



Bible Introduction

International Alpha Bible Course
by Ralph Vincent Reynolds

BIBLE INTRODUCTION

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INTERNATIONAL ALPHA BIBLE COURSE

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Lesson One

THE BIBLE

A. THE NAMES AND TITLES OF THE BIBLE

1. The Bible

The English word *Bible* comes from the Greek words *biblos* and *biblion*, which mean “the book.” Ancient books were written upon the biblus or papyrus reed, and from this custom came the Greek word which finally came to be applied to the sacred books.

It is not called *Biblos* because there are sixty-six books, but because of its preeminence over all books. It is not merely a book – it is *the* book which stands as high above all other books as the heaven is high above the earth. It is named “THE BOOK” in Psalm 40:7 and Hebrews 10:7.

The title Bible was given to us by John Christianson of Constantinople (AD 398 - 404).

References:

| | |
|------------|--------------|
| Mark 12:26 | Hebrews 10:7 |
| Acts 7:42 | Acts 1:20 |
| Luke 3:4 | Luke 20:42 |
| Psalm 40:7 | |

2. The Word of God

Of all the names given to the Bible, this title is perhaps the most significant, impressive, and complete. It expresses the thought that the Bible is God speaking to man. It signifies divine authority and is used frequently in the Old Testament and about forty times in the New Testament.

References:

| | |
|--------------|--------------|
| Mark 7:13 | Hebrews 4:12 |
| Romans 10:17 | |

3. The Scriptures

This designation is found once in the Old Testament in Daniel 10:21. It was used more frequently in the early church than it is at present. This title is found in the New Testament some fifty-two times. It comes from a Latin word meaning "writing."

References:

| | |
|-----------------|---------------|
| Matthew 22:29 | John 5:39 |
| Romans 1:2 | II Peter 3:16 |
| Luke 24:27 | Acts 17:11 |
| II Timothy 3:15 | |

4. The Old and New Testament

The word *testament* means "covenant," and by this term God was pleased to designate the relation that existed between Himself and His people. *Testament* is used thirteen times in the Authorized Version, but is translated *covenant* in the Revised Version. The Old Testament or Covenant was given at Mt. Sinai and deals with the calling and history of the Jewish nation.

The New Testament or Covenant was made in the Upper Room and is concerned with the history and application of the redemption wrought by the Lord Jesus Christ.

References:

| | |
|---------------|--------------------|
| Luke 22:20 | II Corinthians 3:6 |
| Hebrews 12:24 | Hebrews 9:15 |

5. The Oracles

Oracles originally meant the place where the Word of God was kept and from which it was communicated. This designation is found approximately fourteen times in the Old Testament and four times in the New Testament.

References:

| | |
|----------------|--------------|
| I Samuel 16:23 | Hebrews 5:12 |
| Romans 3:2 | Acts 7:38 |
| Psalms 28:2 | I Peter 4:11 |

6. The Precepts

The precepts are prescribed truths. It means “placed in trust” and has to do with the conduct and conscience of man.

7. The Statutes

This term means fixed obligations and comes from the root word meaning “to engrave.” These statutes are fixed and engraved by the hand of God.

8. The Commandments

God’s Word is given with authority and is lodged with us as a trust. Not to obey the Word of God is an act of rebellion.

9. The Judgments

God’s judgments were made in infinite wisdom. By them we must be judged. The Bible is a guide which is just and right.

B. THE DIVISIONS OF THE BIBLE

1. Into Testaments

Old and New Testaments

2. Into Books

a. The English Division of the Old Testament (39 books)

* **Pentateuch (5 books)**

| | |
|-----------|-------------|
| Genesis | Numbers |
| Exodus | Deuteronomy |
| Leviticus | |

* **History (12 books)**

| | |
|-----------|---------------|
| Joshua | II Kings |
| Judges | I Chronicles |
| Ruth | II Chronicles |
| I Samuel | Ezra |
| II Samuel | Nehemiah |
| I Kings | Esther |

* **Poetry (5 books)**

| | |
|----------|-----------------|
| Job | Ecclesiastes |
| Psalms | Song of Solomon |
| Proverbs | |

* **Prophecy (17 books)**

| | |
|--------------|-----------|
| Isaiah | Jonah |
| Jeremiah | Micah |
| Lamentations | Nahum |
| Ezekiel | Habakkuk |
| Daniel | Zephaniah |
| Hosea | Haggai |
| Joel | Zechariah |
| Amos | Malachi |
| Obadiah | |

b. The Hebrew Division of the Old Testament (24 books)

The Old Testament division is referred to in Luke 24:44. The Hebrews never spoke of I and II Samuel or I and II Kings until the translation of the Septuagint Bible in 285 BC. When seventy Jews began to translate the Bible into the Greek, they found that it took so much space that they divided some books into two books. The poetical books were not divided.

c. The English Division of the New Testament (27 books)

* **Gospels (4 books)**

| | |
|---------|------|
| Matthew | Luke |
| Mark | John |

* **Historical (1 book)**

Acts of the Apostles

* **Epistles (21 books)**

| | |
|------------------|-------------|
| Romans | Galatians |
| I Corinthians | Ephesians |
| II Corinthians | Philippians |
| Colossians | James |
| I Thessalonians | I Peter |
| II Thessalonians | II Peter |
| I Timothy | I John |
| II Timothy | II John |
| Titus | III John |

Philemon
Hebrews

Jude

- * **Prophecy (1 book)**
Revelation

3. Into Chapters

There are 1,189 chapters in the Bible, and they are man-made. Credit for this is given to Stephen Langdon who died in 1227. Originally, chapter divisions were thought to have been done by Cardinal Sancto who died in 1263, but Stephen Langdon is still given credit for the work.

The division of the Bible into chapters was done for the purpose of a Latin concordance. Some divisions are unfortunate, but this has been retained in all following translations.

4. Into Verses

There are 31,163 verses in the Bible. This division is also man-made and was done in 1550 by Sir Robert Stevens. The Geneva Bible, printed in 1560, was the first Bible to be printed in verse form. The Revised Version of 1881 does not have the verse divisions.

There are 3,566,480 letters in the Bible.

C. THE SYMBOLS OF THE BIBLE

1. A Critic or Discerner

“For the word of God is quick, and powerful . . . a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12).

This is the only place in the Bible where the word *critic* occurs. How presumptuous for men to dare to be critics of the Bible when it has been given to be our critic.

2. A Lamp or Light

Like the Star in the East, the Bible will lead any honest seeker to Jesus. Like the seven-branched candlestick in the Tabernacle, it shines with a perfect light upon divine things. Like the fiery pillar, it lights up the whole pathway of the child of God throughout his wilderness journey.

References:

Psalm 119:105 Psalm 119:130
II Peter 1:19 Proverbs 6:23

3. A Mirror

Like a mirror the Bible shows man as he really is, "Guilty before God." This is the first step that leads to God.

References:

II Corinthians 3:18 James 1:25

4. A Laver

As water cleanses by separating from the body those outward stains which defile it, so the Word of God has a cleansing effect by teaching the heart to shrink from every form of sin which would defile the inner life.

References:

Ephesians 5:26 John 15:3
Psalm 119:11

5. Food

- a. Milk for babes: I Corinthians 3:2; Hebrews 5:12-13
- b. Bread for the hungry: Deuteronomy 8:3; Isaiah 55:1-2
- c. Strong meat for men: I Corinthians 3:2; Hebrews 5:12-14
- d. Honey: Psalm 19:10; Psalm 119:103

6. Gold

God has provided in His Word such lasting wealth that all the riches of this world are in comparison as nothing.

Reference:

Psalm 19:10

7. Fire

References:

Jeremiah 20:9 Jeremiah 23:29

8. Hammer

Some men's hearts are as hard as rock, and it takes the steady beating of the Word to break them.

Reference:

Jeremiah 23:29

9. Sword

Reference:

Ephesians 6:17

10. Seed

References:

Luke 8:11

I Peter 1:23

Isaiah 5:10

- a. We should sow in all places (Isaiah 32:20)
- b. We should sow at all times (Ecclesiastes 11:6)
- c. Soil should be prepared by love and compassion (Psalm 126:6)

Lesson Two

HOW WAS THE BIBLE WRITTEN?

A. GOD ONLY WROTE THREE TIMES

We have record of God only writing three times:

1. The Ten Commandments written on tables of stone

“And he gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon Mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God” (Exodus 31:18).

2. Judgment on Belshazzar’s wall

“In the same hour came forth fingers of a man’s hand, and wrote over against the candlestick . . . and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote” (Daniel 5:5).

3. The message of grace written by our Lord in the dust of the floor of the temple

“But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not” (John 8:6).

The first time was the giving of the law which was broken by man. The last time was a special act of grace which was trampled underfoot by man.

A fourth example of God writing, which might be considered, is God writing on the fleshy tables of the human heart (II Corinthians 3:3). The reason we have not included this among the three examples given above, is that this is done by the Holy Spirit and is not literal writing.

