

² This amusing story illustrates that there is often much in our printed bibles that is not strictly Biblical.

Scripture. Not only in the hand of the printer, but in the hands of the publisher, the Bible has been the subject of many a page of illuminated decorations to glosses which sometimes consumed more of a page than the Scripture text itself. The glosses or commentaries had accumulated over the centuries, incorporating comments by some of the earliest church fathers as well as later scholastics. Prologues and introductory material by

¹ Dr. Severance received her Ph.D. in history from Rice University and is Director of the Dunham Bible Museum.

² *The Holy Bible*, published in parallelism with philological explanatory Annotation, ed. T.W. Coit, D.D. Boston, 1834, Museum.

St. Jerome were a part of many Vulgate manuscripts. Tables, almanacs, and charts for the liturgical use of Scripture were also included.³

Additional matter in the English Wycliffe bibles varied from manuscript to manuscript, but, like their Vulgate counterparts, many had prologues before the books and tables of epistles and gospels for

division of the Scripture into chapters had been made about 1250, the Wycliffe bibles had chapter divisions. Some included drawings of a hand out in the margin, pointing to an especially noteworthy passage.⁴

Early printings of the Bible also included supplementary material, pictorial as well as verbal. The subject of bible illustrations is fascinating, even if sometimes salacious and bizarre, but the focus here will be on the written additions. A folio bible printed in Germany in 1480 was probably the first to have summaries placed at the head of each chapter. 15th century German publishers added other

contents, a list of canonical books, marginal references, and a table of scriptural readings for the liturgical year.⁵ In 1486 the Press of Strassburg printed the first bible with a title page though this title page lacked that authorization to be read in the churches our New Englanders welcomed in their

. Some bibles were printed with a history of the text of Scripture and a section on

time publishers added material to their bibles simply because there were a few blank pages at the end.⁶

Matthew's Bible of 1537 was the first English bible to include extensive notes. Over 2000 notes, taken from the writings of Tyndale, Coverdale, Luther, Lefevre, Olivetan, and Bucer presented a distinctly Protestant Reformation perspective. Though dedicated to Henry VIII, the King quickly issued a royal injunction forbidding the printing or importation of English Bibles with notes or prologues

⁷ In addition to the notes, *Matthew's Bible* included two tables found in many later Bibles, including American ones

Table of the

The *Great Bible* of 1539, which was ordered placed in every church in pecti1537 eveh inTf54 43to hu.t/-9(

Several tables found in earlier bibles on the continent were also included chronological tables and

found in German bibles almost one hundred years earlier was included, but the *Geneva Bible* provided a reason for its importance:

Whereas the wickedness of time, and the blindness of the former age hath suche that all things altogether have bene abused and corrupted, so that the very right names of diverse holie men named in the Scriptures have been forgotten, and now seme strange unto us, and the names of infants that shulde ever have some godlie advertisements in them, and shulde be memorials and markes of the children of God received into his housholde, hath been hereby also changed and made the signes and badges of idolatrie and heathenish impietie, we have now set forthe this table of the names that be most used in the olde Testament with their interpretations, as the Ebrewe importeth, partly to call backe the godlie fro that abuse, when they shal know the true names of the godlie fathers, & what they signifie, that their children now named after them may have testimonies by their very names, that they are within that faithful familie that in all their doings had ever God before their eyes, and that they are bounde by these their names to serve God from their infancie & have occasion to praise him for his workes wrought in them & their fathers: but chiefly to restore the names to their integrities, whereby many places of the Scriptures and secret mysteries of the holie Gost shal better be understand.⁸

This table of Hebrew names continued to be printed in American bibles well into the 19th century. Knowing this helps us better understand why and how so many colonial Puritans had obscure names from the Old Testament.

