



# PRINCIPLES IN SERVING GOD

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**INTRODUCTION TO THE HOLY BIBLE**

# The Holy Bible

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graph TD; A[The Holy Bible] --- B[Introduction]; A --- C[Old]; A --- D[New];
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Introduction

Old

New

# INTRODUCTION

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1. What is the Holy Bible?
2. The purpose of reading the Holy bible
3. How do I achieve this goal when reading the Holy Bible?
4. The status of the Holy Bible in the Coptic Orthodox Church.
5. The meanings of the Holy Bible.
6. Versions of the Holy Bible.
7. The Dangers of using one verse.
8. The relationship of the Holy Bible and books of the world
9. Types of Bible Studies
10. Additional (Research Studies)
11. Bible Commentaries



# WHAT IS THE HOLY BIBLE?

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- IT IS THE BOOK OF THE WORDS OF GOD
- IT IS THE BOOK OF HUMANITY
- IT IS A BOOK OF SAYINGS THAT ALLOW ME TO DISCOVER MYSELF



## 2- THE PURPOSE OF READING THE HOLY BIBLE

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- Reading the Holy Bible has a unique purpose, and cannot be fulfilled through reading any other book. This purpose is to sustain our lives, for “man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God” Luke 4:4. 44
- Reading the Holy Bible is not only for reviewing the word of God and communicating with Him. It is also not for serious reading with a goal of logically understanding things. The main and true goal of reading the Holy Bible **is to get into the inner soul of the human being so he becomes in a state of unification and partnership with the words of the living God**. Therefore, this reading is considered as “communion, or Holy union.” But it is different from the Sacrament of the Eucharist, as it is an absorption of the word of God in a different way, through the external senses, with our **brain** and our **feelings**.



## 2- THE PURPOSE OF READING THE HOLY BIBLE

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- **The prophet Ezekiel says:**“moreover he said to me, 'son of man, eat what you find, eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel.' So I opened my mouth, and He caused me to eat that scroll. And he said to me, 'Son of man, feed your belly, and fill your stomach with this scroll that I give you'. So I ate, and it was in my mouth like honey in sweetness”. Eze 3:1-3.
- Reading the Holy Bible reproaches us sometimes, calls us, comforts us and strengthens us. Sometimes He captivates us and sometimes He despises us. Therefore, sometimes, I see myself as God likes me to be and not as what I am in my sins and weaknesses. It is a unique experience of reading. ***Material food does not strengthen us unless we chew it and digest it. The same thing can be said of the Words of God: we have to eat it and let it go inside us, then we digest it, i.e. we keep the food inside us for a while and do not forget it.***



### 3- HOW DO I ACHIEVE THIS GOAL WHEN READING THE HOLY BIBLE?

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- a) I have to pray before and while I am reading the Holy Bible, such as St. Isaac the Syrian who said “Lord, qualify me to feel the strength of your book.”
- b) Reading the Holy Bible in every stage of our lives gives us a new meaning, new grace, and new joy; there is continuous change that happens within the person “change the way you look by changing your minds” Rom 12:2.
- Note: in the Holy liturgy, we have a liturgy for the preached people as a preparation for them to take the Body and Blood of our Lord. The liturgy for the preached is like eating the written word of God for our senses and feelings and our internal development, then we actually take the Body and Blood of our Lord that is the edible word of God



### 3- HOW DO I ACHIEVE THIS GOAL WHEN READING THE HOLY BIBLE?

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- Understanding the word of God and spiritually benefiting from it.
  - a) To explain the Bible through the Bible:
  - b) Liturgies are a practical evidence of the Holy Bible.
  - c) Explaining the Holy Bible through actual lives of the Church Fathers.





## 3- HOW DO I ACHIEVE THIS GOAL WHEN READING THE HOLY BIBLE?

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- The practical way to read the Holy Bible:
  - a) Knowing the subjects and the main outline of the Holy Bible.
  - b) Hearing God's voice in a personal way.
  - c) Continue to write down your contemplations.
  - d) Studying one or two verses a day.
  
