

## Unit 1 Reading Guide Answer Key

# God's Original Revelation

## Chapter 1: God's Original Plan

### Article 1: The Divine Architect and His Plans

1. Both of the Creation accounts are true. Each one expresses the religious or spiritual truths that God wanted to convey for the sake of our salvation.
2. This belief that all of creation is good is an essential part of our faith because it guides our interaction with other human beings and all of creation.
3. Because everything he creates is good, we can conclude that God is also good.
4. The union of Adam and Eve with God prefigures the People of God called together to be the Church.
5. A particular good is something that shares in the goodness of God, but ultimately leaves us unsatisfied (like food, entertainment, and so on).
6. The ultimate good is the source of our complete fulfillment, found only in our union with God.

### Article 2: The Bible or Science—Which One Is Right?

1. It is important to note that science deals strictly with objectively measurable phenomena.
2. The most important truths revealed in the Bible are not scientific truths but religious truths.
3. The fundamentalist approach ignores the literary forms used by the Bible's human authors and the historical settings in which the writings were developed.
4. The contextualist approach takes into account various contexts in order to understand the truth God is revealing.
5. These contexts include the literary forms used, the historical situation at the time, the human authors' cultural beliefs and practices, and a number of other things.

### Article 3: Right People, Wrong Turn

1. Genesis depicts Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden in a state of original holiness and original justice.
2. The account symbolically expresses several important truths: Sin is a free choice that destroys the harmony and union humans have with one another and God.
3. Adam and Eve hid from God after their disobedience because of their shame and fear of judgment.
4. Forty is a number indicating a period of testing, trials, or purification.
5. A covenant is a solemn agreement between human beings or between God and humans in which mutual commitments are recognized.
6. Covenants are a way that God expresses his desire to be in communion with his people.



## Article 4: Sin's Ripple Effect

1. The consequences of sin are quite natural: a loss of unity, harmony, and justice.
2. All human beings have inherited this tendency toward sin, which is called concupiscence.
3. Salvation history is the pattern of specific events in human history through which God clearly reveals his presence and saving actions.
4. The Bible communicates salvation history, particularly how God never gives up on his people.

## Chapter 2: God's Revelation

### Article 5: Natural Revelation: Finding the Artist in the Art

1. By observing the universe we can learn something about God.
2. Our soul is what reflects the image of God.
3. Natural revelation is the process by which God makes himself known to human reason through the created world.

### Article 6: Logic: It Just Makes Sense

1. These theologians were called scholastics, and they used philosophy to better understand revealed truth.
2. Grounded in Sacred Scripture and the Church Fathers, scholastic theology employed the use of logic to argue for the existence of God.
3. Saint Thomas Aquinas provides his “five ways” or proofs of the existence of God.
4. These “proofs” should be understood as “converging and convincing arguments” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, number 31) that lead us toward the truth of the existence of God.
5. We are still only human and, because of Original Sin, we often do not use our reason honestly or effectively.

### Article 7: Divine Revelation: The Word from On High

1. Divine Revelation is God's self-communication through which he makes known the mystery of his divine plan.
2. God established a covenant with his Chosen People and gave them his Law. God's Law is summarized in the Ten Commandments.
3. The prophets were chosen by God to speak his message of salvation.
4. In Jesus Christ, God is most fully revealed.
5. This is a very brief summary of salvation history, the pattern of events recorded in the Bible, through which God clearly reveals his presence and saving actions.



## Article 8: Inspiration: From God's Mouth to Our Hearts

1. Divine Inspiration is the divine assistance the Holy Spirit gave the human authors of the books of the Bible so they could communicate through human words God's message of salvation.
2. With this assistance, the human authors of the Bible were able to teach "that truth which God wanted put into sacred writings for the sake of salvation" (*Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation*, number 11).
3. This does not mean that the Holy Spirit dictated the Bible word for word. Instead, God's truth was expressed using the human authors' skills and creativity.
4. Because it is God's Word being conveyed, God is the true author of Sacred Scripture.
5. To properly grasp what the human authors were trying to communicate, we "must take into account the conditions of their time and culture, the literary genres in use at that time, and their modes of feeling, speaking, and narrating" (CCC, number 110).

## Chapter 3: Overview of the Bible

### Article 9: From Word to Text

1. The handing on of the message of God's saving plan through words is called oral tradition.
2. A crisis that occurred in the sixth century BC, when many of the Jewish People were captured and taken from the Promised Land to slavery in Babylon, was called the Babylonian Exile.
3. The third stage, called the written tradition, is the synthesis in written form of the message of salvation that was passed down in the oral tradition.
4. Scholars today believe that many of the books of the Old Testament were written during this time (the Babylonian Exile).

### Article 10: When Did It Happen? When Was It Written?

1. Sometimes there was a long period between the actual events in the Bible and when the final writing occurred.
2. At some point, guided by the Holy Spirit, human authors expressed how God acted in the lives of their ancestors who lived years, decades, or sometimes even centuries beforehand.
3. The Bible tends to bounce around in time, going backward and forward, and sometimes events found in one book are repeated in another book.
4. It is always helpful to learn about the time period in which the events most likely occurred, as well as the date the book was probably written.
5. Ultimately, all of these details help us to better understand what God is revealing through the words of the human authors of the Bible.



