

**WHY CATHOLICS
SHOULD READ
THE BIBLE**



**A. J. Hill Company
1215 Fannin Street
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Houston, Texas**

THE HOLY BIBLE
FOR THE CATHOLIC HOME

**THE
HOLY BIBLE**

TRANSLATED FROM THE LATIN VULGATE

*Diligently Compared With
The Hebrew, Greek, and Other Editions
In Divers Languages*

THE OLD TESTAMENT

*First Published by the English College
At Douay, A. D. 1609*

and

THE NEW TESTAMENT

*First Published by the English College
at Rheims, A. D. 1582*

WITH ANNOTATIONS, REFERENCES,
By BISHOP RICHARD CHALLONER
AND AN
HISTORICAL AND CHRONOLOGICAL
TABLE

Scriptures, the 'Following of Christ,' or some other pious book." (Pastoral Letter of the Archbishops and Bishops of the United States.)

SPEC
CAPAM

*Because the Church Has Granted
a Special Indulgence for
Reading It*

Our late Holy Father, Leo XIII, on the 13th day of December, 1898, granted to all the faithful who will read the Holy Gospels for a quarter of an hour each day, an Indulgence of three hundred days; and to those who follow this practice for a month, a Plenary Indulgence on any day within the month on which they approach the sacraments and pray for the intention of His Holiness. These indulgences are applicable to the holy souls in Purgatory.

*Because the Bible Is the
Word of God*

The Word of God! Think of it! God's own word. Not man's word. Whatever men wrote in the Bible, they did so at the command and inspiration of God Himself. If God came personally to you and spoke to you, would you turn

Him a deaf ear? But God's appearance and personal talk are not necessary. All He has to say to us He has left us in the Bible, in the Old and New Testaments, with the Church to explain and interpret it to us. But the Church cannot explain it well to us, unless we are already well acquainted with it as to its facts and simple teachings. In these Testaments we read what God wants of us, to have us know of Him, love Him, serve Him, and to be forever happy with Him in heaven, the sole end, as the Catechism teaches us, for which He has created us. In the Bible we learn His exact will for us, His exact commandments, His love and rewards for us, His judgments and punishments. "For what things soever were written," says St. Paul, "were written for our learning; that through patience and the comfort of the scriptures, we might have hope." (Rom., 15, 4.)

*Because the Bible Is a Rule of Faith—
The Church Takes Her Teaching
From the Bible and From
Tradition*

In the reading of the Bible you will find the basis of the various teachings, rites and ceremonies, devotions and practices of the Church. With a knowledge of the main events and les-

sons of the Bible, we get a much better appreciation of our holy religion. Hence it is a rule of the Church that children be taught Bible History, and particularly the life of Our Saviour, from earliest childhood by their parents, and from their first school year by their teachers, along with the Catechism.

*Because the Bible, as the Word
of God, Is the Food of the
Soul and the Bread
of Life*

The Word of God is as necessary for the spiritual nourishment and life of the soul as material bread is for the body. "The words that I have spoken to you, are spirit and life." (John, 6, 64.) The human body grows, thrives and lives on natural bread and foodstuffs. But the soul, to have spiritual life and everlasting life, must be fed on the word of God. "Not in bread alone doth man live, but in every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God." (Christ in the Gospel of St. Matthew, 4, 4.) Now every word that came from the mouth of God, is written in the Bible. The body with all the bread it ever ate will rot in the grave, but the soul will live on and, if it would have spiritual and everlasting life, it must be constantly nourished and fortified with the word of God. It is the con-

stant reading of the word of God that produces the spirit of God and the spirit of Christ. "It is the spirit that quickeneth: the flesh profiteth nothing." (John, 6, 64.) People who are indifferent to the Word of God languish in their spiritual life, if they do not lose it altogether. They lack the spirit of God, the fear of God, respect for His Holy Name, for His commandments and the dread of His punishment. They are easily profane, swear and curse, are victims to their passions, and become a menace even to society. "He that is of God, heareth the words of God. Therefore you hear them not, because you are not of God." (John, 8, 47.) To have the spirit of God, and to grow daily in it, priests and most of the religious, must read, recite or sing the Word of God every day in the verses of the Bible, and that by the hour, even under pain of mortal sin. The priest reads the Epistle and the Gospel of the mass each Sunday to the faithful. But those few verses are only a snatch or drop compared to the full Gospels, books and chapters of the Bible, which the faithful are supposed to read by themselves during the week. If Catholics are to have the true spirit of their religion, and the true Christian spirit altogether, and if they are to impart the same to their children, they cannot dispense with the reading of the Bible, but must make it a part and parcel of their daily Christian life according to the rule of the Church and the request of the Bishops of this country in particular.