B. THE BIBLE HAS ONLY ONE AUTHOR

In writing the Bible, God used *forty* men over a period of some 1,600 years. Although there were so many men used over such a long time, it is quite evident that the Bible has only *one* author. The Bible is the product of one Master Mind.

A reverent and careful study of the Bible will acquaint the student with its Author.

C. THE BIBLE WAS WRITTEN BY INSPIRATION

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof,

for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (II Timothy 3:16).

If every Scripture is inspired by God, then there can be no Scripture which isn't inspired by God.

"Given by inspiration of God" comes from one Greek word meaning "God breathed."

"But above all, remember that no prophecy in Scripture will be found to have come from the prophet's own prompting; for never did prophecy come by human will, but men sent by God spoke as they were impelled by the Holy Spirit" (II Peter 1:20-21, Weymouth).

D. DEFINITION OF INSPIRATION

Inspired literally means "God-breathed." It comes from the Greek word *theopneustos* or "God breathed out." It is the strong, conscious inbreathing of God into men, qualifying them to give utterance to truth. It is God speaking through men, and the Bible is therefore just as much the Word of God as though God spoke every single word of it with His own lips. The Scriptures are the result of divine inbreathing just as human speech is uttered by the breathing through a man's mouth.

"Holy men of God, qualified by the infusion of the breath of God, wrote in obedience to the divine command, and were kept from all error, whether they revealed truths previously unknown or recorded truths already familiar" – Evans, *Great Doctrines of the Bible*.

We cannot explain the manner in which the Holy Spirit enabled the writers to accomplish the task. God chose a vessel, a human personality, and used that human personality as His vocal cords.

All Scripture is God-breathed. This means that no one Scripture is inspired more than any other Scripture.

E. DEFINITION OF REVELATION

Revelation is that act of God by which He directly communicates truth not known before to the human mind. Revelation discovers new truth while inspiration superintends the communication of that truth.

All in the Bible has not been revealed, but all is inspired.

F. DEFINITION OF ILLUMINATION

Illumination is the influence of the Spirit upon the minds of men that they might understand spiritual things. Spiritual illumination is conditioned by yielding to the Holy Spirit.

References:

Matthew 16:17

I Corinthians 2:14

Revelation is a divine revealing of the mind of God. Illumination is a divine action of the mind of men. If we are speaking of truth, then it is proper to use the word *revelation*. If we are speaking of the *mind* and *heart* of man, then it is proper to use the word *illumination*. The revelation of truth illuminates man's mind and heart.

G. THE EXTENT OF INSPIRATION

We believe in *plenary* or *full* inspiration. Partial inspiration is incorrect. There are those who say that the Bible *contains* the Word of God. We believe that the Bible *is* the Word of God. There is a great difference between these two statements: (1) the Bible contains the Word of God, and (2) the Bible is the Word of God. Let us make certain that we know the difference.

H. WHY WE BELIEVE IN THE FULL INSPIRATION OF THE BIBLE:

1. Jesus gave the Old Testament His full sanction (Matthew 5:18).
2. It is the product of one Master Mind. Although it contains sixty-six books, written by forty writers over 1,600 years, it has One *Author*.
3. The types, symbols, and ceremonies reveal it as divine, e.g. Christ in the Tabernacle.
4. Bible prophecies stamp it as being divine (I Peter 1:10-11). A tremendous amount of Bible prophecy has been literally fulfilled in our own lifetime.
5. Moral standards of the Bible prove it to be divine (I Peter 1:16).
6. The Creator of man is the Author of the Bible. Only in this way could the Bible reveal man to himself as it does.
7. It reveals the only way of salvation, so plain but yet deep.

8. By its fruits we know the Bible is divine (Romans 11:33). It always brings good.

9. The Bible will outlast the universe (Psalm 119:89; Matthew 5:18).

10. The world recognizes it as divine. It is *The Book*. It has been translated into more languages than any other book. Whole libraries have been written to interpret it, and before it sages bow.

I. DEFINITION OF VERBAL INSPIRATION

Verbal Inspiration means that each word was inspired in the original writings. Mistakes could have been made by the translators but were impossible in the original. If the Bible is verbally inspired, there should be—there can be—no errors in it; God cannot make a mistake. If, on the other hand, it is not fully and verbally inspired, then the assumption is that some parts are from God while other parts are purely human; in these latter parts we should naturally expect to find errors. If the thoughts only are inspired, then the Bible contains the Word of God but is not such in its essence. This, of course, is error. We believe absolutely in verbal inspiration.

J. REASONS FOR VERBAL INSPIRATION

1. The writers themselves say so.

Moses: “God spake all these words” (Exodus 20:1).

“Moses wrote all the words of the Lord” (Exodus 24:4).

“And the LORD spake unto Moses saying” (Exodus 25:1).

David: “His word was in my tongue” (II Samuel 23:2).

Isaiah: “The Lord hath spoken” (Isaiah 1:2).

Jeremiah: “The Word of the Lord came unto me” (Jeremiah 1:4).

“I have put my words in thy mouth” (Jeremiah 1:9).

Ezekiel: “The word of the Lord came expressly to Ezekiel”
(Ezekiel 1:3).

Amos: “The words . . . which he saw concerning Israel” (Amos 1:1).

John: “The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him” (Revelation 1:1).

2. The writers often did not understand what they wrote. God gave the words but not necessarily the thoughts.

“The prophets have enquired” (I Peter 1:10-12). They were not ministering unto themselves but unto us.

Daniel did not understand all he wrote (Daniel 12:8-9).

Did David understand about the parting of the garments and the piercing of the hands and feet? (See Psalm 22:18 and Psalm 22:16.)

3. The Bible would be incorrect if it were not verbally inspired.

a. Importance is placed upon simple words, e.g. Hebrews 12:27 quoting “Yet once more” from Haggai 2:6.

b. Importance is placed upon the tense of a verb, e.g. “I am” (Luke 20:37).

c. Importance is placed upon a mere letter, e.g. - “S” - seed not seeds (Galatians 3:16).

4. The science of the Bible is absolutely correct, although many of the popular ideas of that day were incorrect, e.g. Earth, flat, etc.

5. The testimony of Christ proves that the Bible was verbally inspired.

“Jot or tittle” (Matthew 5:18). We might say the crossing of a “t” or dotting of an “i.”

All things must be fulfilled which were written (Luke 24:44).

6. If part of the Bible is divine and part human, who can tell which is which?

Lesson Three

THE SUPPOSED CONTRADICTIONS OF THE BIBLE

When correctly interpreted, the Bible never contradicts itself. We are listing here a few supposed contradictions with the proper explanations. This is another proof of the infallibility of the Bible.

If we find a Scripture that apparently contradicts some other passage of Scripture, we should pray and ask the Lord for a proper understanding. As soon as we have the proper understanding, there will no longer be any confusion.

A. TWO ACCOUNTS OF THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

“And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came to him” (Matthew 5:1).

“And he came down with them, and stood in the plain” (Luke 6:17).

Are these Scriptures contradictory? Did Jesus preach the sermon in the mountain or upon the plain? Which is correct?

The answer is simply this: There were two sermons – one preached in the mountain, the other preached upon the plain; the first one was preached to the disciples, the other to the crowd.

We should note that Matthew was not present at the Sermon on the Mount which is recorded in his Gospel, but he was present when Jesus repeated the sermon upon the plain. This becomes clear when we read Matthew 9:9 and Luke 6:15.

B. MATTHEW 28:19 AND ACTS 2:38

“Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost” (Matthew 28:19).

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins” (Acts 2:38).

These Scriptures are not contradictory. Jesus did not tell His disciples to baptize, using the words *Father, Son* and *Holy Ghost*. He told them to baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Note that *name* is in the singular, not plural. What is that name?

The words *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost* are not names but titles pointing to One Person who has one name. That name is Jesus.

Jesus expected obedience, not just a repetition of the words He used. Peter obeyed the commission and did exactly what Jesus had said. In fact, a person has not obeyed Matthew 28:19 unless he has been baptized in the name of Jesus.

Certainly, there is no contradiction between Matthew 28:19 and Acts 2:38.

C. PAUL'S SUPPOSED MISTAKE

"And those that died in the plague were twenty and four thousand" (Numbers 25:9).

"Fell in one day three and twenty thousand" (I Corinthians 10:8).

There is no contradiction here. In the book of Numbers, the total is given, but the apostle Paul, writing under inspiration, stated that 23,000 died in one day. The other thousand died on a different day.

D. MATTHEW'S SUPPOSED MISTAKE

"Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, and they took the thirty pieces of silver" (Matthew 27:9).

In the prophecy of Zechariah, we read of Jesus being sold for thirty pieces of silver, whereas there is nothing about it in the prophecy of Jeremiah. Therefore, it is claimed by some that this is a mistake made by Matthew.

