

# [Bible References, Maps, Charts](#)

## ***Basic Background Readings***

Barrois, Georges A., **Scripture Readings in Orthodox Worship**, Chapters 4-5, pp. 71-107.

An excellent and very readable commentary on the biblical texts read during the feasts and services of the Church Year: with particular focus on the Lenten Cycle, Great and Holy Week, Pascha and the post-Paschal cycles, etc. Shows the relationship between Old and New Testament events, major figures, typology and the meaning of images and figures for the major readings of each day and service. A good text for college and adult groups. Small sections for specific lessons can be used with high school students. [SVS Press ISBN 0-913836-41-9]

Barrois, Georges A., **Jesus Christ and the Temple**. 164pp.

A description of biblical events and passages related to the Temple in the Old and New Testament texts, their relationship to Christ, and to images of "temple" as they are related to us today, e.g., becoming "temples of the Holy Spirit." A helpful text as we read the New Testament stories of the teaching and Passion of the last days of Christ. [SVS Press ISBN 0-913836-73-7]

Kesich, Veselin, **The Passion of Christ**. 84pp.

A short commentary on the passion narratives in the Gospels. Provides background information and insights of modern scholarship. An aid for the general reader and adult study groups. [SVS Press ISBN 0-913836-80-X]

Kesich, Veselin and Lydia, **Treasures of the Holy Land**. 112pp.

Prof. Kesich and his wife Lydia provide vivid historical and scriptural descriptions as they visit major sites in the Holy Land, including Hellenistic and Roman influences Jewish, early Christian and Byzantine places of pilgrimage and modern and Muslim influences. A valuable aid to understanding the biblical events as well as a guide for the modern traveler. Includes 24 wonderful line drawings and maps that acquaint the reader with the topography and flavor of Palestine. [SVS Press ISBN 0-88141-045-4]

Wybrew, Hugh, **Orthodox Lent, Holy Week and Easter**. 118pp.

Selected liturgical texts and commentary from the services of the Lenten season through Pascha. [SVS Press ISBN 0-88141-162-0]

**Note:** For Liturgical Music and Recordings for Holy Week and Pascha, see the Resource Bin on Liturgy (or click here for **Liturgical Music**)

# Introduction to Bible Stories & Resources

## **for Children and Adults**

by Dr. Constance Tarasar

Bible storybooks for children are published regularly in new, and often expanded, editions. Some of the titles listed below may be out of print, but reissued by the same publisher, or under a different publisher's name (due to mergers). The best guideline for parents and teachers is to check local public libraries or religious publishing houses and spend some time sampling and comparing texts. Some guidelines for selection and use of Bible texts and resources are the following:

1. Texts that attempt to make the Bible "fun to read" are usually not the best for classroom purposes—a simple paraphrase is preferred, so that the story is not distorted (see, for example, the children's text: *God is with Us*, by Sophie Koulomzin). Some of the large-sized illustrated children's Bible storybooks with paraphrased texts are very usable, both for classroom use and for family reading of the Bible. Family reading of basic Bible stories is helpful in setting an early foundation and acquaintance with the primary stories and people of the Bible. (Before each session, parents or teachers should read ahead to check the vocabulary used—to see what words may need to be further simplified, or which situations and concepts skipped or explained, depending upon the age of your listeners).
2. When purchasing Bible storybooks, also check the style and content of the illustrations. For example, a "realistic" illustration of Abraham poised with a knife above his son Isaac, is best avoided with younger children; as are other illustrations and texts focusing on violent situations that are beyond the experience and conceptual level to be understood by children. Simple drawings or "iconographic" illustrations are generally better than those attempting "realism." In another approach today, some Bible storybooks feature a somewhat "playful" childlike illustration, or even a "cartoon" (or comic book) form of illustration. It is difficult, however, to convey a biblical message while using a form of illustration that sets a different tone or may even detract from that message.
3. For very young children (under age 4 or 5), certain collections or series (e.g., the *Arch Book* series, or *Little People's Paperbacks*) feature stories based upon biblical events, with some liberties taken, such as telling the story through the eyes of a child or another witness (be it a person or an animal that was a part of the story). In general, these stories are harmless for the youngest child, as long as the key events or message remain true, (e.g. the birth of Jesus, teaching, healings, etc). By age 5 or 6, however, such stories should be replaced by a good, simple paraphrased text of the Bible, with illustrations that are appropriate for the biblical text. (*Note: Some of these may be out of print, or have been replaced by newer series or titles. Check with the publishers for current publications.*)
4. By the upper elementary, middle school or Jr. high years, students should be acquainted with the basic structure and contents of the Bible, along with the use of Bible aids and references. A good starter reference is: *What the Bible is All About* (Regal Books: *Young Explorers* edition, see below). This one-volume paperback in large print includes maps, illustrated timelines, outlines and basic information on each book of the Bible (useful also for teachers and parents). A dictionary of Bible words and customs is also included. Students should also be introduced to the use of a *Gospel Parallels* that allow one to compare texts of the same event from different Gospel accounts. These same references are also useful for teachers and adult Bible study groups.
5. In addition to basic Bibles and reference books on the biblical texts, it is important that Orthodox Christians understand the place of the Bible in the Church, particularly, how the Bible is used in the liturgical services and cycles of the church year. (See *Basic Background Readings*, above.) For this purpose, the *Liturgical Aids* for Holy Week and Pascha, published by the Orthodox Church in America, are useful for Bible Study groups as well as for personal study and reflection. See also:
6. *Introductions to Liturgical Themes of Holy Week* that have been excerpted from each of the booklets of the *Holy Week Services* (available from **OCPC**—the sales office for Orthodox Church in America publications), as well as the liturgical verses that may be found in the "*Journey to Pascha*" Liturgy Resource Bin. Also very useful for adults is the two-volume series' *The Living God*, and *The Incarnate God* (SVS Press), and the article: "*How to READ the Bible*," by Bishop Kallistos Ware in *The Orthodox Study Bible*, together with helpful footnotes and the Lectionary provided in this translation of the New Testament.