How to Respect and Treat the Holy Bible

The Bible, being the Word of God itself, in other words, God's own book, is a sacred book and a holy object, and should, therefore, receive the profoundest respect and treatment. It should have a place of honor in the Christian home. Therefore don't put it away with other books. Place it on your parlor table, or in some other honorable and conspicuous place. Put it where it may be seen at all times by the members of the family. Neither lay any papers or articles on top of it. Don't put anything into it except devout pictures or bookmarks. It is no place for bills, receipts and other common papers. This is all some people use their Bibles for, showing how little respect and reverence they have for the Word of God. Small children must not be permitted to handle the Bible, much less to read it. Children should read Bible histories and Bible stories of which there should be a good supply in the house, instead of so many silly books of fairy tales and other meaningless trash. Only parents and adults should read the Bible proper, especially after they have become familiar with the main histories and lessons of the Bible from the simple textbooks.

When to Read the Bible

The plea many lukewarm Catholics make that they have no time to read the Bible is a downright falsehood and a suspicion rather that they have little or no religion at all. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind, and with thy whole strength. This is the first commandment." (Mark, 12, 30.) Anyone who is anxious to fulfil this commandment, will yearn, hunger and thirst for the Word of God, for all he can know and find out about God, what God wants of him, and what he must do to please Him and save his soul. It takes only a minute to read the Bible for all that matter. Only a minute spent each day is far more preferable than never looking into that sacred book at all, as so many Catholics must accuse themselves of this gross neglect. They find time to read the papers, magazines and story books, time to visit and play cards, to waste the precious hours and days of their lives which God gives them to save their souls. What a fearful responsibility on the Day of Judgment, "But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall render an account for it in the day of judgment." (Matt. 12, 36.) If you keep the Bible in sight, you can pick it up any time, if only to glance into it and read a few verses. Do not wait until you have

more time as that opportunity might not come to you for the rest of the day.

How to Read the Bible

The Bible is not to be simply read from cover to cover like an ordinary book and then put away. It is a book to be perused every day. You do not sit down and read your prayer book from cover to cover, but use it only when the occasion requires. So it is with the Bible. You should read it in parts. You have a whole lifetime to read it through and through, time and again. Have a few bookmarks or pictures in different places where you have left off reading. Read a little in the New Testament each day, especially in the Gospels. The Church reads a passage from the Gospels every day in the holy mass. Catholics should do likewise at home. If you have more time, read also in the Old Testament, especially one of the Psalms. The average prayer book contains only five Vesper Psalms, whereas the Bible has one hundred and fifty Psalms, many of which the priest must recite each day under pain of mortal sin. The Psalms are the principal and longest prayers of the Church which are read, recited and sung millions of times each day by the millions of her priests and religious men and women. Why should not lay Catholics also do a little something of the kind?

*Do Not Say
You Do Not Understand
the Bible*

That is another downright falsehood from your own standpoint; a sign rather of your indifference to the real things of God and the salvation of your immortal soul. Don't understand the Bible! Who does? Neither priest, Bishop, nor Pope for all that matter. Neither St. Peter nor St. Paul themselves understood the Bible in your sense, "in which," St. Peter says, "are certain things hard to be understood." (II Pet. 3, 16.) And St. Paul cries out, "O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God; How incomprehensible are His judgments, and how unsearchable His ways! For who hath known the mind of the Lord?" (Rom., 11, 33, 34.) If these Apostles or you understood the whole Bible you would be as wise as God Himself. He dwells in mystery but endeavors through the Bible to make Himself known to us as much as possible. There are many things in religion besides the Bible that you do not understand. You go to church when the service is largely, and sometimes exclusively, in Latin which you do not understand or take the least trouble to do so. Yet you go to church nevertheless, because you believe and feel that doing so makes you good and holy.

And so it is with the Bible whether you understand it fully or not. If you understood the Latin it would not help you much to understand the services unless you were well read in the Bible of which most of the church service consists. If you don't understand the whole Bible, you will understand enough of it to save and sanctify your soul. Our Blessed Saviour came into the world to teach it and shed the last drop of His blood on the cross to give you His Word. How can you be indifferent to it, or dare to say you cannot understand it? If you received the Sacrament of Confirmation worthily and with it the gifts of wisdom, knowledge and understanding, how can you say that you cannot understand the simple teachings of your Divine Saviour and His Apostles for the salvation of your soul? Whatever you will understand will be more than worth while for your salvation. If you found a few grains of gold in your garden, you would probably dig up tons of soil from it with untiring sacrifice to secure a few coveted nuggets. Though you understood only a few words of the Bible, they are, as the same Holy Book tells you, "above gold and precious stones." (Ps., 118, 127.) If you don't understand some big words in your Bible, look them up in your dictionary, if you are not too lazy to do so, or too penurious to have an availing one.