Matthew, writing under inspiration, wrote that Jeremiah spoke these words. Could not this be just as correct as Jude 14 regarding the prophecy of Enoch, although a similar prophecy is in Zechariah 14:5? Jeremiah could have spoken it as well as Zechariah. Both of these prophecies could be recorded in Zechariah but still spoken by Jeremiah and Enoch respectively.

E. DAVID NUMBERING THE PEOPLE

“And there were in Israel eight hundred thousand valiant men that drew the sword; and the men of Judah were five hundred thousand men” (II Samuel 24:9).

“And all they of Israel were a thousand thousand and an hundred thousand men that drew sword” (I Chronicles 21:5).

The explanation for the apparent contradiction here is simply this: Samuel stated that the valiant men that drew the sword were 800,000 while Chronicles stated that all Israel were 1,100,000. There were 300,000 men who could not be called valiant.

F. GENEALOGIES OF OUR LORD

Matthew 1: This is traced back on Joseph’s side to Abraham, to show Christ as the legal heir to the throne of Israel.

Luke 3: This is traced back on Mary’s side to Adam emphasizing Christ’s true humanity and to show Him as the promised seed of the woman (Genesis 3:15).

G. INSCRIPTION ON THE CROSS

“This is Jesus the King of the Jews” (Matthew 27:37).

“The King of the Jews” (Mark 15:26).

“This is the King of the Jews” (Luke 23:38).

“Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews” (John 19:19).

It is claimed that this is a contradiction because it is different in each of the Gospels. However, when we put these together the difference disappears.

Matthew: This is Jesus the King of the Jews.

Mark: The King of the Jews.

Luke: This is the King of the Jews.

John: Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews.

Total: This is Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews.

Undoubtedly the total inscription was written and only part of it was recorded in the various gospels.

H. THE CONVERSION OF SAUL

“And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man” (Acts 9:7).

“And they that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid; but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me” (Acts 22:9).

The explanation here is that the men with Saul saw a light and heard the sound of a voice, but to the men the sound of the voice did not express words that they understood. Jesus was speaking to Saul, and he was the only one who understood what was being said.

I. OTHER SUPPOSED CONTRADICTIONS

There are other supposed contradictions and mistakes in the Bible, but the examples given here in this lesson are sufficient to prove that there is no mistake in the Bible. The error is always in our understanding of the Bible, never in the Word of God. The Bible is absolutely accurate and infallible. How important it is that we study the Bible and understand the message it contains. We should never attempt to change in the slightest manner the Word of God.

Lesson Four

DOCTRINE

A. THE MEANING OF DOCTRINE

The word *doctrine* means “teaching” or “truth.” It is impossible to teach the Bible without teaching doctrine. Doctrine is the backbone and framework of all teaching and preaching. It gives strength, form, and beauty to the message we proclaim.

B. SOUND DOCTRINE

“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears” (II Timothy 4:3).

Sound doctrine is the teaching of God’s Word in purity and truth without error or darkness. It is teaching which is wholesome and healthful. If you are sound in body, you are healthy; if you are sound in doctrine, you have spiritual health. Sound doctrine exalts Jesus and denounces sin. It faithfully points out the suffering which follows a life of sin; it inspires faith in the hearer and leads him to a life of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Sound doctrine leaves the believer with a heart full of deep peace and rest in Jesus.

In these days of apostasy, many are not willing to endure sound doctrine. A spirit of restlessness, discontent, and dissatisfaction enters and the professing Christians begin to look for a thrill, excitement, or something sensational. They become unstable and unsettled and are like a wave of the sea driven by the wind and tossed. They become wells without water, clouds that are carried by a tempest. Because of this they depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils.

When we endure sound doctrine, we are perfectly happy and content with God’s Word alone. When heaven and earth have passed away, it will still be standing. The Bible is that which will lead us to Jesus and save our souls. It alone is truth, for it alone is infallible.

C. IMMUTABILITY OF DOCTRINE

The Word of God does not change and is absolutely eternal and unchangeable in its nature. This means that there is no true doctrine apart from that taught by the apostles,

and there is the great necessity of continuing steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine.

"The truth of the Lord endureth for ever" (Psalm 117:2).

"And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:42).

D. THE IMPORTANCE OF DOCTRINE

The importance of Bible doctrine may be seen in the following Scriptures:

"And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' *doctrine* and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:42).

"Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to *doctrine*" (I Timothy 4:13).

"Take heed unto thyself, and unto the *doctrine*; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee" (I Timothy 4:16).

"Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and *doctrine*" (I Timothy 5:17).

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for *doctrine*, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (II Timothy 3:16).

"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and *doctrine*" (II Timothy 4:2).

"Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the *doctrine* of Christ, hath not God" (II John 9).

E. THE PROPER ATTITUDE TOWARDS DOCTRINE

The proper approach to the study of God's Word is to have a healthy hunger to know truth for the sake of truth alone. There are many motives for the study of the Bible, but above all others this should be the most important.

We should never search into God's Word simply to win an argument or to defend a certain position. We should always search for and seek after truth for the sake of truth alone.

F. PRINCIPLES TO BE REMEMBERED IN UNDERSTANDING DOCTRINE

1. Truth cometh by divine revelation. There is no better teacher of divine truth than the Holy Spirit, the Author of the Bible. Many truths are mysteries which are hidden from the unregenerate mind and can only be understood as the Spirit makes them clear.

“When he, the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth” (John 16:13).

“The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned” (I Corinthians 2:14).

2. Next to the Holy Spirit, Scripture is the best interpreter of the Bible.

3. Truth is in agreement with the whole tenor of Scripture. Doctrine should never be established on one isolated passage of Scripture unless that doctrine is at the same time in harmony with the entire Bible.

4. Truth is always well balanced and sound. Extreme viewpoints are more likely to be in error than the middle of the road belief.

5. Truth always exalts Jesus Christ. Any teaching that degrades Jesus is erroneous.

6. Truth always has a sanctifying effect in the life of a believer. A man’s daily walk will tell whether or not he is a believer of true doctrine.

G. HOW TO STUDY A BIBLE DOCTRINE

1. Using an analytical concordance or topical Bible, trace the doctrine through the Bible and collect all references. By taking time to write all these references out in long hand, the student is more likely to receive a true understanding of what the entire Bible has to say about the subject.

2. By comparing all these Bible references, write a definition of the doctrine. Ask yourself these questions: What do these references have in common? Where do they differ? Remember the Bible never contradicts itself.

3. Relate the references to their immediate context and the total pattern of biblical truth. Study each reference in the light of its context, and evaluate the presence of this doctrine within the total pattern of the biblical revelation.

4. Apply the doctrine to personal experience. Is this a doctrine for believers or unbelievers? In what way must it be applied to the lives of those to whom it is addressed?

5. Summarize the doctrine. Write a paragraph or more stating your conclusions.

Lesson Five

HOW WE GOT OUR BIBLE Part I

A. MANUSCRIPTS

The Bible was originally written on long sheets of parchment and then rolled onto wooden rollers. These were called “manuscripts,” meaning “written by the hand.” The men who copied the Word of God on these manuscripts were called “scribes.” These manuscripts were very expensive and had to be read to the congregation.

At the beginning skins of “clean” animals were used and then later a parchment made from the papyrus reed. The Old Testament was written in Hebrew and the New Testament was written in Greek.

These rolls of skins or parchments were known as “scrolls.”

The Jewish scribes exercised the greatest possible care in copying the Hebrew manuscripts. Each new copy had to be made from an approved manuscript, written with a special kind of ink, upon sheets made from the skin of a “clean” animal. The writers had to pronounce aloud each word before writing it and on no account was a single word to be written from memory. They were to reverently wipe their pen before writing the name of God in any form and to wash their whole body before writing *Jehovah*. The new copy was carefully examined with the original, and if there were only one incorrect letter, the whole copy was rejected. In the Hebrew documents of the Old Testament, any variations introduced by the copyists amounted to less than one-thousandth of the entire text.

The Hebrew language was originally written entirely in consonants without any vowels and with no spacing to divide the words. The name JEHOVAH was simply written *jhvh*. If we were to write the Lord’s Prayer in this manner, it would appear thus: *RFTHRWHCHR-TNHVNHLLWDBTHYNM...*

B. SEPTUAGINT

About 277 BC seventy scholars at Alexandria, Egypt, began a translation of the Old Testament into the Greek language. This Greek translation of the Old Testament was

known as the Septuagint, which was a Latin word meaning seventy. The Septuagint was widely circulated and was used as the basis for many future translations.

It is said that it was in the Septuagint that the present familiar titles of the various books of the Bible were first adopted and their order established. This arrangement has been followed ever since, although it is quite different from that of the original Hebrew Scriptures.

The Septuagint was a loose and free translation and was faulty in many respects. It was in existence in the time of our Lord, but neither He nor the apostles ever made use of it.

It is most probable that our Lord spoke Aramaic.

