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“Of the world.” The world he is referring to is not our physical world but all the people living in this physical world. It includes every tribe, every race, every location, every age group, both sexes ... all the people of the world.

Jesus said this same thing in many different ways at different times. So, just what was (and is) Jesus saying? He is saying that:

- 1) The **“you”** means he is counting on every one of us to so live, think and speak that we are able to take over his task after his short, physical life here on earth ended.
- 2) The **“are”** means that task began at that moment in time when he gave us this responsibility nearly 2,000 years ago.
- 3) **“The light”** means he expects us to think, speak and live so much like him that others will see God and see Jesus through us.
- 4) **“Of the world.”** If each Christian, each one of us, does as he has asked us to do, wherever we are in the world, all the people in the world can have an opportunity to get the eternal life Jesus came to give all mankind.

The Book

Hello or Greetings, Dear Friend,

We are most happy to have you join with us in this new I.B.S. lesson series called **THE BOOK**.

We sincerely wish the best to you and your loved ones. This study may well be the most important one in your life. We will be looking deeply into a message that has brought new life to millions and millions of people since it first became known. We cannot personally greet you at this time but hopefully that time will come.

These lessons are about the good book that has come to us in our world from our God in heaven. This book has been called the most priceless possession of the human race. Millions of copies of it are printed each year.

There is a clear difference between this book and all other books. God is its actual author. God, using many people, put it into words and into written form. But behind all of them is God, the actual author.

You will find much in this series of studies to think about. We believe you will be blessed by the message it has for you. We look forward to hearing from you and answering your questions. We want to help you understand and accept its message.

These lessons will open the door to what can really make life great. Our goal is to share with you that which has been a blessing to us.

May God bless you on your way ...

How Can IBS Give You Its Courses Free of Charge?

You receive these courses free of charge because caring Christians give what it costs to purchase and send them. Also, IBS does not have to have a school building where students and teachers meet together for study. IBS teachers are Christian volunteers. Most of them do their work right out of their own homes. They may be busy people but they give their time to help their students by correcting lesson answer sheets, giving additional information and answering student questions. Most also personally pay the postage to write to you.

Why do they do what they do? They realize they have been blessed by God's love for them and his forgiving them of their sins plus the bonus of eternal life at the end of their journey on this earth. They want to share what they have received with others, even their enemies. Their reward is to know that they have been a spiritual blessing to others. Occasionally a few teachers keep in contact with their past students somewhere else in the world and a few even go, often with a group of other Christians, to personally visit and encourage their students. Giving of one's self is a normal and natural result of a Christian's gratitude for the spiritual blessing they have received through Christ.

Jesus first sent out his twelve disciples to tell the good news about him to their own people, the Jews. He gave them his instructions as recorded in Matthew 10:1-42. Among the many things Jesus said were these words, "**Freely you have received, freely give,**" Matt. 10:8. They were to do what they did for free no matter how badly they might be treated by others.

Jesus also said this to a great crowd who came out to hear him: "**Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you,**" Luke 6:37-38.

The study of the Bible brings us closer to knowing the only true God and his Son whom he sent to be our Saviour. The proof of God's love can be seen in his creation, throughout all history and even in all of our lives. Yes, there is still suffering in the world. But let us never forget that it came upon our world when mankind rejected the one who alone gives real life, joy, peace and happiness. It was because of the lies of God's enemy, Satan, that man rejected what God's great love had planned for us. Still, God did not reject us and leave us to our own fate. God's compassion still calls us back to receive the greatest of his blessings, eternal life. For this we praise God!

Jesus said, **For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.** " But he also said, "**whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him,**" John 3:16, 36.

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We are also partners with others who can refer you to IBS Lessons in an ever growing number of languages.

<http://white-fields.org/ibs/ibslessonsindex.html>

In this White Fields Overseas Evangelism web site, our lessons are listed under "Lessons for New Christians."

<http://www.latm.info>

This is Literature and Teaching Ministries. Go to "Internet Resources." This refers you to the IBS web site.

<http://www.abarc.org/>

ARM or American Rehabilitation Ministries. Go to their web site and then to "many Other Great Resources," then to "IBS"

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We believe the Bible has the answer to life's most important questions. And, we want to help you through this beginning IBS correspondence course to ...

1. Better understand what life should be all about.
2. Know what it means to live our lives without Christ.
3. Face the fact that the world cannot meet all of our needs.
4. Find out what God's greatest desires are for you.
5. Find out how forgiveness from God can be yours through Christ.