The 1569 edition of the *Geneva Bible* also included: a cycle of the Sun, Declaration of the Golden Number (to determine the age of the moon), Faires in France, and additional historical material on the Babylonian captivity of the Jews, the Maccabees and intertestamental period. Later editions included even more extensive notes, reflecting the Calvinistic theology and politics of the English exiles in Geneva.⁹

The *Geneva Bible* was extremely popular, but it was never approved by the Church of England, as was the 1568 *Bishops' Bible*. Though it lacked the extensive notes of the *Geneva Bible*, the *Bishops'*

⁸ *The Bible and Holy Scriptures*. Geneva: Rouland Hall, 1560.

⁹ *Editions of the Bible*, 294-304.

Bible unsurprisingly included helps important for the liturgical year – proper lessons for Sunday and holy days, proper psalms on certain days, a 30 year almanac to calculate the date of Easter, and holy days to be observed. Among the tables was one regularly included in later American bibles – a table of consanguinity and affinity, determining in which kinship relations marriage was forbidden.¹⁰

When John Reynolds presented to King James I the proposal for a new Bible translation at the Hampton Court Conference of 1604, the king was quite amenable – only if the bible was without notes. King James especially opposed the *Geneva Bible* favouring too much trayt

Geneva Bible was anti-monarchical. His objections began with the note on Exodus 1:19, which praised the Hebrew midwives for not killing the Hebrew babies, thus approving the disobedience to Kings and sovereign princes.¹¹

Though the bible printed in 1611 and dedicated to King James did troublesome notes, it did contain supplemental material. In addition to

the the 1611 bible included a calendar, an almanac with a table to find Easter, tables of psalms and lessons, with the days to be observed, names and orders of the books, a 36 page table of the genealogy of Scripture, a map of Canaan, and marginal notes. As the century progressed, later editions of what we now call the *King James Version* were printed with additional notes, marginal references, and tables. In perfect irony, several editions were even printed with notes from the Geneva Bible.¹²

¹⁰ *Editions of the Bible*, 304.

¹¹ P. Heylyn, *Aerius Redivivus. The History of the Presbyterians*, 2nd ed. (London, 1672) Book Six, p. 214, quoted in *Sixteenth Century Journal*, vol. 14, no.1 (Spring, 1983), 48-49.

¹² *Editions of the Bible*, 305-306; *The Minutes of the Report on Versions*. American Bible Society, 36th Report, 1852; *New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, vol. 2, 158-159, as accessed through the Christian Classics Ethereal Library, www.ccel.org.

Throughout the American colonial period, the printing of English bibles remained under the control of British printers. In 1776, American printers began printing bibles for the first time and included much of the additional material which had been included in bibles printed in England. This additional material was to aid the individual reading of the bible in five areas: basic Bible content, chronology and time of the Bible events, historical and geographical setting of the Bible, theological perspective, and practical application.

Much of the supplementary material was devoted to basic Bible content. A list of the names of the books of the Old and New Testaments with the number of chapters in each showed which books were accepted as canonical Scripture. Page headings, chapter summaries and paragraph notations helped the reader remember key ideas and search for particular passages.

the Old and New Testaments, *Matthew's Bible* in 1537, was first published in an American bible in 1823, almost three hundred years later, and continued to be included in bibles throughout the 19th century.¹³ The contents gave a brief title to each chapter in the Bible, enabling the reader to read through a summary of the entire Bible in eight pages or less, depending on the size of the bible.

throughout the following century, gave an account of the key passages of Scripture from Adam to Christ and the apostles. It also included historical background and specific dates of events. Many bibles

concordance was the one most often included in the 19th

and in many thereafter, is a real curiosity.¹⁴ This is a detailed analysis of words and letters in the bible, all calculated in the pre-computer age. In this table are included such tidbits as: t occurs 6,855 times; t 684 times in the New Testament; the middle verse of the bible is II Chron. 20:17; the New Testament contains 181,253 words and 838,380 letters. Who would have had the time or even bothered to count and calculate all these letters and words? An old newspaper clipping found between the pages of a bible in The Bible in America M the statistics were compiled by the Prince of Granada, heir to the Spanish throne, during his life imprisonment in the Palace of Skulls, Madrid. The Prince had only one book, the Bible, to read during his 33 years of solitary confinement in the prison. Upon his death, the statistics were found written on all the walls of his prison cell. Though an expert in Bible trivia, there is no