## Article 11: Not One Book, but Many

1. The word *bible* comes from the Latin term *biblia*, which means “books.”
2. The Old Testament in a Catholic Bible contains forty-six books. The New Testament contains a total of twenty-seven books.
3. Taken together, the seventy-three books of the Bible make up the canon of Sacred Scripture.
4. To be considered inspired by the Holy Spirit and included in the canon, each book had to meet these four criteria: apostolic origin, universal acceptance, liturgical use, and consistency.

## Article 12: Bible Translations

1. The Bible was originally written in three different languages: Hebrew, Greek, and Aramaic.
2. Saint Jerome completed one of the earliest translations of the Bible. Called the Latin Vulgate, the Church used this translation of the Bible for over a thousand years.
3. There are four Catholic English translations that are used most often today: The New American Bible, Revised Edition (NABRE); the New Revised Standard Version, Catholic Edition (NRSV); the New Jerusalem Bible (NJB); and the Good News Translation in Today's English Version, Second Edition (GNT).

## Article 13: The Old Prepares Us for the New

1. Almost two-thirds of Sacred Scripture is the Old Testament.
2. We call the Old Testament “Old” because it reveals God’s covenants and saving actions prior to the coming of Jesus Christ.
3. The writings of the Old Testament were sacred to Jesus. In fact, he would often quote from the Old Testament in his teachings and used these Scriptures in his prayer.

## Article 14: The New Fulfills the Old

1. By becoming flesh in the person of Jesus Christ, God established a New Covenant that fulfilled and perfected the Old Covenant.
2. Jesus’ followers were well versed in Old Testament writings and began making the connections between the prophecies of the Old Testament and things they had witnessed.
3. The Gospels are considered “the heart of all the Scriptures because they are our principal source for the life and teachings of the Incarnate Word, our Savior”<sup>1</sup> (CCC, number 125).



## Chapter 4: Interpreting the Bible

### Article 15: Reliable Guides: The Magisterium and the Holy Spirit

1. The Magisterium is the Church's living teaching office. It consists of all the bishops in the world, in communion with the Pope, the bishop of Rome.
2. God has given the Magisterium the responsibility and the gifts required to interpret Sacred Scripture correctly. The Magisterium acts under the guidance of the Holy Spirit to faithfully teach the message that God revealed to the original Apostles.
3. "Inspired by the Holy Spirit" (*"Divino Afflante Spiritu,"* 1943) calls for new translations of the Bible into modern languages.
4. The *Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation* (*Dei Verbum*, 1965) encourages scholars to recognize the different genres or types of biblical literature. The Council also supports studying the cultures in which the various books of the Bible were written.
5. In the document *Interpretation of the Bible in the Church* (1993), the Church offers more specific directions and guidelines for interpreting the Bible.

### Article 16: Exegesis: What Does It Mean?

1. Biblical exegesis is the critical interpretation and explanation of Sacred Scripture.
2. To understand what the human author (of the Bible) was trying to say, the document (*Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation*) goes on to say that we should pay particular attention to the following: the literary genres used by the author, the characteristic ways people spoke and wrote in their time, and the cultural ways people interacted with one another at the time.
3. To understand what God wants to reveal to us, the document goes on to say that we should pay particular attention to the following: the content and unity of the whole Scripture, the living Tradition and teachings of the whole Church, and the analogy of faith.

### Article 17: Making Sense of the Bible

1. The literal sense considers the plain meaning of the text. The literal sense is the meaning intended by the human author.
2. Because the human authors often used poetry, symbolism, metaphors, and even exaggeration, understanding the literal sense of the writing requires study and interpretation.
3. The spiritual sense is interpretation that builds on the literal sense, considering what the realities and events of Scripture signify and mean for salvation.
4. The three categories, or sub-senses, of the spiritual sense are the allegorical sense, the moral sense, and the anagogical sense.



## Article 18: The Literature of the Bible

1. History and poetry are two different literary genres. Each one has its own set of expectations and rules for grasping its meaning.
2. These books (of the Bible) use numerous literary forms or genres: religious history, prayer, song, poetry, proverbs, parables, letters, and gospels, among others.
3. Scholars employ various forms of biblical criticism to deepen their understanding of how the human authors expressed God's Word.
4. The word *criticism* does not refer to a negative viewpoint. It refers to an analysis or evaluation.

## Article 19: Biblical Archaeology: Digging for Answers

1. Archaeology is the study of human activity and history by means of excavating and analyzing the artifacts and other physical materials.
2. Sepphoris was a wealthy Roman city at the center of trade for the area. Tradesmen like Jesus and his foster father, Joseph, were probably in great demand there. Because it was located just a few miles from Nazareth, it is quite possible that Jesus took this hour-long walk to get work.
3. Though we do not have the original versions of any of the biblical books, we have older copies and more copies of the books of the Bible than for any other ancient text! Every ancient copy found has reinforced biblical scholars' certainty in the authority of biblical text.
4. The Dead Sea Scrolls are a collection of ancient scrolls, found on the northwestern shore of the Dead Sea, which possibly belonged to the Essenes, a group of pious, conservative Jews who lived during the time of Jesus.

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The quotation on this answer key marked *Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation* is from *Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation [Dei Verbum, 1965]*, number 11, at [www.vatican.va/archive/hist\\_councils/ii\\_vatican\\_council/documents/vatii\\_const\\_19651118\\_dei-verbum\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vatii_const_19651118_dei-verbum_en.html). Copyright © LEV.)

### Endnote Cited in a Quotation from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, Second Edition

1. *Dei Verbum* 18.