If this interests you, ask your teacher for a copy of this study course or download it from the IBS website.

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Advanced Correspondence Course
THE BOOK

Lesson 1 – What is This Book

Lesson 2 – Why the Bible is a Very Special Book

Lesson 3 – Finding Your Way Around in the Bible

Lesson 4 – Understanding What is Written

Lesson 5 – Getting the Message of the Bible

Lesson 6 – Some Basic Bible Study Guidelines

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Bible Book Titles and Their Abbreviations as Used In these Lessons

Old Testament Book Titles Used

Genesis (Gen.)	Exodus (Ex.)	Deuteronomy (Deut.)
Joshua	Samuel (Sam.)	Kings
Isaiah (Isa.)	Esther	Job
Psalms	Song of Solomon	Isaiah (Isa.)
Jeremiah (Jer.)	Daniel	Hosea
Malachi		

New Testament Book Titles Used

Matthew (Matt.)	Mark	Luke (Lk.)
John (Jn.)	Acts	Romans (Rom.)
Corinthians (Cor.)	Galatians (Gal.)	Philippians (Phil.)
Colossians (Col.)	Thessalonians (Thess.)	Timothy (Tim.)
Hebrews (Heb.)	James (Jas.)	Peter (Pet.)
Jude	Revelation (Rev.)	

STUDENT INSTRUCTIONS BEGIN HERE

This information is for all IBS lessons. Read it carefully.

Welcome to International Bible School.

We are happy to study the Bible together with you. Also included are lesson questions to be answered by you. Today this is often called Distance Learning. We do not require you to accept all the teachings found in the lessons but we hope you will accept what we teach. If you wish to express your own ideas, tell us why you believe them instead of what is taught here.

We recommend that you first complete our Beginner's Correspondence Course. You can ask for this course if you have not yet received it and we will send it to you. Also, a Bible is needed. Ask us for one if you do not have one.

Five (5) things to do when studying all IBS lessons:

1. Carefully read each lesson. Look up the Bible verses each time they are given.
2. After you have studied a part (or all) of a lesson, go to the Questions.
3. You may go back into the lesson to review what it says at any time even while answering the lesson questions.
4. Answer the questions for each lesson. Do only one lesson at a time. Next, remove the lesson questions from the booklet and send them to your teacher.
5. Wait for your teacher's reply to be sure you are doing your work properly.

Some ways your teacher may help you: your teacher will...

1. ...review your answers to all the questions.

...write **"You are the light of the world," Matt. 5:14-16**

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LESSON ONE

WHAT IS THIS BOOK?

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Why? To help them find their way, from their condemnation as a sinner, to their salva

tion from all their sins. Jesus was that spiritual light for OT or during Jesus' life on earth. Sometimes Jesus was telling people what to do at that moment in time when the person was still under the Old Covenant because it was before Jesus' death. Example: Matt. 19:16-30. Does this mean we are to ignore the Ten Commandments in Ex. 20:1-17? No. All are restated in the NT as a part of every Christian's responsibility except one. This one is on keeping the Sabbath according to the Law given through Moses, see Col. 2:16-17.

Who was it written for? Is what you are reading written for others in addition to those to whom it was first given? Does what you are reading only apply to a limited time period or group of people or only under certain circumstances? Or, is it to be applied to all people for all time?

One good example of this being true is in Matt. 28:16-20. Jesus is only speaking to his eleven remaining disciples whom he also called apostles. He gives these men a series of commands in verses 19-20. But, in this case he makes it very clear that they are to instruct all Christians to do what he told them to do during his years of teaching them. He says, **"... and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."** The **"them"** refers to those in **"all nations,"** who become his followers, see vs. 19.

Foot washing Jn. 13:1-11 is an example of just the opposite. Here Jesus washes his disciples' or apostles' feet. This was a common practice for people who wore sandals and walked almost everywhere they went with little or no paving to walk on. In my culture and time it would be the same as offering our

traveling guests fresh water, coffee or tea and maybe inviting them to use our bathroom. What Jesus did was a sign of humility, hospitality and concern, of being a servant by doing a servant's work. One of Jesus' disciples had a problem with letting someone of higher rank or position stoop down to wash his feet. Jesus saw 'ranking' as a totally wrong way of thinking. Thus, it is also an unchristian way to act. How did Jesus overcome this disciple's problem? After he was finished, he asked the twelve if they really knew what he had done. Verses 12-17 contain Jesus' answer. He was setting them an example in humility. Some have wrongly concluded that washing feet must be practiced by all Christians for all time rather than getting the teaching across to them that all Christians are to be humble servants for all time and find ways to put their humility into practice in their day or time and in their culture.

