

BIBLE 101

The Bible can feel intimidating when you're new to it. What's a chapter? What's a verse? Why are there numbers everywhere? And how are you supposed to find Matthew 24:6 when you've never navigated a Bible before? Here's what you need to know.

CHAPTERS & VERSES

The biblical authors did not originally write with chapter and verse numbers. These were added later to make Scripture easier to navigate.

Chapters divide a book into larger sections; verses divide the text into smaller sections.

Chapter and verse numbers help you find a passage, but they aren't necessarily the natural divisions of the text. Read the surrounding verses for context!

THE ANATOMY OF A REFERENCE

A Bible reference tells you where to find a passage:

Matthew 24:6-8

BOOK	CHAPTER	VERSES

WHY DO CATHOLIC BIBLES HAVE MORE BOOKS?

The Catholic Bible contains 73 books, while most Protestant Bibles contain 66. Catholic Bibles include seven additional Old Testament books—**Tobit, Judith, 1 and 2 Maccabees, Wisdom, Sirach, and Baruch**—as well as **additional passages in Esther and Daniel**. These are called the Deuterocanonical books. The difference comes from the different scriptural traditions inherited by Catholics and Protestants. The early Church widely used the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Jewish Scriptures that included these books. The Catholic Church formally affirmed this 73-book canon at the Council of Trent in 1546.

TRANSLATIONS & VERSIONS

A translation renders the biblical text from its original languages—primarily Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek—into another language. Catholic Bibles come in several approved translations, such as the NABRE, NRSV-CE, and RSV-2CE. Each makes different choices about wording and style while translating the same biblical texts. “Version” is often used simply to refer to a particular translation or edition. Different translations are not different Scriptures—they are different ways of rendering the biblical text in English.

HOW DO ABBREVIATIONS WORK?

Bible books are often abbreviated in study materials:

Gn — Genesis	1 M — 1 Maccabees	Ob — Obadiah	Ep — Ephesians
Ex — Exodus	2 M — 2 Maccabees	Jon — Jonah	Ph — Philippians
Lv — Leviticus	Jb — Job	Mi — Micah	Co — Colossians
Nm — Numbers	Ps — Psalms	Na — Nahum	1 Th — 1 Thessalonians
Dt — Deuteronomy	Pr — Proverbs	Hb — Habakkuk	2 Th — 2 Thessalonians
Jo — Joshua	Ec — Ecclesiastes	Zp — Zephaniah	1 Tm — 1 Timothy
Jg — Judges	Sg — Song of Songs	Hg — Haggai	2 Tm — 2 Timothy
Ru — Ruth	Ws — Wisdom	Zc — Zechariah	Tt — Titus
1 S — 1 Samuel	Si — Sirach	Ml — Malachi	Phm — Philemon
2 S — 2 Samuel	Is — Isaiah	Mt — Matthew	Heb — Hebrews
1 K — 1 Kings	Jr — Jeremiah	Mk — Mark	Jm — James
2 K — 2 Kings	Lm — Lamentations	Lk — Luke	1 Pt — 1 Peter
1 Ch — 1 Chronicles	Ba — Baruch	Jn — John	2 Pt — 2 Peter
2 Ch — 2 Chronicles	Ezk — Ezekiel	Ac — Acts	1 Jn — 1 John
Ez — Ezra	Dn — Daniel	Rm — Romans	2 Jn — 2 John
Ne — Nehemiah	Ho — Hosea	1 C — 1 Corinthians	3 Jn — 3 John
Tb — Tobit	Jl — Joel	2 C — 2 Corinthians	Jd — Jude
Jt — Judith	Am — Amos	Ga — Galatians	Rv — Revelation
Es — Esther			



LOOKING FOR A BIBLE ON YOUR PHONE?

If a reflection question says: **MT 24:6**, just type **MT 24 6** into your Bible app or search bar.

WHAT ARE CROSS-REFERENCES?

Cross-references point you to another passage of Scripture that may be related.

Think: “Look over here, too.”

WHAT ARE THE HEADINGS?

Headings such as “The Wedding at Cana” or “Jesus Calms the Storm” are not part of the biblical text. They are editorial additions that help readers navigate.

WHAT ARE FOOTNOTES?

Footnotes give additional information about the passage—such as an alternate translation, word meaning, manuscript difference, or historical background.

WANT TO GO DEEPER?

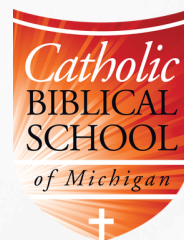
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