

## Interpretation of the Scriptures

Bible	Roman Catholic Church
<p>Nehemiah 8:8 “So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the <b>sense</b>, and caused <i>them</i> to understand the reading.”</p> <p>Acts 15:15 “And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written,”</p> <p>Acts 17:11 “ These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.”</p> <p>Romans 12:6 “Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, <i>let us prophesy</i> according to the proportion of faith”</p> <p>2 Peter 1:20-21 “ Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake <i>as they were</i> moved by the Holy Ghost.”</p> <p>2 Timothy 3:15-17 “ And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture <i>is</i> given by inspiration of God, and <i>is</i> profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”</p>	<p><a href="#">From the Catechism of the Catholic Church:</a> The Senses of Scripture</p> <p>115 According to an ancient tradition, one can distinguish between two senses of Scripture: the literal and the spiritual, the latter being subdivided into the allegorical, moral and anagogical senses. The profound concordance of the four senses guarantees all its richness to the living reading of Scripture in the Church.</p> <p>116 The literal sense is the meaning conveyed by the words of Scripture and discovered by exegesis, following the rules of sound interpretation: "All other senses of Sacred Scripture are based on the literal."<sup>83</sup></p> <p>117 The spiritual sense. Thanks to the unity of God's plan, not only the text of Scripture but also the realities and events about which it speaks can be signs.</p> <p>(1) The allegorical sense. We can acquire a more profound understanding of events by recognizing their significance in Christ; thus the crossing of the Red Sea is a sign or type of Christ's victory and also of Christian Baptism.<sup>84</sup></p> <p>(2) The moral sense. The events reported in Scripture ought to lead us to act justly. As St. Paul says, they were written "for our instruction".<sup>85</sup></p> <p>(3) The anagogical sense (Greek: anagoge, "leading"). We can view realities and events in terms of their eternal significance, leading us toward our true homeland: thus the Church on earth is a sign of the heavenly Jerusalem.<sup>86</sup></p> <p>118 A medieval couplet summarizes the significance of the four senses: The Letter speaks of deeds; Allegory to faith; The Moral how to act; Anagogy our destiny.<sup>87</sup></p> <p>119 "It is the task of exegetes to work, according to these rules, towards a better understanding and explanation of the meaning of Sacred Scripture in order that their research may help the Church to form a firmer judgement. For, of course, all that has been said about the manner of interpreting Scripture is ultimately subject to the judgement of the Church which exercises the divinely conferred commission and ministry of watching over and interpreting the Word of God."<sup>88</sup></p> <p>But I would not believe in the Gospel, had not the authority of the Catholic Church already moved me.<sup>89</sup></p> <p>Notes: 83 St. Thomas Aquinas, S Thess I, 1, 10, ad I. 84 Cf. I Cor 10:2. 85 I Cor 10:11; cf. Heb 3:1 -4:11. 86 Cf. Rev 21:1 - 22:5. 87 Lettera gesta docet, quid credas allegoria, moralis quid agas, quo tendas anagogia. Augustine of Dacia, Rotulus pugillaris, I: ed. A. Walz: Angelicum § (1929)</p>

	<p>256; Augustine of Dacia, Rotulus pugillaris, I: ed. A. Walz: Angelicum § (1929) 256.  88 DV 12 § 3.  89 St. Augustine, Contra epistolam Manichaei 5, 6: PL 42, 176.</p> <p>“Furthermore, in order to restrain petulant spirits, It decrees, that no one, relying on his own skill, shall,--in matters of faith, and of morals pertaining to the edification of Christian doctrine, --wresting the sacred Scripture to his own senses, presume to interpret the said sacred Scripture contrary to that sense which holy mother Church,--whose it is to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the holy Scriptures,--hath held and doth hold; <b>or even contrary to the unanimous consent of the Fathers</b>”  -<a href="#">Council of Trent, Session 4, Decree 2</a></p>
--	--

1) The Truth:

(1) Roman Catholic 4 senses:

- (a) Literal Sense
- (b) Spiritual Sense
  - (i) Allegorical
  - (ii) Tropological (moral)
  - (iii) Anagogical (prophetical)

(2) Reformation hermeneutical Principles: ONE SENSE:

- (a) sola scriptura
- (b) analogia fidei
- (c) analogia scriptura
- (d) good and necessary consequence

2) Advantage for the Roman Catholic Church to hold this position against the Bible: First, if the Scriptures may be interpreted with multiple senses, since men are able to multiply senses forever, there must be an outside-the-Scriptures authority to tell the people what senses are authoritative. Secondly, interpreting the Bible, if not understood to have one sense of the Holy Spirit’s meaning in the text, is weakened to require an outside interpreter for people to know what it means, thus a need arises in the laity for suspending all judgment regarding the

Scripture's meaning until the church judges the meaning. In this way, there is no authoritative check to the authority and judgment of the Roman Catholic magisterium.