What is the Literary Style of the Part of the Bible I am Reading?

We will not restudy this question here but urge you to review Lesson Four under the heading, "Different types of literature in the Bible". Look over the basic guidelines given there.

40.

General Summary

For hundreds and hundreds of years this book has been called the most important book of all time. The total way of life for individuals, nations and whole civilizations including their systems of government have been built on the message of this book. This is especially true in Europe, the Americas and Australia but also in many parts of Africa and Asia. Efforts to bring just and equal treatment to all races of people and all levels of society including both men, women and children have been led by people who believed the message of this book. Medical and scientific advances as well as art and literature are just a few of the areas that the message of this book has affected for the general good of all people everywhere. But best of all, it has given new (and the true) meaning and purpose to the lives of millions upon millions of people.

Why has this book been so encouraging to so many for so many years? Why is it still the best selling book in the whole world? The answer is to be found not only in the great truths it contains but also because it gives to all people the real meaning and purpose of life. It gives real hope, a hope nothing on earth, even death, can destroy! In the Bible any person can find out who God is, what he is like, and what we can become because of God's concern or love for us. No other book makes known such a clear picture of God and his great love for **all people**. Also, no other book gives such amazing proofs of its truth, accuracy and God given nature. This book is most commonly known as **the Bible!**

What is Its Basic Message?

What does **this book**, the Bible, say about God and about us? From the very beginning pages of the Bible it announces that God created all human beings and he created them to be like him in many different ways. No, not with a body like God has. The Bible clearly says that God is a spirit person or spiritual being, not a person of flesh and bone. He is not limited by time or space. He does not have a physical body yet he is a person. He is not just a force or energy in the universe. Also, God has created us with both a body and a spirit. We are like him in spirit. We are created in his image because we are spiritual beings as well as physical beings.

This inner spirit sets humans (all men and women) apart from every other kind of living thing. We can do many things mentally and creatively that

no other earthly creature can do. We can make all kinds of moral decisions with our minds because God has created us like him in spirit. Our ability to make moral decisions means we are responsible for the decisions we make. Sadly, we often decide to act in ways that hurt our inner spirit-nature. There are groups that say they are Christians, who say they believe and follow the teachings of the Bible, but who have seriously twisted Jesus' message to us. For example, history books tell of such groups hating, fighting and killing other people in the name of Christianity. The God we read about in the Bible is very patient, loving, unselfish and compassionate but he is also truthful and just. He expects the same of us, his creation. Yet people are often unloving, selfish, merciless and untruthful. This type of conduct, either in our mind or body or both, destroys the God-given spirit within us. If these bad ways within us go unstoppped, we become the opposite of what God wants us to be. These evil ways within us humans can ruin both our world and us.

The Bible teaches us that God, our creator, made us with the freedom to choose right or wrong, good or evil. He created us this way. He also saw this freedom used wrongly in the first people he created. We know them as Adam and Eve. God did not give up or abandon them. Neither has he abandoned us. He chose to keep an open relationship with us. Because of his love and compassion he longed to see us escape from the effects of immoral living and the bad people groups that developed over the years. The Bible is the record of what God has done over many, many years to make it possible for us to escape the eternal punishment due to us for our bad or evil ways.

The earlier part of the Bible tells how God worked with and through imperfect people and nations before he sent Jesus to earth. But the newer and most important part of the Bible for us is the New Testament. Why? Here we read about how, when, where and why God sent us his only son, Jesus. His son came as a physical person. He came to personally demonstrate (1) what God is like, (2) what he has offered to do for us, and (3) what he wants us to do for him. God tells us about himself in the Bible in ways people can easily understand. The New Testament is where we, of this day and age, can clearly learn from Jesus' teaching and from the way he lived. We also learn what Jesus, and thus God, has planned for our lives here as well as after our physical death. The New Testament also tells us (1) how Christianity started, (2) what the church is to be like, (3) how to live as a Christian, and (4) God's plan for all people while still living here on earth as well as after our physical life on earth has ended. The Bible answers our greatest questions. Questions like: (1) where did we come from, (2) why are we here, (3) how are we to use our life on earth and (4) what is going to happen to us after we die physically?