C. THE VULGATE

The Vulgate was a Latin translation of the Septuagint version of the Old Testament and of the original Greek of the New Testament. The name means "to make common or public" (vulgar). It was made in North Africa and was revised in the fourth century by Jerome.

For a thousand years this was the standard Bible in the Catholic Church. The common people could not read Latin. The leader read to the people. During the dark ages God's Word was locked up in the Latin language.

D. JEROME

Jerome was one of the ablest scholars of the fourth century. He was born in AD 340 in Dalmatia, studied in Rome, and was baptized in the year AD 360.

He studied the Hebrew language and lived as a hermit not far from Antioch from AD 373 to AD 379. He returned to Rome, traveled through Palestine and Egypt. He went to Bethlehem in AD 386. He served as head of the monastery and he made his headquarters there until his death in AD 420.

The older Latin versions of the Bible were crude, and Pope Damasus proposed to Jerome that he make a revision. He completed the New Testament in AD 388. He then translated the Old Testament using the ancient Hebrew manuscripts. The result of Jerome's work was the Vulgate, which is still in use in the Roman Catholic Douay Bible.

E. FIRST ANGLO SAXON TRANSLATION

In AD 450, the Anglo-Saxon language was introduced into England by the invaders. However, for many centuries the Word of God was only available in handwritten copies of the Latin Vulgate. Because of this it was available only to the learned and the rich. Nevertheless, it had sufficient influence in the land that paganism died out.

In the eighth century the Psalms and the Gospels were translated into the Anglo-Saxon language by the Venerable Bede, one of the greatest literary men of those times. He died in AD 735.

Alfred the Great, who was crowned king at the age of twenty-two, was a man of prayer and a lover of the Bible. He instituted great reforms and expressed a desire that every youth should be able to read the Scriptures before studying any other subject. He ordered a translation of the whole Bible be made into Anglo-Saxon but did not live to see its completion.

England was conquered by the Normans under William the Conqueror in 1066, after which the French language was introduced and the country became priest-ridden.

F. CHAPTERS

The Bible was divided into chapters for the purpose of a Latin concordance. Some of these divisions were unfortunate but have been retained to the present time.

Credit for this work has been given to Stephen Langdon who died in 1227. The writer has found that his references on this have been somewhat conflicting. One reference gives credit to Cardinal Hugo while another reference gives credit to Cardinal Sancto.

This work was accomplished in the early part of the thirteenth century.

G. FIRST ENGLISH TRANSLATION

John Wycliffe, the great reformer, was born around the year 1320. He became a lecturer at Oxford and one of the ablest theologians and scholars in England at that time. He was convinced that the Bible was God's Word, and he determined to give it to the people in the English tongue.

He translated the whole Bible into the English language from the Latin Vulgate. It was divided into chapters, and although it was copied in handwriting, its circulation was large. Some one hundred and fifty manuscripts survive.

This translation took about twenty-two years to accomplish and each copy took ten months to write out. Each copy would cost about US\$150 to buy. Those who could not afford to buy a copy would pay a large sum to be able to read it one hour each day. Sometimes a load of hay would be given for a few pages of it.

The Roman Catholics opposed this translation and eventually forbade the reading of this English Bible under penalty of death. History records a long list of martyrs who died at the stake rather than give up this English Bible.

Wycliffe died of paralysis in 1384. Forty years after his death, the Roman Catholic authorities dug up his bones and burned them, scattering the ashes on the River Swift.

Wycliffe's Bible was printed in four volumes in 1850.

Wycliffe has been called the "Morning Star of the Reformation."

The principle that directed his life was his claim, "The sacred Scriptures are the property of the people and one which no one should be allowed to wrest from them."

H. THE INVENTION OF PRINTING

Printing was invented in Europe about 1450 by Gutenberg who is said to have printed a Bible. Printing was introduced into England by Caxton in 1476 about which time some of the Old Testament was printed in Hebrew. This invention greatly increased the circulation of the Scriptures.

I. WILLIAM TYNDALE

In 1525 Tyndale, one of the Protestant reformers and a contemporary of Luther, made another English translation and was the first to publish an English New Testament in print. He had to do this partly at Cologne and partly at Worms. He worked under great difficulty, in exile, poverty, and distress. Several editions of his translation were printed.

The Testaments were smuggled into England in bales of cotton, sacks of flour, etc. Catholics made every effort to prevent it and burned thousands of copies.

Tyndale translated from Greek, and his translation was very accurate. He also translated the Pentateuch and the Book of Jonah into English. In 1535, he issued a revised version of the New Testament from original Greek.

In 1536 Tyndale was first strangled and then burnt at the stake by the Roman Catholic authorities. His last words were, "Lord, open the King of England's eyes!"

J. FIRST PRINTED ENGLISH BIBLE

The whole Bible was first printed in English in 1535 by Miles Coverdale. This Bible also contained the apocryphal books.

Coverdale died in 1568.

Lesson Six

HOW WE GOT OUR BIBLE Part II

A. FIRST AUTHORIZED VERSION OF THE BIBLE

Thomas Cromwell induced Henry VIII to grant a license for the issuing of the Bible in English. This was done by John Rogers and was known as "Matthew's Bible." It was unpopular because of comments in the margin against the Roman Catholic Church.

In 1539 a reprint was brought out by Coverdale and others without marginal comments. The King gave his approval, and this became the first authorized version. This was known as the "Great Bible" because of its size. It was ordered to be in every parish church and chained to the pulpit where the people flocked to hear the Word of God read.

B. THE GENEVA BIBLE

In 1553 Queen Mary came to the throne and was queen for four and a half bloody years. The printing, importation, and circulation of Bibles were prohibited. During her reign, Nicholas Ridley, Thomas Cranmer, Hugh Latimer, and over three hundred Bible-loving men were burned at the stake.

In 1558 Queen Elizabeth came to the throne at the age of twenty-five. She inaugurated her reign by pressing to her lips and heart a copy of the Bible. This brought about a great change which caused everyone to rejoice.

A very important edition of the Bible known as the Geneva Bible appeared in 1560. It was called the Geneva Bible because a number of reformers had fled to Geneva during the persecutions under Queen Mary. While in Geneva they translated this new Bible directly from the original Hebrew and Greek.

The Geneva Bible was smaller in size and became popular. It was the Bible used by Shakespeare, Cromwell, and John Bunyan, and was brought to America by the Pilgrims.

The Geneva Bible was a very important Bible for the following reasons:

1. It used the more easily read Roman type.
2. It was the first whole Bible that was divided into verses.
3. It was the first to use italics for those words the translators added for the sake of English idioms and which were not in the original text.
4. It was the first to omit the apocryphal books since their introduction into the Septuagint.

C. THE BISHOPS' BIBLE

In 1568 the Bishops' Bible was brought out by a committee of bishops. It was a very expensive edition, poorly translated, and never became popular. It was used only a short time.

D. THE DOUAY BIBLE

In 1582 Roman Catholics translated the New Testament at Rheims. In 1610 they translated the Old Testament at Douay. This Bible includes the Apocrypha. It was translated from the Latin Vulgate and contains gross errors which cannot be supported by the original Hebrew and Greek.

E. THE APOCRYPHA

What is the Apocrypha? It is fourteen books which are included in the Roman Catholic Bible but not in the Protestant Bible. *Apocrypha* means hidden or secret. These books are not included in our Bible because:

1. The Scriptures are self-contained and absolutely complete with nothing lacking.
2. There is no reference to the Apocrypha in the New Testament.
3. There are three solemn warnings against adding to the Bible:
 - a. Moses: "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you" (Deuteronomy 4:2).
 - b. Solomon: "Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee and thou be found a liar" (Proverbs 30:6).
 - c. John: "If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life. . ." (Revelation 22:18-19).

4. The Apocrypha is not acknowledged by Orthodox Jews or the Christian church as being inspired.

5. The Apocrypha contains a great deal of legendary nonsense and some historical errors.

F. KING JAMES VERSION

In 1611 the King James Version appeared. This is the translation now used by most English-speaking people. Forty-seven scholars authorized by King James made an exhaustive study of earlier versions. Ancient Hebrew and Greek texts were studied in order to obtain the best results. This translation has held first place for three hundred and fifty years.

The forty-seven translators were divided into groups to which were given certain sections of the Bible to translate. Their work was then submitted for the approval of all the others. The whole Bible was given to a committee of six who worked for nine months examining the complete text.

The English language has changed somewhat in the last three hundred and fifty years. The earliest printing had many words spelled much differently and this was modified about one hundred years later.

Here are two verses from the 1611 printing:

“Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.

“Thou preparest a table before me, in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil, my cup runneth over” (Psalms 23:4-5).

G. REVISED VERSION

In 1870 nearly one hundred learned men of different denominations met at Westminster and for over ten years worked at revising the Authorized Version.

In 1881 the Revised New Testament was published. The demand for this version was so great that two million copies were ordered before it was published. Every word from the beginning of Matthew to the end of Romans was telegraphed from New York to Chicago, the longest telegraphic message ever sent up to that time.

