



# The Biblical Dante (Toronto Italian Studies)

*V. Stanley III Benfell*

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Dante Alighieri cited the Bible extensively in his *Commedia*, but also used his epic poem to meditate on the meaning of the Scriptures as a 'true' text. *The Biblical Dante* provides close readings of passages from the *Commedia* to explore how Dante's concept of Biblical truth differs sharply from modern notions.

V. Stanley Benfell examines Dante's argument that the truth of the sacred text could only be revealed when engaged with in a transformative manner - and that a lack of such encounters in his time had led to a rise in greed and corruption, notably within the Church. He also illustrates how the poet put forth a vision for the restoration of a just society using Biblical language and imagery, revealing ideas of both earthly and eternal happiness. *The Biblical Dante* provides an insightful analysis of attitudes towards both the Bible and how it was read in the Medieval period.

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