How is the Bible Arranged or Organized?

The Bible has two main parts. They are usually called the Old Testament (OT) and the New Testament (NT). Christians, Jews and Muslims respect the first part, the OT. The OT was first written in the Hebrew-Jewish language. The NT was written in Greek, the most common international language of Jesus' day.

What are the Main Differences Between the OT & NT?

- (1) The **promises** of the New Testament are primarily heavenly—eternal life. Most but not all of the promises of the Old Testament were for life here on earth, in this physical world, see Heb. 7:18-22 and 9:11-15.
- (2) The OT did not promise the full or complete **forgiveness of sins**. The people's sins were remembered from year to year. The Jewish high priest went through a ritual required by God to have their sins rolled ahead each year on the Day of Atonement, see Heb. 7:27; 10:1-4, 11.
- (3) The **OT high priest** was human. These men both sinned and died. Jesus, the great high priest of the New Testament or Covenant, was and is perfect as well as sinless and he never dies. He lives forever, see Heb. 7:11-28.
- (4) The OT system of **repeated sacrifices** was replaced in the NT by the perfect, once and for-all-time, sacrifice of Jesus Christ, see Heb. 9:23-10:18.
- (5) Our **way of life on earth** is to be both morally higher and for a more lasting (eternal) purpose. See Jesus' Sermon on the Mount in Matt. 5:1-7:28 and read Heb. 10:19-31.
- (6) **The Old Covenant or Testament is no longer in effect**. It was replaced by a New Covenant or Testament, see Heb. 8:6-13.

Some Basic Questions to Ask Yourself When Reading the Bible

Who is speaking or writing? This is one question we almost automatically ask ourselves even in every day life (like on the phone). Who the speaker is does not always make a difference but often it does. Two speakers as different as God and Satan speak in the Bible. Who is speaking in Gen. 3:1-5 and in Matt. 4:1-11? Is it God or Satan? Satan even quotes Scripture in Matt. but he uses it incorrectly. So, does the person speaking have authority? Or, is this a person who not only does not have authority but one who needs to be corrected by someone in authority? Examples: see Matt. 16:21-23 and Rev. 22:8-9. So, our advice is: listen to the right voices, the right people.

To whom is this person writing or speaking? It will make a difference if one is reading from the OT instead of the NT and looking for guidance on how to become a Christian or live as one. Certain general moral and spiritual principles as well as human examples are in the OT, see 1 Cor. 10:6-11. But, our specific guidance is given in the NT and especially that part of the NT record after the death of Jesus on the cross, see Matt. 28:16-20; Acts 2:22-41.

Where is the speaker or writer? Usually it does not make any difference in what country, continent, building or position a person is located. There may be some difference in what the Christian says or how he says it if the person is in prison for his faith or is in a foreign land or in a city where Jesus and God are totally unknown. Example: Paul in Athens, Greece, Acts 17:16-34.

When is this being spoken or written? First of all, is it before or after the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus? If it is before these events, is it intended for us who live after these events or for those who lived before these

We need to recall three key words we have referred to before. They have the same meaning. The words are: **covenant**, **testament** and **will**. God has worked with his people through his agreements called covenants or testaments or wills. Because the three words have the same meaning we have chosen one and used it as our primary word in this study. Our choice is the word **testament**. A testament is an agreement between two or more persons.

We do not set the conditions or requirements of a God-given agreement. God does that. Why? Because he is greater than we are and he is promising us what we cannot have if he does not give it to us. To receive what he promises we must accept his requirements or conditions on “**faith**”. Faith means we believe what he has promised and are willing to act upon it. This has always been true of all of God’s testaments or agreements with people. One good series of examples is in Heb. 11:1-40. Please notice that faith, in every example given here, is more than just an idea or truth accepted in our mind, see Jas. 2:18-19. Faith is always seen by one’s action, by one’s obedience.

Some have come to a wrong conclusion about their salvation from sin. They believe **God does it all for us** and we have to do nothing. But, if we want God to commend or speak highly of us, we must do what he asks us to do, Heb. 11:4. All of the people reported in Hebrews chapter eleven lived under the OT or Old Testament. We live in the NT or New Testament time period but this “faith” requirement remains unchanged.