In 1885 the Revised Version of the whole Bible was issued. The Old Testament was also revised at Westminster but it took fifteen years to accomplish.

In this version paragraphs were introduced.

H. AMERICAN STANDARD VERSION

This version was issued in 1905. It also took fifteen years to accomplish and divided the Bible into paragraphs.

I. REVISED STANDARD VERSION

In 1929 the copyright of the American Standard Version was transferred to the International Council of Religious Education, a body related to forty major Protestant denominations. This council appointed a committee of scholars from twenty seminaries and universities to revise the Standard Version.

The Revised Standard Version of the New Testament was published in 1946, and the complete Bible was issued in 1952. This version reflects liberal theology. We see this in the translation of the word *virgin*, etc.

J. OTHER TRANSLATIONS

There are other translations into modern English that one may use: Moffat, Weymouth, Amplified, etc. These help in the study of the Bible and may be used as a source of reference.

K. LOVE FOR THE BIBLE

When we realize the long hours of toil which have been invested into the translations, and that many men gave their lives in order that we might have the Bible, we should devoutly love our Bibles. Above all, this it is God's Word and for this reason alone we should ever cherish it and hide it away in our hearts.

Lesson Seven

JESUS CHRIST IN THE BIBLE

Some have believed that the Bible is a record of man's religious discoveries and his progress as he groped his way for a truer concept of God. This is not true. The Bible is the record of God's unfolding revelation of Himself and His own entrance into the world as the God-man, Christ Jesus.

The Bible is God's portrait album, and although it contains the portraits of many saints and sinners, there may be found on every page a portrait of Him. What we see when we open our Bible is "the face of Jesus Christ" (II Corinthians 4:6) "who is the image of the invisible God" (Colossians 1:15).

As the planets revolve around the sun, so the truths of the Bible may be said to revolve around Jesus Christ. The Bible is the written Word; Jesus is the living Word. The entire written Word is centered in the living Word. Jesus is the Author of the Bible. In every part of the Bible we are introduced to the Author.

A. JESUS CHRIST IN OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY

Scriptural References:

"And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself" (Luke 24:27).

"To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts 10:43).

The Old Testament prophecies all point forward to Jesus Christ giving a great deal of information concerning His coming and His ministry. We shall content ourselves with just a few examples:

| | |
|------------------|---|
| Genesis 3:15: | Seed of the woman |
| Isaiah 7:14: | Virgin birth |
| Psalms 22:16-18: | Piercing His hands and feet, parting His garments |
| Isaiah 53:1-12: | Christ's sufferings at Calvary |

There are altogether about one thousand prophecies in the Bible—about eight hundred in the Old Testament and about two hundred in the New. Of those in the Old Testament no less than three hundred thirty-three center in Jesus Christ.

B. JESUS CHRIST IN THE OLD TESTAMENT TYPES

The Old Testament is full of types of which Jesus Christ is almost always the anti-type. Again, we shall not attempt in dealing with a large number of these, but content ourselves with the consideration of a few examples.

1. Jacob's Ladder

Genesis 28

The word *ladder* really means “stairway.” Jacob saw a stairway and angels ascending and descending. There is no other ladder in Scripture. The ladder reached to God.

Jesus Christ is the antitype as explained in John 1:45-51. Jesus is the ladder by which God came down to man. God was on earth in Christ. If there is no virgin birth, then God didn't come down.

Jesus could love you from heaven, but He couldn't save you from there. The ladder touched earth and heaven. It was set up on earth—virgin birth; and then it touched heaven—ascension. Man can never enter heaven in any other way.

2. The Brazen Serpent

Numbers 21

This is one of the types that Jesus pointed out to us (John 3:14-15). The Israelites were sinful and were murmuring against God. As judgment, fiery serpents were sent among them. When the people cried to Moses for aid, God instructed Moses to construct a serpent of brass and lift it up on a pole. All that was necessary was to look—“look and live.”

There is no man or woman living who has not the poison of the serpent bite. We are sinners under the sentence and shadow of death. The poison of the serpent is the poison of sin.

Brass in Scripture is typical of judgment. So the serpent of brass speaks of judgment. Christ was judged in our stead. The serpent on the pole stands for judgment. The anti-type gives us judgment, for Christ on the cross was judged.

A look at the serpent on the pole brought life. The serpents brought death, but the look brought life.

3. Manna

Exodus 16

The manna was the wilderness food of Israel.

Jesus Christ is the antitype as stated in John 6:30-58.

Manna came down from heaven. Christ is the bread which comes down from heaven. They didn't have to understand the manna; all they had to do was eat. All we have to do is accept Christ; we don't have to understand. Manna rested on the earth only a little while; the thirty-three years of Christ's life are brief in the face of eternity. Manna came then and has never come since; Christ came once as a Savior.

The Old Testament is full of types pointing forward to Jesus Christ. It is possible to name a long list of such types: Adam, Aaron, Isaac, Jonah, Joseph, the Passover lamb, the cities of refuge, the Tabernacle in the wilderness, the high priest and his garments, etc.

C. JESUS CHRIST IN THE OLD TESTAMENT OFFERINGS AND SACRIFICES

Every offering and sacrifice, of which the Old Testament is full, points to Jesus Christ from every conceivable point of view:

Genesis 22:13: the sacrifice for the individual – Isaac

Exodus 12:3: the sacrifice for the household – Passover

Leviticus 4:13-15: the sacrifice for the nation

John 3:16: the sacrifice for the world

D. JESUS CHRIST IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

The entire New Testament is the record of the life and ministry of our Lord in bringing salvation to mankind. Each division of the New Testament gives us a different aspect of His life and ministry.

1. The Gospels

Matthew wrote for the Jews, and set forth Jesus as King. Here God says to us, "Behold thy King" (Matthew 21:5).

Mark wrote for the Romans and set forth Christ as the true Servant and Son of God. Here God says to us, "Behold My Servant" (Isaiah 42:1).

Luke wrote for the Greeks, and set forth Christ as Son of Man. Here God says to us, "Behold the Man" (John 19:5).

2. Acts and the Epistles

In Acts and the Epistles we see Jesus Christ living and ministering in His church.

3. Revelation

In Revelation Jesus is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. In fact, the entire prophecy is the "Revelation of Jesus Christ."

Lesson Eight

DISPENSATIONAL TRUTH

A dispensation is a period of time during which God deals in a particular way with man in respect to sin and man's responsibility. Unless a person understands the dispensations, he cannot understand the Bible, and it becomes a book of confusion.

The word *dispensation* means "administration."

"For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me" (I Corinthians 9:17).

During a dispensation man is tested in respect of obedience and to some specific revelation of the will of God.

If we consider the Tribulation as a separate dispensation, there are *eight* dispensations. In this study we shall consider eight dispensations although some may disagree and place the Tribulation period in the church age or dispensation of grace.

A. DISPENSATION OF INNOCENCE

1. Period of Time: The length of time is not known. It began with the creation of man and ended with the fall of man (Genesis 1:26 - 2:23).

2. Man's Responsibility: Man must choose whether he will believe God's Word or the statements of Satan.

3. Man's Failure and the Consequences: Man chose to believe Satan rather than God. Judgment came upon mankind, the earth and Satan. The necessity of the Savior is seen and the promise of a Savior is given.

B. DISPENSATION OF CONSCIENCE

1. Period of time: This period lasted from the fall of man to the flood—1,656 years (Genesis 3-7).

2. Man's Responsibility: Man was to choose between doing good and doing evil. He insisted on evil.

3. Man's Failure and Consequences: Man proved to be exceedingly wicked, and as a result judgment came through the flood. God's mercy is seen by saving eight people to begin a new dispensation.

C. DISPENSATION OF HUMAN GOVERNMENT

1. Period of time: This dispensation lasted from the flood to the confusion of tongues at Babel – 427 years.

2. Man's Responsibility: Noah was given the responsibility to govern for God.

3. Man's Failure and the Consequences: Noah revealed that man is unable to govern himself and therefore unable to govern others. The building of the tower of Babel was an organized political and religious rebellion against God. The consequences of man's failure were the confusion of tongues and the dispersion of the people.

D. DISPENSATION OF PROMISE

1. Period of time: This period lasted from the call of Abraham to the Exodus – 430 years (Genesis 11:10 - 15:21).

2. Man's Responsibility: Abraham was to stay in the land that God had given to him, and not to go down into Egypt which is a type of the world.

3. Man's Failure and the Consequences: Abram doubted God's Word and went down to Egypt for food. Finally, Jacob's entire house went down to Egypt. The result was slavery in Egypt, sin, and idolatry. Divine mercy is seen in the deliverance and preservation of Israel.

E. DISPENSATION OF LAW

1. Period of time: This dispensation lasted from Sinai to Calvary, from the exodus to the cross – 1,491 years.

2. Man's Responsibility: Israel was to keep the law which included the Ten Commandments and all social and civil law.

3. Man's Failure and the Consequences: They failed to keep the law, and the only One who did keep the law was crucified by them.