Old Testament quoted by Christ and his Apostles in the

¹⁵ This table went through the Old Testament book by book and listed every passage quoted and gave the New Testament passage where it was quoted. Baltimore printer John Hagerty in 1812 was the first American printer to include a

each of the books in the Bible, spiritual

import.

The most frequent supplement to aid an understanding of the B Scriptural references. In 1647 John Canne (c. 1590-d. 1667?), an English minister and later a Brownist

¹⁴ *The Holy Bible*. Philadelphia: Matthew Carey, 1801.

¹⁵ *The Holy Bible*. Philadelphia: Matthew Carey, 1803.

¹⁹ This table was prepared by John Witherspoon the President of Princeton. Witherspoon placed Matthew as the earliest book written, in 39 AD, and has John writing between 94-98AD. Though this feature was included in many later bibles, others often assigned different dates for the various books.

Closely related to additions related to chronology are those related to history and geography. , of that day and since, was that the Biblical writings were more mythical than historical. To counter such criticisms, 19th century American bibles included an increasing array of supplements enhancing an understanding of the historical and geographical setting for biblical events. Isaiah Thomas 1791 folio bible, and numerous bibles to follow, included a table relating to Roman and Jewish treatment of time. What was meant by the ninth hour? How did the Jewish month Nisan correspond to the American months? The table on time answered those questions.

The 1640 German Ernestine bible was the first to have a table of Scripture measure, weights and coins. Dr. Cumberland, bishop of Peterborough, created a comparable table used in many English and American bibles. The table showed the measures of length, surfaces, capacity, weights, and also showed how to refigure such measurements in English units. This table helped the reader determine the English equivalent of a cubit and an ephah. (Incidentally, Dr. Cumberland was a Cambridge Platonist who died at the age of 87, in 1719. If you have never heard of him before, you probably have heard of his most

Maps were included in many bibles. In the earliest bibles, maps were often quite decorative and stylistic. As the 19th century progressed, they became more scientific and accurate.²⁰ Many bibles also

¹⁹ *The Holy Bible*. Trenton, New Jersey: Isaac Collins, 1791.

²⁰ Paul Gutjahr. *An American Bible*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1999, 63-69.

American bibles. Often, when there was just one blank page at the end of a testament or bible, a printer included this supplement. The table listed the various titles of leaders and their functions, from patriarch to Persian Tirshatha, from religious sects such as the Herodians, to ecclesiastical leaders such as Apostles. Such tables helped the reader understand the Bible in its literal sense. These terms were the titles and positions of literal, historic people, not allegorical or mythical inventions.

Bibles sometimes included supplements on post-Biblical Christian history. Matthew Carey 1801 bible, and numerous the Apostles and their Successors, who founded and presided over the Five Grand Apostolical

Based largely on the writings of the church historian Eusebius, this catalogue gave the names of the leaders and years they served in the churches of Antioch, Rome, Jerusalem, Byzantium or Constantinople, and Alexandria, through the time of the Council of Nicea. One motive for including this material might have been to show that the Church at Rome was not considered the supreme church at that time. Opening with the church at Antioch, the catalogue records:

It is generally acknowledged by the Romish writers, that a church was founded here by St. Peter some considerable time before that at Rome; and partly because here it was that the venerable name of Christians first commenced. The fathers in the council at Constantinople style the church of Antioch, *The most ancient and truly apostolical*; and S. Chrysostom, *The head of the whole world*.²¹

offices, was the most frequent table in 19th century American bibles.