Here is one example of a change in a human testament or will. A person or a couple writes a will but later decides some major changes are needed and write a new will. **This new will makes the first will old and out of date.** The first is no longer binding by law. Only those parts of the first will that are also in the second will are still binding. The same is true in the Bible. The will in the OT (after which the OT is named) was made in the days of Moses by God and was between God and Abraham’s children through Isaac, Abraham’s son. These people became known as Israel or even later as the Jews.

This OLD Testament remained in effect **until** the death of Jesus on the cross. Jesus himself lived under this old will and urged his people, the Jews, to abide by it even as he introduced them to the **NEW** covenant or will or testament. So, a NEW will or testament (NT) **replaced** the OLD will or testament (OT) right after the death of the will maker or mediator, Jesus Christ, see Heb. 9:14-18. This was predicted or prophesied in the OT, Jer. 31:31-34, and clearly taught in a number of places in the NT, see Lk. 22:14-20; 1 Cor. 11:23-26; 2 Cor. 3:6. No NT book speaks of this change as often or as clearly as **the book of Hebrews**. One needs a good background in OT teaching and history to fully understand and appreciate what Hebrews says. The Jewish Christians, to whom Hebrews was first written, had that background.

Today’s translations of the Bible are from ancient Hebrew and Greek copies written long before the invention of the printing press. The OT and NT are much like little libraries. They both contain a number of separate books. As arranged today, there are 66 books in the Bible, 39 in the OT and 27 in the NT. Some of them are very short, no longer than a small letter. Others are much longer. It may take several hours to read one of the longest books.

Bible books contain true stories, eyewitness reports, history and much more. Bible books also contain a record of great speeches, poems and songs. Some were written as personal letters to individuals or groups. The 39 books in the OT tell about God’s direct early contacts with people and their contacts with him. They were gathered together between 1500 BC and 400 BC. The 27 books in the NT were written between the time of Jesus death on earth (about 30 AD) and the death of the last of his apostles (shortly before 100 AD).

Tip #1: [Here is your first basic Bible study help.]

BC refers to the years “**B**efore **C**hrist”, the years before the birth of Jesus.

AD refers to “**A**fter the **D**ate of the birth of the Christ or Jesus.”

Where Do These Events Take Place?

The entire Bible was written by men born or living in southwest Asia. It was not written by men born or living in Europe or America. The events recorded on the pages of the Bible take us to many ancient southwest Asian nations and empires. It often refers to places like Egypt, Syria, Assyria, Babylon, Israel, Persia, Greece and Rome. Most of the events took place in the narrow strip of land connecting the three continents of Africa, Asia and Europe. This narrow strip of land is between the great Arabian Desert on the east and the Mediterranean Sea on the west. This area, called Canaan, was later called Palestine and Israel.

It was very important at that time, small in size but important to traders and rulers. The major trade routes connecting three continents--Africa, Asia and Europe--went through it. Every political empire in that part of the world wanted control of this area. The Bible mentions many of the wars in which first one king or empire and then another fought in order to seize and hold this valuable land. The Bible writers tell us God deliberately chose this land area. Why? So God’s people could do two things: #1, to demonstrate how God wanted all people to live by the way his people lived; and #2, for his people to spread the good news about him and his concern for all peoples all across the whole world, see Gen. 12:1-7 and Isaiah 5:1-7.

Who are The Main or Leading People Mentioned in The Bible?

Early in the Bible we meet a man referred to in both the OT and NT named **Abram** or **Abraham**, see Gen. 11:26ff.

Tip #2: “**ff**” after a verse means “...and the verses or chapters that follow”.

Abraham moved from his homeland (Syrian-Turkish border of today) to Canaan at God’s request. God promised to give ancient Canaan to Abraham and his descendants because of Abraham’s great trust in God and his willingness to do

what God asked him to do. This trust is what the Bible often refers to as faith, see Heb. 11:8-10. About 600 years passed before all of this land was actually in the control of Abraham's children. God developed a very special relationship over many centuries with one branch of Abraham's family. God had one purpose in his mind. The OT is largely an account of how God tried to work through this family that is often called the Children of Israel. "Israel" was the name God gave to one of Abraham's grandsons, see Gen. 32:28. A few hundred years later a man named **Moses** becomes the main leader in the spiritual and national development of these people, see Ex. 2:1ff. Then, a few hundred years after Moses, another outstanding leader God used was **David**, see 1 Sam. 16:1ff. David was a man who acted more like God wanted a man to act than any other leader though he was still far from perfect, see 1 Sam. 16:7 and Acts 13:22. He is remembered as Israel's greatest king.

