

HOW TO... LOOK STUFF UP IN THE BIBLE

LET'S SAY you want to look up verses 1 and 2 and and 11 in the 50th psalm of the Book of Psalms. Here's the citation:

Psalm 50:1-2, 11

1. FIND THE BOOK.

You can find the page number of your book by looking in your Bible's table of contents, or the chart in the back. The name of each book appears at the top of each page.



2. FIND THE CHAPTER.

It's the first number in the citation, and the big number on the page.



3. FIND THE VERSES.

Those are the last numbers in the citation and the tiny numbers on the page. Here, you would read all of verse 1 and all of verse 2, then you would skip down and read all of verse 11.



Psalm 50 876

where the darkness lasts forever.

20 Our greatness cannot keep us from death; we will still die like the animals.

True Worship

50 **1** The Almighty God, the LORD, speaks; he calls to the whole earth from east to west.

2 God shines from Zion, the city perfect in its beauty.

3 Our God is coming, but not in silence;

and the cattle on the hills.

11 All the wild birds are and all living things in the fields.

12 "If I were hungry, I would not ask you for food, for the world and all that is in it is mine.

13 Do I eat the flesh of or drink the blood

14 Let the giving of thanksgiving be your sacrifice to God, and give the Almighty what you promised.

15 Call to me when trouble

4. READ THE FOOTNOTES.

Wherever you see an asterisk, you can look down at the bottom of the page for a note that will explain the passage.

HOW TO...

DO LECTIO DIVINA (SACRED READING)

LECTIO DIVINA or “sacred reading” is an ancient method of praying with sacred texts that dates to the fourth century. Usually the text comes from the Scriptures, but other texts may be used as well, such as the writings of the saints. The basic idea is to read the text slowly and prayerfully, listening for what God might have to say to you, almost as if the sacred text were a much-cherished love letter from God.

Lectio divina takes many forms, but traditionally it is divided into four steps: *lectio* (reading), *meditatio* (meditation), *oratio* (prayer), and *contemplatio* (contemplation). You might spend five minutes on reading, five on meditation, five on prayer, and five on contemplation. Here is what to do during each step.

1. READING. First, select a short reading—the shorter, the better: a paragraph or two, or even a sentence or two. Traditionally, the text is taken from the Scriptures or the writings of the saints. You might use the Scripture reading for the day, or a quotation from the saint or blessed of the day. Read the text slowly and carefully two or three times, allowing a brief pause between readings.

2. MEDITATION. Reflect on the meaning of the passage. What words or images stood out for you? Why? What

does the reading mean to you? Does it say anything important about your life right now? If you are doing *lectio* with others, spend just a few minutes sharing.

3. PRAYER. Use your insights from the meditation step as a starting point for your prayerful response to God’s word. This can be done silently (if you are alone) or out loud (in a group). During the prayer step, you might offer thanksgiving to God for what he is saying to you in the text. Or, if you found the text difficult, you might ask God for help understanding. If the God’s word for you was challenging or hard to accept, you might ask him for humility, strength, and the ability to trust his loving care for you.

4. CONTEMPLATION. The fourth step of *lectio divina* is sometimes called “resting in the Word of God.” Be very still and quiet, and pay attention to God’s presence with you. God may speak to you in a particular way, or may just be with you in silence.

5. WRAPPING UP. End with a blessing, a formal prayer (like the Glory Be or the Sign of the Cross), or a song.