

We Need a Guide to the Bible

ST. JEROME, 341? —420

The great Bible scholar-saint Jerome advises us that to interpret Scripture correctly, we must have a guide:

In the Apocalypse a book is shown sealed with seven seals, which if you hand to an educated person saying, "Read this," he will answer, "I can't because it's sealed." Today many people claim to be educated, yet Scriptures are a sealed book to them, one which they cannot open except through him who has the key of David, "he that opens and no one shuts; and shuts and no one opens" (see Rv 3:7).

In the Acts of the Apostles, Philip asked the holy eunuch who was reading Isaiah, "Do you understand what you are reading?" He answered: "How could I, unless I have someone to guide me?" (Ac 8:30-31). Yet although he had the book in his hand and took the words of the Lord into his mind, and even had them on his tongue and pronounced them with his lips, he still did not know the one he unknowingly worshiped in the book. Then Philip came and showed him Jesus, who was concealed beneath the letter. What a wonderful teacher! In the same hour the eunuch both believed and was baptized. He became one of the faithful and a saint. He was no longer a pupil, but a master.

I have touched on this instance to convince you that you can make no progress in the holy Scriptures unless you have a guide to show you the way.

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