

Yemelyan Mikhailovich Yaroslavsky (1878 – 1943) was an esteemed journalist, historian, and scholar whose revolutionary career spanned over four decades. Born Minei Gubelman in Chita, Siberia, he became an apprentice bookbinder at the age of nine and graduated from a three-year school in 1892. After joining the R.S.D.L.P. in 1898, he worked as a correspondent for *Iskra* and organized party cells along the Trans-Baikal Railway, siding with the Bolshevik faction after the 1903 party split. He actively participated in the Revolution of 1905 and organized textile workers in the city of Yaroslavl, from which he derived his *nom de guerre*, “Yaroslavsky.”

Yaroslavsky relocated to Moscow after the February Revolution of 1917 and became a candidate member of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.) in 1919. He attained full membership in 1921 and, over the next two decades, held several other prominent positions in party and state organs. Yaroslavsky was a member of the directorate of the Lenin Institute and also served on the editorial boards for notable periodicals such as *Pravda*, *Marxist Historian*, and *Bolshevik*. He earned the Order of Lenin award in 1938 and the Stalin Prize in 1943.

Yaroslavsky is best remembered today for his anti-religious activism. In 1922, the Central Committee established the Anti-Religious Commission and appointed Yaroslavsky as its chairman. Later that same year, Yaroslavsky founded the anti-religious newspaper *Bezbozhnik*, which quickly gathered a substantial readership. In 1924, the “Society of Friends of the Newspaper *Bezbozhnik*” was formed, and, in 1925, the Commission facilitated its reorganization into an all-union “League of Militant Atheists” with Yaroslavsky acting as its chairman. The League continued to publish *Bezbozhnik* until the early 1940’s, when the war effort necessitated cooperation with the church for the defense of the Soviet Union.

This book by Yemelyan Yaroslavsky, *The Bible for Believers and Non-Believers*, began as a collection of articles printed in *Bezbozhnik* during the earliest years of its circulation. Although he authored many works throughout his lifetime, “Yaroslavsky’s Godless Bible” remains one of his best-known pieces worldwide.

Yaroslavsky The Bible for Believers and Non-Believers

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