F. DISPENSATION OF GRACE (HOLY GHOST AND CHURCH DISPENSATION)

1. **Period of time:** From the outpouring of the Holy Ghost on the Day of Pentecost to the rapture of the church.

2. **Man's Responsibility:** Man is to believe in and accept the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior and to obey the gospel.

3. **Man's Failure and the Consequences:** Man becomes a lover of himself, of money, of pleasure and a rejecter of Jesus Christ. The result is that God gives them up to unbelief and eternal judgment.

G. DISPENSATION OF JUDGMENT OR TRIBULATION

1. **Period of time:** This period will last from the rapture of the church to the Millennium.

2. **Man's Responsibility:** Man is to recognize and worship God; he is to refuse to take the mark of the beast.

3. **Man's Failure and the Consequences:** Man refuses to repent. The result is utter destruction and Armageddon.

H. DISPENSATION OF THE KINGDOM

1. **Period of time:** From the return of Christ to the Great White Throne Judgment— one thousand years.

2. **Man's Responsibility:** Man is to obey and submit to the King and also to worship Him.

3. **Man's Failure and the Consequences:** Man gives feigned obedience, but when given a choice, he follows Satan. The result is complete destruction by fire.

I. EACH DISPENSATION ENDS IN A WORLD CRISIS

| | |
|------------------|------------------------------------|
| Innocence | - Expulsion of man from the garden |
| Conscience | - The flood |
| Human Government | - Confusion of tongues |
| Promise | - Bondage of the chosen race |
| Law | - The cross of Christ |
| Grace | - The rapture of the church |

Tribulation - The binding of Satan
Kingdom - Fire from heaven

J. IN EACH DISPENSATION GOD COMES DOWN

Innocence - God came down to the garden
Conscience - God talked with Noah
Human Government - God said, "Let us go down"
Promise - "I am come down" (burning bush)
Law - Incarnation of Christ
Grace - The Lord shall descend
Tribulation - Coming to earth
Kingdom - Still upon the earth

K. IMPORTANCE OF DISPENSATIONAL TRUTH

Dispensational truth is very important in rightly dividing the Word of Truth. One must never take truth that belongs to a past dispensation and apply it to the present, nor a truth which belongs to a future dispensation and try to apply it to the present.

We shall be content in giving only one example of this: The 144,000 belongs in the Tribulation Dispensation, not in the Church Dispensation.

Lesson Nine

THE STUDY OF NUMBERS IN THE BIBLE

As we study the Bible, we are impressed with the significance that numbers have in God's Word. Every detail of the Scriptures is important, and this is very evident with the study of numerals.

Let us be careful that we do not place an importance upon this study that God never intended. It would be wholly impossible to build a doctrine upon the significance of the various numerals in the Bible. It is sufficient to recognize that God has placed a certain meaning upon each numeral. Such recognition should strengthen our faith in the fact that there was one Author of the Bible, that the Scriptures are the product of one Supreme Mind.

A. NUMBER ONE

The number one is a primary number. All other numbers depend upon one. It precedes and produces all other numbers.

The number one is God's number. Without Him nothing could exist.

The number one stands alone, independent of all others. God is independent; we are dependent.

God is one who has a solution for every problem. His Word has been given to us as the one *Book*, the only *Book*.

B. NUMBER TWO

The number two is the number of division and separation. Number two affirms there is a difference.

God divided the night from the day. There is a separation of the saved and unsaved. The human race is divided into two classes. There is the first Adam who failed; there is the second Adam who brought salvation.

There are many twos in Scripture:

Old Testament and New Testament
Law and grace
Strait gate and wide gate
Narrow way and broad way
Cain and Abel
Ishmael and Isaac

C. NUMBER THREE

The number three is the number of union, approval, and completeness.

There is the three-fold testing of man: lust of the flesh, lust of the eye, and the pride of life. There are three enemies of man: the world, flesh, and the devil. Man is body, soul, and spirit.

There are three that bear witness in earth: Spirit, water, and blood.

D. NUMBER FOUR

The number four is the creation number. It has special reference to the earth. On the fourth day the creation of material things was completed.

There are four directions: north, east, south, and west.

There are four seasons: spring, summer, autumn, and winter.

There are four kinds of soil in the parable: wayside, stony, thorny, and the good. There are four Gospels which give the life of our Lord upon earth.

E. NUMBER FIVE

The number five is significant of God's grace.

The pillars of the outer court in the Tabernacle were five cubits apart and five cubits high.

Five titles are given to our Lord in Isaiah 9:6: Wonderful, Counselor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace.

Jesus took five loaves and fed the five thousand.

F. NUMBER SIX

The number six is man's number. This number brings to light the sad state of human incompleteness.

Man was created on the sixth day. Six days were to mark the number of man's labor.

Goliath was six cubits tall; he wore six pieces of armor; his spear's head weighed 600 shekels of iron.

Nebuchadnezzar set up an image sixty cubits high and six cubits wide. Six kinds of musical instruments played to denote the time to worship the image.

The number of Antichrist is 666 (Revelation 13:18).

G. NUMBER SEVEN

The number seven denotes divine fullness, perfection, and completeness. It is one of the perfect numbers and comes from a Hebrew word meaning "to be full" or "to be satisfied."

In Revelation there are seven churches, seven seals, seven trumpets, seven personages, seven vials, seven dooms, seven new things.

There are seven better things in Hebrews. There are seven sayings on the cross. God rested on the seventh day. We are to forgive seventy times seven.

H. NUMBER EIGHT

The number eight is the number of the resurrection.

On the eighth day there is a new beginning. The first day of the week is a resurrection day.

Eight people were saved in the flood. A Jewish child was circumcised on the eighth day.

David was the eighth son of Jesse while Solomon was the eighth son of David. The writers of the New Testament were eight in number: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul, James, Peter, and Jude.

I. NUMBER NINE

The number nine is the number of judgment and finality.

Jesus was nailed to the cross at nine o'clock in the morning and died at the ninth hour of the day.

There is the nine-fold fruit of the Spirit given in Galatians 5:22-23 which speaks of finality, for there is nothing more needed. Likewise, there are the nine gifts of the Spirit as recorded in I Corinthians 12:8-10.

J. NUMBER TEN

The number ten is another perfect number. It speaks of perfection in divine order and human responsibility.

The human body has five fingers on each hand, ten in all. The ten toes speak of human responsibility in divine walk.

In the Ten Commandments we see the completeness of God's claim. The completeness of God's judgment is seen in the ten plagues. Man's responsibility in stewardship is to give God one-tenth.

K. NUMBER ELEVEN

The number eleven is the number of disorder and imperfection. Eleven speaks of the disorder just before the midnight hour. When Judas betrayed Jesus, it left eleven disciples which spoke of incompleteness.

L. NUMBER TWELVE

This number speaks of governmental perfection or rule. Our Lord chose twelve disciples. There were twelve tribes of Israel.

The wall of New Jerusalem has twelve foundations. The length, breadth, and height of the city are 12,000 furlongs.

Lesson Ten

PARABLES, TYPES, AND FIGURES OF SPEECH

In order to understand and interpret the Bible correctly, the student of the Bible must be familiar with its various expressions and figures of speech in the Bible. We shall make no attempt to give an exhaustive study of these, but rather to just mention some of the more common ones.

A. PARABLE

A parable teaches a spiritual truth by analogy from a natural situation. The word *parable* implies a “placing along side of” for purposes of comparison. The essential element of a parable is the spiritual lesson to be taught.

A parable is an earthly story with a heavenly meaning. It may or may not be a true story. A parable is an extended simile.

Jesus gave us the reason why He taught in parables: “And with many such parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to hear it. But without a parable spake he not unto them” (Mark 4:33-34).

There are two reasons why parables were used:

1. To make truth known to the sincere disciple of our Lord who really does desire to understand.
2. To hide the truth from the idly curious, the one who really does not desire to understand.

Because of this, we need spiritual wisdom and divine revelation in the interpretation of a parable. It is important to relate the story to the background of social customs of that time. It is necessary to understand how much of the parable was interpreted by the speaker or by the context.

We should not try to establish any doctrine on a parable. However, the parable can throw light on the doctrine. Remember it was meant to be an illustration of a truth. Also

,we must be careful that we do not read into the parable more than what was meant. We should look for the parable to illustrate one main spiritual truth.

B. ALLEGORY

An allegory is sometimes called a prolonged metaphor. It is often an involved narration of an artificial event or story in which all the details are determined by the realities they point to and the message they are meant to convey. Thus, in an allegory there need be no attempt to be true to life, whereas a parable always presents a real familiar life situation.

One of the most familiar examples of an allegory is Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. A well-known allegory in the Bible is found in the story of the two sons of Abraham representing the two covenants (Galatians 4:22-31).

