts including the *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* with Westminster 4.2 morphology. Nearly fifteen Greek texts, most with corresponding morphologies, including the earliest individual GNT manuscripts. Numerous parallel passages and harmonies.

Other Ancient Texts

The complete works of Josephus. The works of Philo in English and Greek (with morphology). The parallel aligned Hebrew-Aramaic and Greek Texts of Jewish Scripture (Tov). Aramaic Targums. Syriac Peshitta NT (with morphology). The Latin Clementine Vulgate. The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the OT in English. The Nag Hammadi Library in English. Amarna Letters. Lichtheim's *Ancient Egyptian Literature: A Book of Readings*, 3 vols.

Language Tools¹⁶

Seven Hebrew and Aramaic lexicons including the *Concise HALOT*, BDB, and *TWOT*. An analytical lexicon of the Syriac NT. A dictionary of the Latin Vulgate NT. Eleven Greek lexicons including Liddell and Scott, Louw-Nida, and *TDNT* (both the unabridged 10 vols. and the abridged "little Kittel"). (Unfortunately, BDAG must be purchased separately.) Five Hebrew grammars including Gesenius. One Aramaic grammar. Five Greek grammars (not including Robertson, Turner, Wallace, or any volumes from the Studies in Biblical Greek series edited by D. A. Carson). Nunn's *An Introduction to Ecclesiastical Latin*. GNT textual apparatus: Novum Testamentum Graece Apparatum Criticum (Tischendorf) and Metzger's *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*. Other tools include Deppe's *The Lexham Clausal Outlines of the Greek New Testament*, Kantenwein's *Diagrammatical Analysis*, Lukaszewski's *The Lexham Syntactic Greek New Testament* (glossary and clause analysis), OT and NT genre coding, books on building your Hebrew and Greek vocabulary, audio files pronouncing Greek words in both Erasmian and modern Greek, and Scanlin's *The Dead Sea Scrolls & Modern Translations of the Old Testament*. Word studies: Vincent's *Word Studies in the New Testament*, 4 vols.; Robertson's *Word Pictures in the New Testament*; Girdlestone's *Synonyms of the Old Testament*; Trench's *New Testament Synonyms*; Bullinger's *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible*; Wuest's *Word Studies in*

¹⁶These are in addition to the morphologies corresponding to the ancient language texts.

the Greek New Testament; and Zodhiates's *Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*. Merriam-Webster's *Collegiate Dictionary* (11th ed.) and *Thesaurus*.

Bible Commentaries

The New American Commentary, 31 vols. The United Bible Societies' OT and NT Translator's Handbook Series, 41 vols. The Pulpit Commentary, 77 vols. Walvoord and Zuck's *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, 2 vols. *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Bible*. Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown's *Commentary, Critical and Explanatory, on the Whole Bible*. Carson, France, Motyer, and Wenham's *New Bible Commentary*. Wiersbe's *Bible Exposition Commentary* on the NT, 23 vols., along with 11 OT vols. Keil and Delitzsch's *Commentary on the OT*, 10 vols. The New International Greek Testament Commentary, 12 vols. Lightfoot on Galatians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon.

Bible Introductions and Surveys

Geisler and Nix's *A General Introduction to the Bible*. Archer's *Survey of Old Testament Introduction*. Smith's OT Survey Series, 5 vols. Pink's *Why Four Gospels?* Guthrie's *New Testament Introduction*.

Bible Dictionaries

Easton's Bible Dictionary. Elwell and Comfort's *Tyndale Bible Dictionary*. Cornwall and Smith's *The Exhaustive Dictionary of Bible Names*. *Harper's Bible Dictionary*. *New Bible Dictionary*, 3rd ed. Elwell's *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible*, 4 vols. *Willmington's Bible Handbook*. Richards' *The Bible Reader's Companion*. *The New Nave's Topical Bible*. Smith's *The New Treasury of Scripture Knowledge*. *Biblical People*, which graphically depicts relationships between individuals named in the Bible.

Bible Culture, Atlases, and Archeology

Freeman's *The New Manners and Customs of the Bible*, ed. Chadwick. Du Toit's *The New Testament Milieu*. Isachar's *Images of the Holy Lands*. *Logos Deluxe Map Set*. Negev's *Archaeological Encyclopedia of the Holy Land*. *A Time Travel to the World of Jesus*. Edersheim's *Bible History: Old Testament*, *The Temple: Its Ministry and Services as They Were At the Time of Jesus Christ*, *Sketches of Jewish Social Life in the Days of Christ*, and *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*.

Biblical and Systematic Theology

Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, translated by Beveridge

(unfortunately, not the standard work translated by McNeil). Zuck, Merrill, and Bock's *A Biblical Theology of the Old Testament*. Zuck and Bock's *A Biblical Theology of the New Testament*. Packer's *Concise Theology*. Shedd's *Dogmatic Theology*, 3rd ed. Hodge's *Systematic Theology*, 3 vols. Strong's *Systematic Theology*, 3 vols. (with a readable, adjustable font-size—unlike the 3-vols.-in-1 print ed.). Henry's *God, Revelation and Authority*, 6 vols., 1999 ed. Ryrie's *A Survey of Bible Doctrine*. Evans' *The Great Doctrines of the Bible*. Enns' *The Moody Handbook of Theology*. *Semeia* journal, published by the Society of Biblical Literature, 91 vols.