## **General Bible Texts & References**

**Orthodox Study Bible, New Testament.** Thomas Nelson publishers. An Orthodox edition of the New Testament and Psalms (New King James Version text), with articles, brief notes, commentaries, icon illustrations in full color, a concordance and several other resources in an index that accompanies the text. Especially useful is the article on "**How to Read the Bible**" by Bishop Kallistos Ware. ISBN 0-8407-8523-2

**The New Oxford Annotated Bible, (RSV or RSV Catholic Edition)** with the Apocrypha, [Expanded Edition] is recommended for teachers and older students, for the additional notes, commentaries, maps and other Bible aids in this edition. Includes 12 topographical maps of Palestine, describing major events, journeys, and the Temple area of Jerusalem in Old and New Testament times. Oxford University Press

**The Holy Bible (RSV) Second Edition, Large Print Reference Edition** (Augsburg), Thomas Nelson publishers. Includes 8 maps, a 96 page Concordance, cross references (in center columns) for finding related texts, and several articles on the use of the Bible.

**God is with Us**, Bible Stories by S. Koulomzin, [OCA –OCPC]. Ages 4-10. A soft-cover book of Bible stories for children, with iconographic illustrations, covering basic stories from Creation to Pentecost. Stories for the FOCUS Education Journey to Pascha study unit are found in an **expanded edition** on this website. See "**God is With Us**". (Full color text out of print, but available in many parish libraries.)

\***The Children's Illustrated Bible**, Dorling-Kindersley, publishers, London, 320 pp. [6 ½ x 5 ¼"] This hardcover book of well-written paraphrased Bible texts is beautifully illustrated in full color, with drawings and photographs of people, places and descriptions of life experiences in Palestine in the time of Jesus and in modern time. Excellent picture maps help young readers to better understand the topography of the land and where events took place. The text is too small for children whose reading skills are limited. Recommended for upper elementary, junior high and older levels. [There are also available larger editions similar to this book with larger type and layout.] ISBN 0-7894-5331-2

**What the Bible is All About (Young Explorers Edition)**, by Frances Blankenbaker, Regal Books. Introductions to each book of the Bible, with black and white illustrations, maps and illustrated time-lines that outline major personalities and events for the narratives in each book. A useful reference for teens, teachers and other adults. Can also be used for late middle school or junior high. Available in paperback or hardcover. ISBN 0-8307-1162-7

**Gospel Parallels, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition**, by Burton H. Throckmorton. A very useful resource for teens, teachers and other adults. Shows the Gospel texts of Matthew, Mark and Luke in parallel columns, with references provided for the Gospel of St. John. Enables easy comparison of texts of the synoptic gospels. This edition uses the NRSV text, but the RSV may still be available from Thomas Nelson, Inc. ISBN 0-8407-7484-2

**The Living God: A Catechism for the Christian Faith. 2 Volumes.** SVS Press. The basic teachings of the Orthodox faith are communicated through the liturgical year—its feasts and seasons, as related and fulfilled in Scripture, theology, iconography and hymnography. Includes full color icons and liturgical music examples. An excellent series for parents, teachers, youth and adults. Useful for discussion groups and families. ISBN 0-88141-040-3 (2 volume set).

**The Incarnate God: The Feasts of Jesus Christ and the Virgin Mary. 2 Volumes.** Catherine Aslanoff, editor (French Edition) English Translation by Paul Meyendorff, SVS Press. Vol. I, featuring the Feasts of Christ and the Virgin Mary focuses on the period of Advent, Christmas and the Theophany cycles. Vol. II focuses on Great Lent, Holy Week, the Resurrection and Paschal periods, and the Feast of the Dormition. Includes wonderful black and white illustrations by Fr. Andrew Tregubov, as well as an extensive glossary explaining liturgical, scriptural and theological terminology. A useful guide and resource for high school and adult groups. Includes 110 iconographic illustrations. Set: ISBN 0-88141-130-2.

## **Maps and Charts**

**The Student Bible Atlas**, by Tim Dowley, Richard Scott (*Illustrator*)

**Bible Atlas.** American Bible Society (catalog #107300). This atlas contains four sections: geographical maps, historical maps, maps illustrating stories of the Bible, and maps showing the history of Jerusalem. Includes color photographs, a comprehensive index, references and a poster showing a satellite view of the Bible lands. 64pp. (7 x 9 ¼ in.) Hardcover.

**Reproducible Bible Maps**, Abingdon Press

**What the Bible is All About** (Young Explorers Edition, see above) Regal Books [Reproducible Maps, Resources, Charts, Time Lines and Illustrations] ISBN 0-8307-1162-7