Every Household Should Have a Family Bible

And each adult member should have his own, at least a small pocket Bible, just as each member usually has his own prayer book. How sad when young people leave their homes and take no Bible with them and cannot, therefore, read it every day as the Church desires. Do not say you don't need a Bible, that you have your prayer book. A prayer book is not a Bible and cannot take its place. A dictionary is not a grammar, nor an arithmetic a geography. Every book has its own purpose. When you use your prayer book, or pray at any time, you speak to God, or to His saints. But when you read the Bible, God speaks to you. It is far more important, and necessary, that God should speak to you in His Holy Bible every day than that you should speak to Him. If you do not care to listen to Him, as to what He has to say, He will not be likely to pay much attention to you, as you are probably not doing much of His Will anyway, when you are not well grounded in His teachings through your neglect to read them constantly in the Holy Book He gives you. He will be likely to say of you as He said of the false Jews of His time who were always praying and boasting of their devotions: "This people honoureth me with their lips: but their heart is far from me." (Matt., 15, 8.)

Above All Things Read the Holy Scriptures in the Proper Christian Spirit

With faith, humility, sorrow for sin, and a complete dependence upon the guidance of God for the proper understanding and application of His Holy Word. Avoid idle curiosity, vain speculation and futile discussion about obscure and mysterious passages and events. Read the Bible solely for edification and imitation, and for repeating the prayers and sounding the praises of God in its sublime pages. Call upon the Holy Spirit in particular to enlighten you and to bring to your mind the things that Our Blessed Redeemer would have you learn and observe for your salvation and sanctification. "The Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name. He will teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind, whatsoever I shall have said to you." (John, 14, 26.)

Differences Between the Douay and King James Bibles

1. Protestants admit as inspired and canonical only those books of the Old Testament which are contained in the Hebrew Bible, and consequently reject the following books and

sections of books, which are not recognized by the Jews, namely: Judith, Tobias, Baruch, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus (not to be confounded with Ecclesiastes), and the two books of Machabees; Esther x, 4-xiv, 24; Daniel iii, 24-90, xiii, 1-xiv, 42. These books and sections of books were formerly printed in the King James Bible under the heading "Apocrypha," but they are now omitted in the Bibles printed in this country, as also in those issued by the British Bible Society.

The Books called Apocrypha by the Protestants we call deutero-canonical, as having been added to the books of the Jewish canon, which we call protocanonical.

There is some difference in the names of the books. The two first books of Kings are called, respectively, first and second book of Samuel in the Hebrew and Protestant Bibles, and our third and fourth book, the first and second book of Kings. The two books of Paralipomenon, (that is, of the things passed over, so called because they contain matter not found in the four books of Kings) are more correctly styled the two books of Chronicles. The book commonly called by us the Second Book of Esdras, though its main title in our Bible is the Book of Nehemias, is always called The Book of Nehemiah. Lastly, in the New Testament, The Apocalypse, (which in Greek means revelation) is called The Revelation.

3. The two Bibles also differ in the number-

*The KB Editions of the HOLY BIBLE have the same
type as used in this pamphlet.*

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THE HOLY BIBLE

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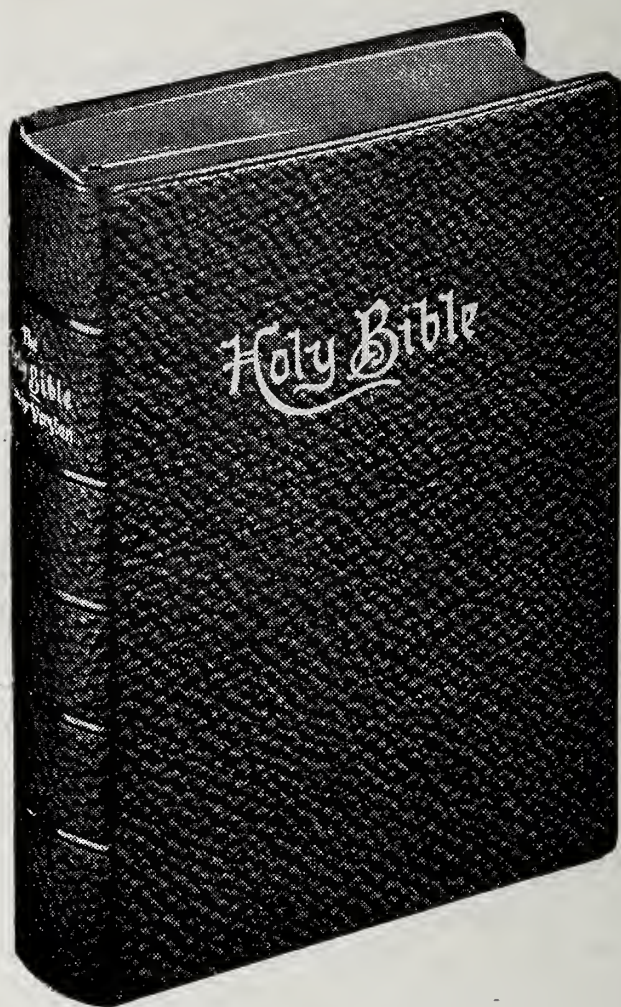
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