

## Bible Reading

### ENCOURAGEMENT from the Lord Jesus

Did not our hearts burn within us  
when He opened to us the Scriptures?

Luke 24:32 (cf. 24:27, 44)

All scripture is inspired by God  
and profitable for teaching, reproof, correction  
and instruction in righteousness,  
so that a man of God may be perfect,  
capable of every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16-17; cf. 14-15)

### TRADITION

To be ignorant of the Scriptures  
is to be ignorant of Christ. (St Jerome, 342-420).

**B**EGINNERS sometimes think and quite reasonably that it is best to begin at the beginning, with the majestic opening of Genesis 1:1-2:

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was formless and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters. And God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light.

### READ & KNOW the OLD TESTAMENT

**C**HILDREN: read aloud to them at/after the main meal; try Schuster’s *Bible History* of vital texts listed in the *Catholic Family Catechism Disciples’ Edition*:-

#### FAITH and MORALS in Genesis 1-4:

- The first hint of the **Blessed Trinity**, Genesis 1:1-2;
- God created everything **from nothing**;
- God is **Almighty**: He created everything by His Word;
- the **goodness and beauty** of His works in creation;
- unique status of man made in God’s **image & likeness**;
- man’s **stewardship** over creatures;
- **Sabbath** rest: to honour God & uphold rights of employees;
- man’s **communion** with God and duty to offer **sacrifice**;
- man and woman are of **equal** worth before God;
- **Adam & Eve** really existed — no polygenism;
- the blessing of **marriage**, family and children;
- nobility of **work** — of farming and flocks;
- the **happiness** of life on earth;
- a spiritual **testing time**;
- spiritual **warfare** with the Devil;
- **sin, suffering and death**;
- the promise of a **Saviour** and the role of **His mother**;
- His mother’s **Immaculate Conception**;
- **difficulties for marriage** and child-bearing
- **difficulties for work** — toil & sweat; thorns & thistles;
- wearing **clothing** — loss of integrity and innocence;
- the first **murder**.

#### SALVATION HISTORY of events and people

Creation: Genesis 1—2, picture p. 17

The Fall from grace into sin: Genesis 3, picture p. 27

Cain and Abel: Genesis 4; picture of Abel’s sacrifice, picture p. 24

Noah’s Ark and the Flood: Genesis 6—9

Tower of Babel: Genesis 11:1-9

Call of Abraham: Gen.12:1-9: revered worldwide by us/Jews/Islam

Sacrifice of Isaac: Genesis 22, picture p. 25

Esau and Jacob: Genesis 25, 27

Jacob and Rachel: Genesis 29—30

Joseph’s “Coat of many Colours”: Genesis 37

Joseph in Egypt: Genesis 39-41 and following

Moses in the Bulrushes: Exodus 1—2

Moses at the Burning Bush: Exodus 3, picture p. 97

Moses and the Ten Plagues: Exodus 4—11

Passover of the Lord: Exodus 12, picture, p. 29

Exodus from Egypt and Red Sea crossing: Exodus 13:17- 14:31

Ten Commandments: Exodus 20, picture p. 93

The Ark of the Covenant: Exodus 25:10-22, picture p. 84

Samuel the Prophet: 1 Samuel 3

David & Samuel: 1 Samuel 16;

David & Goliath: 1 Samuel 17

David & Saul: 1 Samuel 18 & 24;

David & Jonathan: 1 Samuel 20

David’s Repentance: 2 Samuel 12:1-23

Elijah and the Prophets of Baal: 1 Kings 18

Elijah on Mount Horeb: 1 Kings 19

Naboth’s Vineyard: 1 Kings 21 (cf. p. 88)

Achab’s Doom: 1 Kings 22:1-40

Elijah goes to Heaven: 2 Kings 2; (picture p. 51)

Elisha and Naaman the Leper: 2 Kings 5

Fall of Jezebel: 2 Kings 9

Isaiah’s Vision of the Holy One: Isaiah 6:3

Ezekiel’s vision of the Dry Bones: Ezekiel 37

Fiery Furnace: Daniel 3,

Writing on the Wall: Daniel 5

Daniel in the Lion’s Den: Daniel 6; also 14:23-42, picture p. 95

Martyrdom of the Maccabees: 2 Maccabees 7.

#### NEW TESTAMENT listings in *Catholic Family Catechism*

- Christ’s Birth & Hidden Life; Public Life (Precepts, Parables, Mysteries; and His eight Miracles in St John), pp. 34-35;
- Christ’s Passion & Death, p. 36; Resurrection, pp. 37-39; Ascension & Pentecost and symbols of the Holy Spirit, pp. 40-43;
- the Church, p. 44; Blessed Virgin Mary, pp. 45, 116-117.

#### NEW TESTAMENT reading: a simple plan

- Editions with SUB-HEADINGS mark verse groups: e.g. *Revised Standard Version 2<sup>nd</sup> Catholic Edition*.
- A simple book to start with is St James — mainly morals.
- Or start with St Luke’s Gospel — so much is memorable.
- Easy “multi-coverage”: 1 Corinthians (St Paul) or 1 Peter.

#### RHYMING IDEAS

**S**EE OVER for a schemata of St John’s Gospel from **Father John Gerhard S.J.** Scholar Peter Ellis based a commentary on Gerhard in his *The Genius of John*.

Father Gerhard (with whom I have corresponded) had a computer programme analyse the words and ideas in the Joannine text. Thus he discovered that it was written with **rhyming ideas**, using a rhyme pattern a-b-c-b-a.

This cross-over parallelism is called **chiasm**: the last idea rhymes with the first, and the second idea rhymes with the second last. Within each of these divisions there are subdivisions of the same pattern, and so on within them. Like our **sound-rhymes** and rhythm poetry: such schemes help memorization. The Psalms have an even **simpler parallelism** of rhyming ideas: a-a; b-b, verse by verse, or alphabetical first letters.

**Mr Bernard Sadler** of Sydney has discovered something similar in his *According to Matthew* (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition), available from him, 02 9453 0123, [bsadler@inet.net.au](mailto:bsadler@inet.net.au). He shows how St Matthew repeats words, phrases, or whole sentences in a variety of parallelisms (some chiasm) to divide or unite the separate items. He makes it seven big chapters in all, each divided into five parts. He uses the literal translation of the Douai Bible to make the parallelisms more obvious.

Our **chapter-&-verse divisions** in the 46 Old and 27 New Testament books of a Bible were unknown until Archbishop Stephen Langton of Canterbury published the present chapter breaks in 1228. Subdivisions of chapters into verses came later when Santes Pagnini O.P. added verse numbers in his new-Latin Old Testament in 1528, and his Paris publisher Robert Etienne divided the New Testament into verses, in 1555.

**I**MAGINE the piety of the early Church Fathers finding Bible texts without chapters or verses! They must have known most of the Bible by heart — like our Lord finding a place he wanted to read from in the scroll of Isaiah; (Luke 4:17).

Father James Tierney

OUTLINE OF JOHN ACCORDING TO CHIASTIC, AND GRADATIONAL, INTROVERTED PARALLELISM

