

128850 - Is It Prohibited to Read the Bible?

the question

Is it permissible for me, as a Muslim, to read the Gospel out of curiosity, and not for any other purpose? Does believing in the divinely-revealed books mean believing that they are from Allah, or believing in what it says in them?

Summary of answer

It is permissible for a scholar who has insight to read the Torah, Gospel and Zabur in order to refute Jewish and Christian opponents of Islam. Ordinary Muslims have no right to do that; rather if they have anything of the Torah or Gospel or Zabur, they must bury it in a clean place or burn it so that no one will be misguided by it

Detailed answer

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Belief in Divinely-revealed Books

Shaykh `Abd Al-`Aziz ibn Baz (may Allah have mercy on him) said.

“Every Muslim is required to believe in the [Torah, Gospel and Zabur](#) , and that they came from Allah. So he must believe that [Allah sent down the Books to the Prophets](#) , and that He sent to them scriptures that contained commands and prohibitions, exhortation and reminders, and spoke of matters of the past, of Paradise and Hell, and so on. But he should not follow them, because they have been affected by distortion, alterations and changes.

So he should not keep copies of the Torah, Gospel or Zabur, or read them , because this is dangerous, for he may end up disbelieving in something that is true or believing something that is false, because these books have been distorted and changed.

The Jews, Christians and others have altered them , distorted them and changed the order of material in these books. We have no need of them because of what Allah has given us of our own book, the Glorious Quran.

It was narrated from the Messenger (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) that he saw part of the Torah in the hand of `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him); he became angry and said: “Are you in doubt, O son of Al-Khattab? I have brought to you a message that is bright and pure, and if Musa were alive he would have no choice but to follow me.”

Is it prohibited to read the Bible?

The point is that we advise you and others not to take anything from either the Torah or the Zabur or the Gospel, and not to keep any of these books. Rather if you have any of these things, then you should bury it or burn it, [for the changes and alterations that have been introduced to them are evil and false](#) . What is required of the believer is to avoid that and to beware of looking at it, for perhaps he may end up believing something that is false or disbelieving something that is true. The way to be safe from that is either to bury it or burn it.

[It is permissible for a scholar who has insight to read it](#) in order to refute Jewish and Christian opponents of Islam, as the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) called for the Torah when the Jews denied the punishment of stoning, so that he (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) could have it checked, after which they admitted [that the punishment of stoning is mentioned in the Torah].

The point is that the scholars who are well versed in Islamic teachings may need to look at the Torah or Gospel or Zabur for Islamic purposes, such as refuting the enemies of Allah, or to highlight the virtue of the Quran and what it contains of truth and guidance.

As for ordinary Muslims, they have no right to do that; rather if they have anything of the Torah or Gospel or Zabur, they must bury it in a clean place or burn it so that no one will be misguided by it.” (Fatawa Nur `ala Ad-Darb, 1/9-10)

And Allah knows best.