- In order to truly understand and be affected by the Holy Bible you might like to refer to the following simple guideline:
  - Reading
  - Meditating
  - Absorbing
  - Digesting
  - Applying



## 4-THE STATUS OF THE HOLY BIBLE IN THE COPTIC ORTHODOX CHURCH

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- Our Coptic Orthodox church is fully guided by the Holy Bible not only in liturgy and prayers but in all aspects of the church as shown in the following list:

**1. In personal prayers**

**2. In Liturgies**

**3. In Rites of the Church**

**4. In Canons of the Church**

**5. In Holy Traditions**

**6. In Doctrines**

**7. In dealing with social issues**

**8. In Sacraments**

→ Now the question is: why is all this importance given to the Holy Bible in all aspects of life?

We could briefly respond by saying that it is the book of eternal life. This is evident when St. Peter said to our Lord Jesus: “Lord to whom we shall go? You have the words of eternal life” John 6:68.



## 5. MEANING OF THE HOLY BIBLE

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- a) **Literal Meaning**
- b) **Symbolic Meaning**
- c) **Foreshadowing Meaning**
- d) **The Eternal Meaning**



## A. LITERAL MEANING:

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An example of the literal meaning of the Holy Bible is when Lot exited Sodom and went to Zoar Mountain, in Genesis 19:22.

The literal meaning is clear – that Lot went out of Sodom - but the symbolic meaning is that the spirit should run away from the sinful environment surrounding it.



## B. SYMBOLIC MEANING

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The symbolic meaning when the Israelites were committing sin, in Psalm 16:1-16, was that they represented the whole human race in the darkness of sin, and the Lord had mercy on them and saved them. Psalm 16:8-14.

The church of Alexandria is known from its inception, from the second century, by its school that concentrated on the Holy Bible and explaining it symbolically.

The approach was taken by the scholar Oreganos based on the teachings of his teacher St. Clements.



## C. FORESHADOWING MEANING

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There are many events in the Old Testament that foreshadowed an important event that actually happened in the New Testament, especially regarding the act of salvation of our Lord Jesus.

Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself drew our attention to this foreshadowing when He was talking to the Emmaus disciples by saying: 'ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?' and beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." Luke 24:26-27.



## C. FORESHADOWING MEANING (CONTINUE)

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- The manna was a foreshadow, or symbol, of partaking of the Body and the Blood of our Lord: “Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that one may eat it and not die” John 6:49-50.



## D. ETERNAL MEANING

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The eternal meaning is the meaning that leads us up high so that we transport ourselves from the literal, symbolic, and foreshadowing meaning, so we can discover a different meaning for the Holy Bible.

This eternal meaning is about the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and the Eternal Kingdom (Eschatology).

“Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea” Revelation 21:11.





## 6. VERSIONS OF THE HOLY BIBLE

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- When people hear there are over 50 different versions of the Holy Bible in English alone, they often think to themselves, "No wonder there are many denominations each teaching different things, there are many different versions of the Holy Bible."
- This view, however, is wrong. Yes there are many denominations, but that is not the result of the fact there are many versions of the Bible.
- **There is one Bible!**
- Version means Translation



## 6. VERSIONS OF THE HOLY BIBLE

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- Original Language:

Book	Original Language (written in)
Old Testament	Hebrew
New Testament	Greek (Ancient Greek)



## 6. VERSIONS OF THE HOLY BIBLE

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<b>For Example: Mark 16:16</b>		
Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.	He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned	He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned
(NIV)	(KJV)	(NKJV)