Church History

Early Church Fathers, 37 vols., including the NT Apocrypha and seven ecumenical councils. Schaff's *History of the Christian Church*, 8 vols. Sell's *Studies in Early Church History*. Douglas and Comfort's *Who's Who in Christian History*. *The Encyclopedia of Christianity*, vols. 1–3 (A–O), translated by Bromiley.

Preaching

MacArthur and The Master's Seminary's *Rediscovering Expository Preaching*. W. W. and D. W. Wiersbe's *Elements of Preaching*. Wiersbe's expository outlines on the OT and NT. Wesley's *Sermons on Several Occasions*, 141 sermons. *Selected Sermons of George Whitefield*, 59 sermons. *Zodhiates' Sermon Starters*, 4 vols., 52 NT outlines in each volume. Tan's *Encyclopedia of 7,700 Illustrations*. Federer's *Great Quotations*. *The Merriam-Webster Dictionary of Quotations*.

Other Resources

Thomas à Kempis *The Imitation of Christ*. Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*. Spurgeon's *Morning and Evening*. Bruce's *The Training of the Twelve*. Sproul's *Following Christ*. MacArthur's *Different by Design* and *The Fulfilled Family*. J. S. and P. D. Feinberg's *Ethics for a Brave New World*. *Logos Hymnal*, containing 100 MIDI hymns compatible with other software. Osbeck's *Amazing Grace: 366 Inspiring Hymn Stories*. Other pastoral resources on leadership, ministry, and prayer.

HOW DOES SCHOLAR'S LIBRARY: GOLD COMPARE TO BIBLEWORKS AND ACCORDANCE?

*BibleWorks*¹⁷ and *Accordance*¹⁸ each recently released updated

¹⁷See www.BibleWorks.com.

¹⁸See www.AccordanceBible.com.

versions of their Bible software, so this question is particularly relevant. In a sense this is not a fair overall comparison, however, because *BibleWorks* and *Accordance* are tools designed primarily for biblical exegesis. They are not extensive e-libraries like *Scholar's Library: Gold*. They offer only a limited number of e-books, and those e-books are primarily lexical and grammatical in nature. So how do the exegetical features in *Scholar's Library: Gold* compare to *BibleWorks* and *Accordance*? My opinion is that they are essentially equally powerful. They can all perform swift, technical searches based on large databases. Each program has a few unique advantages,¹⁹ but overall they seem to be on a level playing field. In past years it was generally sound advice to say, "Get *BibleWorks* for exegesis and Logos for your e-library." Now *Scholar's Library: Gold* is a one-stop research center.²⁰

WARNING: THIS IS A POWER TOOL

When I teach first-year and second-year Greek, I begin with a lecture trying to convince the students that mastering New Testament Greek is an invaluable aid to understanding and ministering the New Testament. Part of that lecture includes this argumentation:

I often hear people say something like this: "I don't need to put in all that hard work to learn Greek. There are so many software tools available that it is unnecessary to learn Greek thoroughly." There is one part about that statement that is correct. There are many ancient language tools available today that are incredible, time-saving devices. But placing such tools in the hands of someone with minimal knowledge of Greek may be like giving a chainsaw to a little toddler. High-powered tools are dangerous without sufficient knowledge about the subject—whether it is cutting wood or exegeting Greek. Before the available tools will profit you, you must become familiar with the subject. Otherwise instead of cutting straight God's words with precision, you may be horrendously hacking them with a chainsaw.

Perhaps that analogy is a little too strong, but the point is that just owning high-powered Bible software like *Scholar's Library: Gold* does not make one a Bible scholar! The untrained user may do exponentially higher damage with a power tool, and Bible software is no

¹⁹For example, *BibleWorks* includes Randy Leedy's sentence diagrams of the Greek New Testament. *Accordance* includes the ability to search for morphological roots. *Scholar's Library: Gold* includes syntactical searching as well as verb rivers.

²⁰I must admit, however, that I still find myself turning first to *BibleWorks* for exegesis and then to *Scholar's Library: Gold*, largely because it is more efficient for me at this point since I have been using *BibleWorks* since 1999 and am more comfortable with its layout and features.

exception. This “warning” is not meant to discourage anyone from using *Scholar’s Library Gold*, but rather to encourage the responsible use of an extremely powerful tool.

CONCLUSION

With technological advances come both new blessings and curses for humanity, and *Scholar’s Library: Gold* is one of the most superb technological blessings. I cannot help but imagine what spiritual giants in the past would have produced with this e-tool at their fingertips. Imagine Martin Luther, John Calvin, John Owen, Jonathan Edwards, or Charles Spurgeon with *Scholar’s Library: Gold*. That is a humbling thought. May God help us be good stewards of his manifold grace, including this unprecedented e-library by Logos Bible Software.