duties of husband and wife, noting that it was the joining not of hands but of hearts that constituted

ight. The last paragraph concluded:

In a word, be habitually loving and kind to one another. Have no separate secrets, nor allow yourselves any airs of mystery; but open your whole hearts to each other. Conceal , and cultivate habits of affability, forbearance, and good nature. Never be sullen, or in a pet with each other, especially in the presence

your hands, to lie by you as a neglected book; but daily to read it in and to your

Ostervald emphasized that the Bible should be read privately to better be understood when hearing it preached. The reason many had entirely false and impious notions was because people did not know the Scriptures. In discussing how the Bible was to be read for edification, Ostervald said it should be read with attention, without passion disordering the heart and with deliberation or unhurriedly. Reading the Bible frequently and diligently allowed for more meditation. The Bible was spiritual food and should be taken daily. In reading, keep in mind the designs of the writers and avoid perverting the texts of Scripture. For example, there are speeches of the wicked included in Scripture, but these are not to be followed. Consider what is useful for instruction. We are to be doers of the Word, not mere observers, so we must consider how the Scriptures can excite us to piety. must be obeyed more than personal passions or inclinations; it should be read with submission and obedience. Read Scripture prayerfully, with a love of truth and virtue.

Philip Doddridge, an English nonconformist who lived from 1702-1751

his works were the most popular of his time. He was a leading theologian and writer of hymns. He was a member of the Society of Friends and was instrumental in the founding of the Christian Society in Andover, Massachusetts. He was a strong advocate of the separation of church and state and was a leading voice in the American Revolution. He was a member of the Continental Congress and was instrumental in the drafting of the Declaration of Independence. He was a member of the Massachusetts General Court and was instrumental in the drafting of the Massachusetts Constitution. He was a member of the American Philosophical Society and was instrumental in the founding of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He was a member of the American Academy of Religion and was instrumental in the founding of the American Academy of Jewish Research. He was a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters and was instrumental in the founding of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He was a member of the American Academy of Religion and was instrumental in the founding of the American Academy of Jewish Research. He was a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters and was instrumental in the founding of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

In some modern Testaments and Bibles the commentaries, annotation, even translation (many of them paraphrase) are often directed in slant. They will be bought, the publishers hope, for personal, even solipsistic, reasons. There are Bibles and testaments for the various stages of marriage and break-up, for the first year of divorce, for older women, for those suffering business failure, for those in therapy, for everyone looking for a quick fix of Personal Truth. Niche marketing must surely be a slippery slope.

meant interpretation for oneself, not interpretation of oneself.³⁵

ew York in 1792, with-11004840

% U R Z Q ~~Interpreting~~ Bible

illustrations of the 1896 and last edition, which continued to be published until 1908, no longer included such questionable illustration

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he scriptural

text above. These notes, focusing primarily on translation issues, grammar or historical background, were primarily to make the text more understandable. The notes for each section were followed by cripture to the heart. Throughout his work Brown emphasized that the

folio pages, discussed in some depth the divine authority of Scripture, the rules for understanding Scripture, and the relationship of Christianity to the Jewish laws. In addition, he gave an overview of the geography and history of nations, including a history of the church from its earliest days, through the middle ages and Reformation. He assured his readers that the Turks and the anti-Christ, the chief opponents of Christianity, will finally be extirpated and the millennium be ushered in, either in 1866 or 2016. He thus outlined a sweeping view of history which included his own day and beyond.

In his treatment of the divine authority of Scripture, Brown simply presented the history of the Scriptures and the evidences for their truthfulness, using arguments similar to arguments we have seen in earlier supplementary material. Brown also carefully elaborated on how the reader should read and understand Scripture. Reading the Bible was not simply an intellectual exercise but a spiritual one. The reader should begin with prayer that the Holy Spirit would apply the Scripture to his heart. The Scriptures should be searched earnestly with self-

sense of our ignorance, and of our absolute need of Scripture influence, must animate us to the earnest study of knowledge. He, who thinks that of himself he knows divine things to any purpose Knoweth nothing as he ought to know only with the lowly is wisdom.

end of any bible study. It is the keeping of commandments, not simply the reading of them, that is important.

