

**The Concise Bible
Christian Community Bible
Catholic Pastoral Edition**

**OLD
TESTAMENT**

INTRODUCTION

Oftentimes the Bible becomes a book too bulky and we even find some of its narratives uninteresting. This CONCISE BIBLE presents a collection of the most important moments of the Bible, with concise introductions and notes for better understanding and easy reading.

What we call “The Bible” is a complete library, gathering 74 books, with all imaginable styles: poetry, fiction, novels, laws, history, moral treatises, theological reflections... a bit of everything. These books were written in the course of many centuries. The oldest fragment possibly dates from 1800 before Christ. The most recent book is from 95-100 after Christ.

Along this path, the styles, traditions, literary modes, even religion and the idea of God, keep changing. Israel begins with a very primitive, very tribal faith, and little by little grows in the understanding of God... until we arrive at Jesus, in whom the Plenitude of Revelation dwells.

All along these centuries, the people are sometimes faithful to the Lord, but sometimes they are not. The Bible does not hide the sins, the abuses, the deviations of Israel. Precisely because of this, we can read “the chronicle about the discovery of God, the chronicle about sin and forgiveness throughout History.”

In a book with so many different topics, its “truth” depends also in its genre. What is the truth of poetry? What is the truth of a novel? All these genres are present in the Bible: every passage has to be understood in its own genre.

We are used to reading the Bible as Word of God, and rightly so. But this does not mean that every sentence is a definitive and untouchable Word. We know how Jesus himself completed and even changed the Old Testament. Therefore, each text has its “own truth,” frequently provisional, as a discovery that is better than the previous one but worse than the future. That is how we can understand things of the Old Testament that today appear wrong: these are steps in the long ladder that bring us to the summit: Jesus. And sometimes the steps are very far from the summit.

To select the text of the different books of the Bible for the compilation of this CONCISE BIBLE, we have chosen passages from some books, paying attention to particular chapters, and within the chapters to some concrete verses or versicles (the small number preceding the sentence). It is not our purpose to hide anything, since the Christian Community Bible upon which this selection is based, can be consulted at any time. The purpose is to summarize or, rather, adapt a book, the Bible that is extremely long and that many people, children, youth, women and men, do not dare to read because it is too long.

We have kept the paragraphs of the chosen texts with their own numbering in chapters and versicles, giving the impression that some text is lacking. That is not so. Through the continuous reading of the text the reader still finds its complete meaning and it is perfectly well adjusted to the intention that has guided us in the preparation of this CONCISE BIBLE.