



# The Necessity of Hearing the Holy Bible Reading In Preparation For Partaking of the Communion

Written by: Dr. George Fawzy Girigis  
St Mark Church: New Orleans, LA

**T**he Coptic Orthodox Church requires that all who partake of the Holy Communion be present and hear the Holy Bible reading during the Divine Liturgy. This is a Biblically based rule and not one to be lightly dismissed.

Let us read what St Paul wrote in the Holy Book of I Corinthians 11:29-31. *For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not “discerning the Lord’s body. For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged.”*

With the term **worthy manner** in mind, let us review what happened to Uzziah in the Holy Book of II Samuel 6:6-7.

*“When they came to the threshing floor of Nacon, Uzziah reached out and took hold of the Ark of God, because the oxen stumbled. The Lord’s anger burned against Uzziah because of his irreverent act. Therefore God struck him down and he died there beside the Ark of God.”*

This Holy Bible verse explains to us that there are certain rules, which we cannot ignore. The Ark of



**THE FOUR HOLY GOSPELS**  
*The Holy Gospels in Arabic, with title written in an elegant oriental kufic style on both pages.*

God was very sacred and no one except the priest was allowed to touch it. In the same manner, the Body and Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ is sacred and no one can participate in the Holy Communion except those who are already purified by the Holy Bible reading and by the Absolution recited by the priest.

To further support attendance at the Holy Bible Reading to participate in the Holy Communion is Chapter 8 of the Diskollia.

“Do not come late to the church but go there early and before anything else, and in Vespers, be there and thank God for all the blessings He gifted you for the benefit of your life.”

When you consider all the Holy Sacraments, they each supply the believers with special grace. Within these Holy Sacraments, the Holy Spirit works through the prayers and thanksgivings of the priest and the congregation together with, the power of the Word of God, that is read during the service.

I would like to encourage everyone to come early to participate in the Divine Liturgy, to meet God in the reading of the Holy Bible, and to be spiritually prepared to partake of the Holy Communion.