

# The Fireproof Bible

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“Stop reading that book!” Father snarled at his Seventh-day Adventist Christian mother every time he spotted her reading the Bible. Living in the conservative anti-Christian community of Surabaya, Indonesia, Mother found it also a threat to be found by the neighbors reading the Bible. While father was a devout, confrontational believer of the predominant religion of the community who strongly opposed Christianity, his mother was also very determined and faithful Christian. Her faith was never once deterred by her husband’s intimidation to interrupt her Bible reading and praying. She was also determined to share her highly valued faith with the children. Her persistence and enduring spirit had assisted her to introduce Jesus to them.

“There is no such thing as Christian God!” father sternly declared. “Jesus is only one of the human prophets and he is never happy if he knew that he is being worshipped as God.” Once he learned that his wife was sharing her faith with the children, he warned her upsettingly, “I do not want them to be misguided!”

Father arrived home one day feeling distraught. The family business did not run well recently. As soon as he spotted his wife reading the Bible, his anger elevated suddenly. “Stop reading that nonsense book!” he snarled. “Your Bible and your prayer cannot help in my business!” He suddenly stormed towards her and forcefully snatched the Bible away from her hands.

“I am going to burn this book because I have had enough of it in my house!” he hollered as he tossed the Bible on the burning wooden stove. He stood there for a few seconds before he left. For quite a while, Mother was sitting still feeling downhearted. As soon as she remembered about the Bible, she ran toward the kitchen. She quickly grabbed the Bible out of the fire. Mother dusted off the flakes of the burnt part on the cover and carefully placed it in the box where she had kept it for years. As days passed by, father continued nagging about the Bible and pestering mother to do away with it, but Mother never gave up her faith; she remained committed to her reading of God's word. What had been aggravating the situation was not only the disparity in beliefs but also the financial difficulty that gradually deteriorated Dwi's parents' marital relationship.

One day, Mother took the Bible out to read to the children after her husband had left the house. A few minutes later, he unexpectedly returned, and found walking right into the living room where they were reading Bible. His face became red in anger. "I will burn that book for good this time!" he shouted. "I have had enough of this nonsense." Upsettingly, Father walked straight to the kitchen and once again was found putting the Bible on fire. This time, however, he did not leave immediately. Father wanted to make sure that the Bible would be destroyed completely so he took time in standing and watching the Bible sitting among the burning flames on the wooden stove.

Mother began to sob uncontrollably. Feeling very sorry for her, Dwi reached out and embraced her tightly. He whispered sympathetically into her ear, "You can buy another Bible later, Mama." A few seconds later, Dwi noticed that his father was not coming back to the living room, and he heard no sound from him. Dwi decided to tiptoe to the kitchen to check on his father.

Dwi found his father standing motionless. He was looking intently at Bible lying on top of the burning wooden stove. Father looked confused. Suddenly, he reached his hand toward the burning flames without fear of his hand being burned. Then, he quickly grabbed the Bible, carried across the kitchen, and placed on the dining table. Totally puzzled, he began to flipping pages of the Bible and wiping its leather cover.

"It's unbelievable! The Bible did not burn!" Father exclaimed in disbelief and flipped more pages frantically. He then turned around and saw his stunned and bewildered son. Without preamble, he grabbed the Bible in his hand, walked past Dwi, and sat down slowly in front of his mother. Feeling guilty, embarrassed, and shattered, he placed the Bible carefully on the table nearby, covered his face with his two hands, and began to cry with deep regret.

Soon, Father decided to follow the Christian God. He discussed faith with Mother, and they together agreed to take the entire family to a local Seventh-Day Adventist Church. He reasoned that he found much resemblance between his former faith and the Seventh-day Adventist belief and practice, and the latter had received a greater light. The members were also faithfully keeping God's laws.

Father has completely changed after the incident; he has become an old person but with a brand-new heart that God has given him. God has also

transformed his religious conviction. He made a sincere apology to Mother and bought her a new Bible for daily reading. He now treasures so much the Bible that he had tried to burn. He is keeping it in a glass case, displaying the unburnt Bible proudly in the living room and making it visible to those who come. Father always shares with all visitors on how God had protected the Christian Bible from his two wrongful attempts to destroy it. "God protects this Bible. It is indeed the Word of God that my wife has been reading!" Father is now fully convinced that the Bible is the Word of God as He had protected it from fire, not once, but twice!