Readers should proceed from the simplest to the more difficult, from the historical Old Testament to the more doctrinal New Testament. Each Scripture must be understood within the scope of the book within which it lies, whether it is history, poetry, or prophecy. Each Scripture must also be understood within the general plan of the revealed truth; an overview of the main outlines of histories, doctrines, and prophecies was important. Brown encouraged the reader not just to consider the abstract

meaning of a text, but how the spirit of God intended it in a particular connection. For example, the glory of redeeming grace can best be understood in connection with a
acting against God. How words were joined together would help the reader understand these connections; notice words like and, then, therefore, because, in to, and rough. Finally, Christ Jesus was the end and subject of all Scripture, and the reader should look for Him there.

includes the revision completed by Revs. Cooke and Porter, two Irish Presbyterians, as well as several Americans, including C.P. Krauth, an Evangelical Lutheran; Rev. C.M. Butler, an Episcopalian and chaplain of the U.S. Senate; and Rev. Alfred Nevin, a Presbyterian. As were the bibles of Ostervald, Doddridge, and Scott, this was a bible not marked by denominational peculiarities, but acceptable to the broader Protestant evangelical faith dominant in 19th century American.

Family Bible was the most popular of the annotated bibles in the 19th century. Thomas commentary was much more popular in 19th century America than was Matthew Thomas Scott, who lived from 1747-1821, was a Unitarian priest who converted to Trinitarian faith through the influence of John Newton and the study of the Scriptures themselves. This conversion led to the publication of his first book, *The Force of Truth* in 1779, describing his conversion, itself an argument against Unitarianism. Scott in turn was influential in the conversion of William Cowper, the poet and fellow-hymnwriter with Newton. Scott was often cited as especially able to counter the Unitarian arguments of the day. His *The Holy Bible with Notes*, first published in 174 weekly numbers between 1788 and 1792, was long considered the model Family Bible. The first American edition was published in 1804. Between 1808-1819, 25, 250 copies were sold in the United States, and the commentary continued to be printed in its own right into

In American homes it stood right up there with the classics. When Harriet Beecher Stowe

described a New England home in her novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, she wrote of the respectable old book

³⁹ Even Thomas Jefferson had a set of
original gift to the

Library. However, i
had no effect on him.⁴⁰

Building upon Doddridge and Brown, Scott believed the Scripture was its own best interpreter.
He did not want to press Scripture into some pre-
include the many tables and charts found in many family bible
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In his arguments for the divine inspiration of Scripture, Scott had four emphases not found in earlier bibles. For

conscience and improve the heart; to promote comfort and truthfulness of the true Christian; and to assist the young student of divinity.

They were usually quartos, sometimes folios, which were designed to be used in daily family worship. Heirs of the Reformation recognized that the family, along with the church and the state, was the key foundation institution of society. As historian Edmund Morgan wrote in his work *The Puritan Family* family failed to teach its members properly, neither the state nor the church could be expected to

⁴² The family was a little church, with the father as its bishop. Every morning and evening the father was expected to lead in family worship; religion was not just a Sunday affair. In the 19th century, numerous books were written to encourage Family Worship, and a general pattern developed in many Protestant families of reading the Old Testament together in the morning and chapters from the New Testament at night. Annotated bibles were especially designed with such family worship in mind.

During the second half of the nineteenth century, American bibles continued to borrow from those produced in England. The

century, along with more accurate and less imaginative illustrations of places and artifacts than those in bibles published earlier in the century.