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—English (EN)—  
21st Century King James Version (KJ21)  
American Standard Version (ASV)  
Amplified Bible (AMP)  
Amplified Bible, Classic Edition (AMPC)  
BRG Bible (BRG)  
Christian Standard Bible (CSB)  
Common English Bible (CEB)  
Complete Jewish Bible (CJB)  
Contemporary English Version (CEV)  
Darby Translation (DARBY)  
Disciples' Literal New Testament (DLNT)  
Douay-Rheims 1899 American Edition (DRA)  
Easy-to-Read Version (ERV)  
Evangelical Heritage Version (EHV)  
English Standard Version (ESV)  
English Standard Version Anglicised (ESVUK)  
Expanded Bible (EXB)  
1599 Geneva Bible (GNV)  
GOD'S WORD Translation (GW)  
Good News Translation (GNT)  
Holman Christian Standard Bible (HCSB)  
International Children's Bible (ICB)  
International Standard Version (ISV)  
J.B. Phillips New Testament (PHILLIPS)  
Jubilee Bible 2000 (JUB)  
**King James Version (KJV)**  
Authorized (King James) Version (AKJV)  
Lexham English Bible (LEB)  
Living Bible (TLB)





## 6. VERSIONS OF THE HOLY BIBLE

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**I) The Septuagint Holy Bible**

**II) The Coptic Holy Bible**

**III) The Arabic Holy Bible (Beirut) [Van Dyke]**

**IV) The New King James Version (NKJV)**

❖ 1 New King James Bible, New Testament; 1979

❖ 2 New King James Bible, New Testament and Psalms; 1980

❖ 3 New King James Version of the Holy Bible, containing the Old and New Testaments; 1982

**V) New International Version (NIV)**

**VI) American Standard Version (ASV)**



## 7. THE DANGERS OF USING ONE VERSE

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- We must take the whole Holy Bible in its totality. In order to understand the Holy Bible, we must read above and below the verse that we are reading. We must get the context of everything to fully understand what is being written.
- If you are not careful to check the context of each verse, you can come up with some odd conclusions.



## 7. THE DANGERS OF USING ONE VERSE

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For example,

- "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law." (Romans 3:28) and "knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ..." (Galatians 2:16).
- But you will also find Saint James' statement that "You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only." (James 2:24) and "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also." (James 2:26).
- Taken out of context, Saint James appears to be flatly contradicting Saint Paul.
- However, after a careful study of both what Saint Paul said and Saint James said, one can conclude that a person is justified not by faith alone but by faith and works.



# 8. THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE HOLY BIBLE AND BOOKS OF THE WORLD

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- The Holy Bible, despite of its simplicity, is filled with worldly truths. Keep in mind that the Holy Bible is not meant to be a worldly book. These truths were written in the Holy Bible some 3000 years ago or more, and were written in a simplistic fashion that is acceptable across all times and places. The bible covers many aspects like

**1. Natural Science**  
**2. Medicine**  
**3. Social Science**

**4. Management and Administration**  
**5. Humanities**

- <http://www.cmug.org/articles/Dangers.html>
- <http://www.clarifyingchristianity.com/science.shtml>
- <http://www.christiancourier.com/articles/690-is-the-bible-historically-accurate>





# 9. TYPES OF BIBLE STUDIES

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- Personalities in the Holy Bible
- Study of one Verse
- Study of one Chapter
- Study of certain subjects for example humility, love, gifts of the Holy Spirit... etc.
- Study Theologies in the Holy Bible for example the Oneness of God, the Holy Trinity ... etc.
- Study comparisons between the Holy Bible and other books of the world for example
  - The Holy Bible vs science,
  - The Holy Bible vs medicine,
  - The Holy Bible vs history of mankind,
  - The Holy Bible vs geography of the world,
  - The Holy Bible vs Humanities.



## 10. ADDITIONAL (OR RESEARCH STUDIES)

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- The impossibility of distorting the Holy Bible
- Archeological reports
- Geography in the Holy Bible
- Religions and habits of the old world
- How were the books of the Holy Bible compiled?
- The canonistic aspects of the various books of the Holy Bible, the objections raised and the answers to those objections.



# II. STUDY BIBLE AND COMMENTARIES

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- We need the explanations of the Saints
- The varieties of the Study Bibles
- The Orthodox study Bible
- Fr. Tadros Malaty Series (which includes patristic commentaries)
- The Late Bishop Anba Athanasius series
- “El-mousiha El-kensia” issued by St. Mark Church in Cairo
- Bible Dictionaries
- Bible Atlases
- Bible Concordances