C. TYPE

A type is a divinely appointed illustration of some scriptural truth. A type is a shadow cast on the pages of the Old Testament history by a truth whose full embodiment or antitype is found in New Testament revelation.

Our English word *type* is derived from the Greek *tupos* which occurs sixteen times in the New Testament. The Greek word is very striking and has many shades of meaning. It is translated by such words as *print, figure, pattern, etc.*

Types may be classified as follows:

1. A person, e.g. Adam, Isaac, Jonah, etc.
2. An event, e.g. Deliverance from Egyptian bondage, the wilderness journey, the conquest of Canaan, etc.
3. A thing, e.g. Veil of the tabernacle, brazen serpent, etc.
4. Rituals, e.g. The offerings, the Passover, etc.

Types have these characteristics:

1. They are thoroughly rooted in history.
2. They are prophetic in nature.
3. They are designed as a part of redemptive history.
4. They are Christ centered.
5. They have spiritual meaning in both dispensations.

A true type must be:

1. A true picture of the person or thing it prefigures
2. Of divine appointment
3. A picture which prefigures something future

A study of types is not easy. It calls for much time, work, and prayer. Nevertheless, a study of typology is very important for a true understanding of God's Word. A type must never be used to teach a doctrine, but only to illustrate a doctrine which is clearly taught elsewhere.

D. ANTITYPE

Certain Old Testament items and practices are called types of New Testament truths. The New Testament realities are the anti-types. Thus, we can see the relation between type and antitype between the Canaan rest and the heavenly rest. Many Old Testament types point forward to Jesus Christ. He is the antitype of the Tabernacle, its priests, and its offerings.

E. SHADOW

You can never have a shadow without a body to cast the shadow. In the Old Testament you have the shadow, but in the New Testament you meet the body which cast the shadow.

F. SIMILE

A simile is where one thing is likened to another by direct statement. Generally, the words "like" or "as" are used.

"And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water" (Psalm 1:3).

"As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country" (Proverbs 25:25).

"I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal" (I Corinthians 13:1).

G. METAPHOR

A metaphor likens one thing to another by implication. Words are taken from their literal meaning and given a new and striking use.

"And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself

being the chief corner stone" (Ephesians 2:20).

"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want" (Psalm 23:1).

Here is a comparison of these two figures of speech:

Metaphor: "flesh is grass" (Isaiah 40:6)
"sheep of his pasture" (Psalms 100:3)

Simile: "flesh is as grass" (I Peter 1:24)
"We like sheep" (Isaiah 53:6)

H. PERSONIFICATION

A personification is a figure of speech whereby an inanimate object, an object of nature, or abstract idea is given attributes of life.

"Earth opened her mouth" (Numbers 16:32).

I. APOSTROPHE

Apostrophe comes from the Greek meaning "to turn." This figure of speech is a turning from the reader or hearer and addressing that which is absent as present or addressing the inanimate as living.

"O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" (I Corinthians 15:55).

J. HYPERBOLE

Hyperbole is a rhetorical figure to magnify an object beyond reality. It is an overstatement used for the purpose of deep emphasis with no thought of deception.

"I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written" (John 21:25).

Lesson Eleven

HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE Part I

A. HOW TO PREPARE FOR BIBLE STUDY

1. A Bible student should own a good Bible.

Buy a good Bible—one that is well bound and has clear type that can be read without eye strain. We recommend the Authorized Version.

2. A Bible student should own a Bible in modern language.

There are many Bibles of modern version available. One of the most popular which can be recommended is the Amplified Bible. If the student can afford it, he could have several of these modern versions. By comparing one with the other he can receive a great deal of help in understanding the Scriptures.

3. A Bible student should own a good concordance.

Again there are several from which he may choose. The important thing is to have one that will give him a complete summary of all Scriptures on any one subject and that will trace any particular word through the entire Bible.

4. A Bible student should possess a good notebook.

Buying a cheap notebook is poor economy. A loose leaf notebook of excellent quality will last a lifetime.

B. SPIRITUAL PREPARATION NECESSARY FOR BIBLE STUDY

1. A Bible student should be a born again believer.

It is essential to have a personal acquaintance with the Author of the Bible if we are to understand His Word. The unregenerate man cannot understand spiritual truths. I Corinthians 2:11 states, "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man

which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.”

2. A Bible student should be fully persuaded of the inspiration of God’s Word.

The Bible is not just another book. It is God’s Word. We must approach the Bible on bended knee. The Bible student must never put a question mark where God puts a period.

3. A Bible student must have a love for the Bible.

To be a successful student of the Bible there should be a real passion to know the Bible.

4. A Bible student should pray for discernment.

The knowledge of the Bible will depend upon the revelation of God and the mind of the student being illuminated by the Holy Spirit. Therefore, it is essential that the student pray for guidance and understanding.

5. A Bible student should be willing to obey.

If we are to know the Word, we must do the will of God. It is impossible to fully understand God’s Word if we have a spirit of rebellion.

6. A Bible student must study regularly and consistently.

The Bible should never be studied haphazardly. There should be regular hours set aside for the study of God’s Word.

C. THE BENEFITS OF BIBLE STUDY

1. Personal Faith

As we study the Word, faith increases. The source of our faith is what God has said and promised.

“So faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God” (Romans 10:17).

2. A Sanctified Holy Life

There is cleansing power in the Word of God. D. L. Moody made this statement, “The Bible will keep you from sin or sin will keep you from this Book.” How true this is!

3. Preparation for Service

It is impossible to be a successful personal worker without being able to use God's Word. God honors His Word, not the person. It is the Word that leads a soul to Christ, not just an argument. We must know the Word if we are to be a soul winner.

"And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Ephesians 6:17).

4. Power in the Ministry

If you use the Word of God you will have power in your ministry. The Word is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness (II Timothy 3:16).

5. Knowledge

There is no greater source of knowledge than God's Word. A man who is a student of the Bible is a man of understanding and great knowledge.

6. Benefits Given in the Bible Itself

- a. Bible study will keep one from sinning against God (Psalm 119:11).
- b. Bible study protects against false doctrine (Acts 20:29-32).
- c. Bible study assures joy (Jeremiah 15:16).
- d. Bible study gives peace (Psalm 85:8).
- e. Bible study gives over the evil one (I John 2:24).
- f. Bible study is a source of answered prayer (John 15:7).
- g. Bible study gives wisdom (Psalm 119:98, 100, 130).
- h. Bible study makes one complete (II Timothy 3:16, 17).

The importance of Bible study cannot be overestimated.

D. SOME RULES FOR BIBLE STUDY

1. A Born Again Experience

Bible study is a discerning search for spiritual truth. Men cannot receive this spiritual truth by their own innate wisdom. Spiritual truth only comes through faith and spiritual discernment and revelation.

2. Preparation

Heart-searching should precede Bible searching. Do not rush into God's presence and out again without taking time to free your mind of distractions, to search your soul, and to sense the nearness of God. Try to be alone and uninterrupted.

3. Normal Interpretation

In Bible interpretation we should use this principle: "When the plain sense makes good sense, we should seek no other sense." A passage should be taken literally unless the context shows that it is to be understood otherwise.

4. Contextual Consideration

A text without a context is a pretext.

Each word must be evaluated in its usage in the sentence. A sentence must be considered in the light of the paragraph. A paragraph must be studied in its relation to the chapter, the chapter in its relation to the entire book.

We may go one step further and consider the Bible itself in its relation to all knowledge, whether spiritual or secular. The Bible is the center or the heart of all knowledge.

5. Triple Approach

A text of Scripture may have a threefold interpretation.

- a. Its primary meaning
- b. Its spiritual meaning as applied to our lives
- c. Its symbolic or prophetic meaning

An example of this may be given in reference to the messages addressed to the seven churches in the second and third chapters of Revelation.

- a. There is the primary interpretation in the description of the churches existing in that day and the exhortations given to them.
- b. There is the spiritual application as we apply these messages to our own hearts.
- c. There is the prophetic interpretation as we trace church history by means of these churches, each one describing and representing a definite period in church history.

Lesson Twelve

HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE Part II

A. HOW TO STUDY A BOOK OF THE BIBLE

1. Read the book through to find:

- a. The main theme of the book. Try to express in your own words in a sentence or two the main message contained in the book.
- b. The key verses of the book. Write these verses out in long hand.

2. Learn what you can about the writer:

- a. What is given about the writer's personality and biography in the book itself?
- b. Find out all you can about the writer in reference books.

3. Where was the book written? If possible this should be determined by reading the book itself.

4. When was the book written? Locate the time of the writing within the life span of the author.

5. To whom was this book written? Give chapter and verse if the information is given in the book.

6. What problem in the lives of the readers made the book necessary?

7. List by chapter and verse terms that are repeated and words, phrases or clauses that are unusual and unique.

8. Define all words and phrases that appear difficult. Be certain that you understand the meaning of every expression.

9. What does this book teach about Jesus Christ? Make a complete outline of what the book teaches about Jesus.

10. **Study any major divisions in the structure of the book.** List these divisions clearly.