By the end of the 19th century, Family Bibles had become huge affairs, some weighing fifteen pounds or more. Some had elaborately carved covers with huge metal clasps, as if they were locking a treasure for security. They included much of the supplementary material we have already reviewed and more, including Bible dictionaries, again authored by British scholars. Family bibles were prominently displayed in the parlor. While in our 21st century homes we are concerned about where to build the Entertainment Center, at the end of the 19th century, decorative art books included patterns for tables and lecterns on which to place the Family Bible.⁴³

While the supplementary material in 19th century American bibles was overwhelmingly written by British or European scholars, there are a few distinctively American contributions which need to be noticed. *The Collateral Bible*, printed in 1826, was a three volume work that printed the complete texts of Scriptural references following each verse of Scriptural text. In this way, one could read the Bible and read the cross-referenced Scriptures without having to leaf through to find the various passages of Scripture. For example, Genesi

Eph. v. 14. Wherefore he saith, Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.

Without human commentary, simply by quoting Scripture itself, several themes from Genesis 1:3 are presented:

word has the same power as
bringing healing and even restoring life itself
ors the new

the language, removing
wrote the text across the page in paragraphs, rather than in the traditional
two columns. Campbell included many of the tables included in earlier bibles published in America that
helped explain the customs, history, and geography of the Bible. Campbell himself wrote 47 pages of
understood by the first readers, in a day when current denominational and doctrinal squabbles were not
present. Scripture must be understood by itself, without comment or tradition.⁴⁵

In The Bible in America Museum Collection, an 1832 edition of Campbell's testament is most
interesting because of notes and comments written in it

of paper sewn in later in the bible said Campbell left the Baptists in
Pennsylvania to escape being accused of heresy. He then united with Rigdon and Bennet, who went on
to bec

Introduction and 100 pages above Appendix and addenda 160 pages of comment in print besides a
monthly pamphlet and constant teaching and talk of no comment! What unblushin

The Protestant consensus of 19th century America was that the Bible was essential to a true
education, and several Americans published bibles especially for the use in schools. Time will not
permit a detailed discussion of the various educational settings of common schools, Sabbath schools, or
urban schools in which the Bible was used, but a brief look at the bibles themselves is useful. Hervey
Wilbur (1787-1852), a Congregational minister in Massachusetts, was a pioneer in establishing Bible
classes and probably the first in the country to compile and publish a Bible-class textbook. In 1828 he

⁴⁵ *Bible in English*, 648

published his *Reference Bible*. Supplemental materials covered chronological, historical, geographical, as well as doctrinal topics:

With References and a Key Sheet of Questions, Geographical, Historical Doctrinal, Practical, and Experimental; Accompanied with Valuable Chronological Harmonies of both Testaments; correct and elegant Maps, and highly useful Tables of Scripture Names, Scripture Geography, Scripture Chronology, Scripture References, &c. whole designed to Facilitate the Acquisition of Scriptural Knowledge In Bible Classes, Sunday schools, and Private Families.⁴⁶

lettered

questions. This was a sheet that unfolded at the back of the bible and could be left open and referred to as the bible was read. Each bible verse was marked with a small letter which corresponded to one of the questions on the sheet. As the student read the bible, the corresponding questions for each verse prompted him to think more carefully about what he was reading, much like inductive Bible studies today. Some questions Wilbur included were the following:

- What ANALOGIES between sensible and spiritual things may here be traced?
- What PROPHECY is here accomplished? Where is it found? How many years had it been written?
- What trait of moral CHARACTER is here given? Is it morally good or evil? Does it belong to a natural, or to a renewed state? What advantages attended it?
- What EVANGELICAL EXPERIENCE or what EXHORTATION is here given?
- What GEOGRAPHICAL information is known of this country, province, city, or river, etc.?
- What doctrinal TRUTH is here inculcated? Is it directly or indirectly taught? How illustrated?

Reference Bible, as with much of the supplemental material in

Ultimately the goal in Bible reading, and the supplements beyond the Scripture or the Bible sacred pages, was a closer relationship with the God of the Bible, with the Living Word. The 19th