

The following poems about the Bible were found between the leaves of Bibles in the Dunham Bible Museum's collection. Some were handwritten in blank spaces; others were from newspaper clippings.

Poem from Graham's Magazine pasted inside the front cover of an 1838 Bible:

My Mother's Bible

By George P. Morris

This book is all that is left me now! –
Tears will unbidden start –
With faltering lip, and throbbing brow,
I press it to my heart.
For many generations passed,
Here is our family tree;
My mother's hands this Bible clasped =
She dying gave it me.

Ah! Well do I remember those
Whose names these records bear:
Who round the hearth-stone used to close,
After the evening prayer,
And speak of what these pages said,
In tears my heart would thrill! –
Though they are with the silent dead,
Here are they living still!

My father read this holy book
To brothers, sisters dear –
How calm was my poor bother's look,
Who learned God's word to hear.
Her angel face – I see it yet!
What thronging memories come!
Again that little group is met
Within the halls of home!

Thou truest friend, man ever knew,
Thy constancy I've tried;
When all were false, I found thee true.
My counselors and guide.
The mines of earth no treasures give,
That could this volume buy;
In teaching me the way to live,
It taught me how to die.

Pasted inside the front cover of an 1839 Bible:

On Making a Present of a Bible

Accept this book – not trivial deem
This simple token of esteem;
Although no dazzling show is here
Its ungilt pages should appear
Glittering with what our Savior told,
Which shines with tints more rich than gold;
And long when gold has ceased to shine,
These words will show the power divine.

Within this book a rule is given
To guide your soul to rest in heaven.
'Twill smooth life's thorny, rugged road,
And guide you safe to rest with God.

From a newspaper clipping inside an 1828 Bible:

Bible

Bible!—Blessed Bible!
Treasure of the heart!
What sweet consolation
Doth thy page impart:
In the fiercest trial,
In the deepest grief,
Strength and hope and comfort
In each holy leaf!

Bible—let me clasp thee—
Anchor of the soul!
When the storm is raging,
When the waters roll,
When the frowning heavens
Darken every star,
And no hopeful beacon
Glimmereth afar,
Be my refuge, Bible!
Then be thou my stay,
Guide me on life's billow—
Light the dreary way.
Tell me of the morrow,

When a sun shall rise,
That shall glow forever
In unclouded skies;
Tell me of that haven
In the climes above,
Where the bark rides safely
In a sea of love.

Bible—let me clasp thee!
Chronicle divine,
Of a world's redemption,
Of a Saviour, mine!
Wisdom for the simple,
Riches for the poor,
Hope for the desponding,
For the sick, a cure.
Rest for all the weary,
Ransom for the slave,
Courage for the fearful—
Life beyond the grave!

Bible—Blessed Bible!
Treasure of the heart,
What sweet consolation
Doth thy page impart;
In the fiercest trial,
In the deepest grief,
Strength and hope and comfort
In each holy leaf!

This Family Bible from 1822 had numerous poems and sayings written in it:

The Bible

Thou truest friend man ever knew,
Thy constancy I've tried,
When all were false I've found thee true,
My counselor and guide

Another:

This is a precious book indeed!
Happy the child that loves to read!
'Tis God's own word which he has given,
To show our souls the way to Heaven.

It bids us all from sin to fly.
Because our souls can never die;
It points where angels dwell
And warns us to escape from Hell.

But what is more than all beside,
The Bible tells us Jesus died.
This is the best its chief intent
To led poor sinners to repent.

Another:

The Bible

It is the light of my understanding, the joy of my hope, the fullness of my heart, the clarifier of my affections, the mirror of my thoughts, the consoler of my sorrows, the guide of my soul through this gloomy labyrinth of time, the telescope sent from heaven to reveal to the eye of man the amazing glories of the far distant world. Every promise invites me to heaven, every precept commands, every exhortation urges thither – every warning alarms against the danger of its eternal loss.

Another:

The Precious Bible

This holy books I'd rather own,
Than all the gold and gems
That e'er in monarch's cover shone
Thank all their diadems.

Nay, were the seas one chrysolite
The earth one golden ball
And diamonds all the stars of night
This book were worth them all.

O no! the soul ne'er found relief
In glittering hoards of wealth.
Gems dazzle not the eye of grief,
Gold cannot purchase health.

But hear a blessed balm appears
To heal the deepest woe,
And those who read this book in tears
Their tears shall cease to flow.

From a newspaper clipping in an 1809 Bible:

The Family Bible

How painfully pleasing the fond recollection
Of youthful emotions and innocent joy,
When blest with parental advice and affection,
Surrounded with mercies, with peace from on high,
I still view the chair of my sire and my mother,
The seats of their offspring as ranged on each hand,
And that richest book which excels every other,
That family Bible which lay on the stand:
The old fashioned Bible, the dear blest Bible,
The family Bible, that lay on the stand.

That Bible, the volume of God's inspiration,
At morn and at evening would yield us delight,
The prayer of our sire was a sweet invocation,
For mercy by day and safety through night.
Our hymns of thanksgiving with harmony swelling,
All warm from the heart of a family band,
Half raised us from earth to that rapturous dwelling,
Described in the Bible that lay on the stand:
The old fashioned Bible, the dear blest Bible,
The family Bible, that lay on the stand.

Ye scenes of tranquility, long have we parted,
My hopes almost gone, and my parents no more;
In sorrow and sadness I love broken hearted,
And wander unknown on a far distant shore;
Yet how can I doubt a dear Saviour's protection,
Forgetful of gifts from his bountiful hand;
Oh! Let me with patience receive his correction,
And think of the Bible that lay on the stand:
The old fashioned Bible, the dear blest Bible,
The family Bible, that lay on the stand.

Pasted inside the cover of a 19th century Bible:

How Readest Thou?

Luke 10:26

'Tis one thing friend to read the Bible through,
Another thing to read to learn and do
'Tis one thing too to read it with delight
And quite another thing to read it right.

Some read it with design to learn to read,
But to the subject pay but little heed;
Some read it as their duty once a week,
But no instruction from the Bible seek.

Some read to bring themselves into repute,
By showing others how they can dispute;
Whilst others read it with uncommon care
Better to find some contradictions there.

One reads with father's specs upon his head,
And sees the things just as his father did;
Another reads through Campbell or through Scott.
And thinks it means exactly what *they* thought.

Some read to prove a pre-adopted creed,
They understand but little what they read:
And every passage of the book they bend
To make it suit that all important end.
Some people read, as I have often thought,
To teach the book instead of being taught.