B. HOW TO STUDY A CHAPTER OF THE BIBLE

There are 1,189 chapters in the Bible. Many of them, like Psalms 23 and I Corinthians 13, have been favorites for generations. Some chapter divisions were unfortunate, but on the whole, chapters make suitable units for study.

1. **What is the theme of the chapter?** Read the chapter through at one time and write a phrase that would sum up the main thought of the chapter.

2. **What is the key verse in the chapter?** Write out this verse in long hand.

3. **What people are mentioned in the chapter?** Make a list of the people with information given about each.

4. **What are the commands which we should obey?**

5. **What are the promises which we should claim?**

6. **What are the lessons which we should remember?**

7. **List the words and phrases that have a special appeal to you.**

8. **List the words and phrases that are repeated in the chapter.**

9. **List all the difficult words and phrases and check the meaning of each in a concordance or Bible dictionary.**

10. **What does this chapter teach us about Jesus Christ?** Make a complete outline of what this chapter teaches about Jesus.

C. HOW TO STUDY A BIBLE DOCTRINE

The chief aim of all Bible study is to understand the doctrine of the Bible and be able to apply them to our own lives. For the young student it might be wise to begin by studying the doctrine as given in one book and then expand the study from there.

1. **Collect all references to the doctrine.** Trace all these Scriptures by the use of a concordance or topical Bible. It is recommended that all the Scriptures be written with references in long hand.

2. **Compare all these references.** What do they have in common? Where do they differ?

3. **Relate the references to their immediate context and the total pattern of biblical truth.** Study each reference in the light of its context.

4. **Define the doctrine.**

5. **Apply the doctrine to personal experience.** How may it be applied to our lives?

6. **Write a paragraph giving a summary of the doctrine.**

D. HOW TO STUDY A BIBLE BIOGRAPHY

The study of Bible personalities is very fascinating. Great spiritual lessons may be learned from the experiences of Bible characters. In the Bible there are 2,930 separate individuals.

In studying a Bible character, be careful not to confuse different people who have the same name. There are thirty with the name of Zachariah, twenty with the name of Nathan, fifteen with the name of Jonathan, eight with the name of Judas, seven with the name of Mary, five with the name of James, and five with the name of John.

1. **What is the meaning of the individual's name?** Check the name in a reference Bible or Bible dictionary. The name often tells you much about the individual.

2. **What is the ancestral background?**

3. **What religious and secular crises occurred in his life?**

4. **What advantages did he have in training and development?**

5. **What traits of character were manifested?** Write a brief character sketch of this person.

6. **What friends did this man have?** What influence did they have upon him?

7. **What failures and faults occurred in this life?**

8. **What important contributions were made by this individual?**

9. **What lessons can be found in this life that are of special value to you?**

E. HOW TO STUDY A BIBLE MIRACLE

Miracles are divine contraventions of the normal course of things. They not only display God's power in some unusual way, but they also bring out some important truth.

There are sixty-two miracles recorded in the Old Testament. The Bible also records thirty-eight primary miracles of Christ, forty secondary miracles of Christ, and fifteen miracles by the apostles.

1. **Make an outline of the miracle.**
2. **Note the term designating the miracle.** Does it imply wonder, power, or purpose?
3. **What does the miracle reveal about the nature of God?**
4. **What does the miracle reveal about the work of God?**
5. **What command or prayer brought forth the miracle?**

F. HOW TO STUDY A BIBLE PARABLE

A parable may or may not be a true story to teach a spiritual lesson. Do not try to establish a doctrine on a parable, but rather use the parable as an illustration of a doctrine already established on other doctrinal passages.

1. **What occasion provoked the telling of the parable?**
2. **Note the details, customs and practices which are brought out in the parable.** Study the manner of living referred to.
3. **To whom was the parable told?**
4. **What one main lesson does it teach?**
5. **Does the context help in the interpretation of this parable?**
6. **What other Bible passages teach this truth?**
7. **How can you apply this truth to your own experience this very week?**
8. **Using present day situations, write a parable to convey the same truth.**

Name: _____ Date: _____

Self Help Test: Bible Introduction

Lesson One

Give one word answers for the following questions:

1. How many books are in the New Testament?

2. What is the meaning of the English word *Bible*?

3. What is the meaning of the word *Scripture*?

4. How many chapters are in the Bible?

5. How many historical books are in the Old Testament?

6. What are the first five books of the Bible called?

7. What book follows the book of Obadiah?

8. What is another word that could be used for *Testament*?

9. What scriptural reference speaks of the Bible being a sword?

10. What scriptural reference speaks of the Bible being a lamp?

11. What book follows the book of Joshua?

12. What is the name of the first Bible divided into verses?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Self Help Test: Bible Introduction

Lesson Two

Fill in the blanks with the correct word from those listed below.

| | | |
|--------------|--------------|------------|
| 1,600 | illumination | revelation |
| author | inspiration | tense |
| forty | plenary | three |
| God-breathed | prophecy | word |

1. God used _____ men in writing the Bible.
2. We have a record of God writing _____ times.
3. The Bible was written by _____.
4. The act of God by which He directly communicates truth to the human mind is known as _____.
5. By _____ inspiration we mean full inspiration.
6. The Bible was written over a period of _____ years.
7. The meaning of inspiration is _____.
8. In the Bible even the _____ of a verb is important.
9. The Bible has one _____.
10. Bible _____ prove the Bible to be inspired.
11. _____ is the influence of the Spirit upon the minds of men that they might understand truth.
12. By "verbal inspiration" we mean that each _____ was inspired.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Self Help Test: Bible Introduction

Lesson Four

1. Why is doctrine important?

2. Give three verses of Scripture, including references, to prove the importance of doctrine.

a.

b.

c.

3. What four principles are to be remembered in understanding doctrine?

a.

b.

c.

d.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Self Help Test: Bible Introduction

Lesson Five

Indicate whether the following statements are true or false.

1. The Septuagint was written in Bethlehem. _____
2. The Old Hebrew language left out all vowels. _____
3. In 1536 Tyndale was burned at the stake. _____
4. The Bible was divided into chapters for the purpose of a Latin concordance. _____
5. Alfred the Great was a lover of the Bible. _____
6. Wycliffe was burned at the stake in 1384. _____
7. Pope Damasus requested Jerome to revise a Latin version of the Bible. _____
8. The Vulgate was Greek translation of the Bible. _____
9. *Manuscript* means "written by hand." _____
10. Tyndale was a contemporary of Luther. _____
11. Miles Coverdale printed the whole Bible in English in 1535, _____
12. Jerome made his headquarters in Rome. _____

Name: _____ Date: _____

Self Help Test: Bible Introduction

Lesson Six

1. Give three reasons why the Geneva Bible was a very important Bible.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.

2. Give three reasons why the Apocrypha is not included in our Bible.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.

3. Give the names of the following Bibles:
 - a. Translated by forty-seven scholars and published in 1611
 - b. The Roman Catholic English translation from the Latin Vulgate
 - c. A Bible that was chained to the pulpit
 - d. A Bible authorized by King Henry VIII

Name: _____ Date: _____

Self Help Test: Bible Introduction

Lesson Seven

1. Show how Jesus Christ was revealed in the Old Testament prophecies. Give at least two scriptural references.

2. Show how Jesus Christ was reveal in the Old Testament types. Give at least two scriptural references.

3. Show how Jesus Christ was revealed in the Old Testament sacrifices. Give at least two scriptural references.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Self Help Test: Bible Introduction

Lesson Eight

1. Name the eight dispensations.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
 - e.
 - f.
 - g.
 - h.

2. Name the crisis with which each dispensation ended.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
 - e.
 - f.
 - g.
 - h.

3. Why is dispensational truth important?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Self Help Test: Bible Introduction

Lesson Nine

1. State the significance of each number from 1 to 12 in the Bible.
 - a. One
 - b. Two
 - c. Three
 - d. Four
 - e. Five
 - f. Six
 - g. Seven
 - h. Eight
 - i. Nine
 - j. Ten
 - k. Eleven
 - l. Twelve

2. What lesson may we learn when we recognize the importance of numbers in the Bible?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Self Help Test: Bible Introduction

Lesson Ten

1. Write the correct word following each definition.
 - a. A prolonged metaphor
 - b. Where one thing is likened to another by direct statement
 - c. The New Testament realities of which we have types
 - d. Where an inanimate object is given the attribute of life
 - e. An earthly story with a heavenly meaning

2. Give five examples of types in the Old Testament with the New Testament antitype.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
 - e.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Self Help Test: Bible Introduction

Lesson Eleven

1. Give three benefits of Bible study.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.

2. Give three rules for Bible study.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.

3. Explain what is meant by the triple approach to Bible interpretation.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Self Help Test: Bible Introduction

Lesson Twelve

1. Outline how you would study a Bible biography.

2. Outline how you would study a Bible doctrine.