Tragically, many of these people often turned back to false so-called gods and goddesses. Over and over again, through his chosen speakers called **prophets**, God warned these people about the result of doing this. These prophets were chosen by God to warn them. They told the people they were risking the loss of everything they had on earth including their land and lives. God carries out his threat after centuries of warnings but not without promising them that if they would turn back to him they could return to their land. The OT story continues to tell how God worked patiently with these children of Abraham through the guidance given by his prophets and teachers. They still continued switching back and forth, somewhat faithfully serving him temporarily, and then letting the corruption and evil from their past traditions and of their idol worshipping neighboring people groups become their way of life.

At last, as promised, a person named **Jesus** came and lived in this land of Israel. This is recorded in the beginning of the NT. By this time Rome's armies had conquered the land of Israel as well as many, many other nations. Rome made Israel a part of the Roman Empire but it allowed the Jews (Israelites) much freedom especially with their religious life. Jesus began re-teaching Jews who were willing to listen about God, God-given ways and God's will for them. He performed many miracles as convincing proof that he was actually God's son. He gave special training to twelve of his students or disciples, whom he appointed as "**apostles**," see Matt. 10:1-4.

Tip #3: The Greek word "**apostle**" means, "one sent out" or "authorized to go".

Jesus plan was to train these men for about three years before the Jews and Romans killed him by crucifixion. He was preparing them to spread his God-given message around the world. At first his death by crucifixion caused all his followers including these students (apostles) to lose hope. But then, amazingly, Jesus reappeared among them physically alive! Sometimes he appeared to individuals but most often to small groups of people. Over 500 were present on one occasion. He announced to them that **God had**

LESSON SIX

SOME BASIC BIBLE STUDY

Permit or Allow the Bible to Interpret Itself

Let the Bible itself be your helper. What is studied in one place in the Bible will help you understand the meaning of a section or a word found in another part of the Bible. Serious study includes the comparing of similar words, sections of scripture, records of events, etc. This type of study helps us get a complete view of God's message to all people. You may be surprised at how often one part of the Bible will help you understand another part. Also, pray for God's help and guidance. His guidance and the Bible itself will be your best Bible study helps.

While you are still searching for answers from the Bible, you must also be thinking about possible answers to your own questions. And, you must be humble enough and honest enough to say, "I do not yet know the answer to that question", if you have not yet found the answer in the Bible.

Some things in the Bible are hard to understand. We will always have some unanswered questions. Sometimes it may be our spiritual youthfulness or lack of serious study. At other times it may involve things God has not decided to reveal to any of us. Remember, even Jesus while speaking of the day of his second coming, said: "**No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father,**" Matt. 24:36. Yet, the main message and teachings of the Bible are plainly and often presented.

Most instructions given here apply to any kind of reading materials. First, we need to recognize that there is one big difference between the Bible and most other books. The Bible contains two major wills, covenants or testaments. In the next section we will look again at that one big difference.

The Important Differences Between the OT and the NT

Usually we can see some differences between the foundation of a building and the building itself. Also, the foundation is always under the building. In the same way there are differences between the OT and NT. Why, because the OT is the foundation upon which the NT stands. We have already referred to some of these differences in earlier lessons. We also spoke of some of the places in the Bible where it talks about these differences.

We do well to note that the First or Old Covenant does not end with the last page of the OT. There is a time of transition as Jesus, during his life here on earth, lays the groundwork for the opening of the New Covenant. This New Covenant or Testament does not actually take effect until after Jesus' death on the cross. Jesus himself said that John the Baptist was the greatest, not of the NT prophets, but of the **OT prophets**. The Events in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John were in this transition period and took place while people were still under the Old or First Covenant even though they are placed in the NT part of our Bibles as they should have been, see Matt. 11:1-15.

No book in the NT makes this as clear as the book of Hebrews written to Jewish converts who grew up under the Old Covenant and then became Christians. The primary statement of this fact, based on what the writer said in chapters 1-8, is found in Heb., chapter 9. Some versions of the English Bible use different words here but they all have the same meaning. The English words "will", "covenant", and "testament" all come from the same word in the original Greek text. The version (New International Version) we are using in our studies uses the word "will" in some of these instances and "covenant" in others. Note especially these verses:

"For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance—now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant. In the case of a will, it is necessary to prove the death of the one who made it, because a will is in force only when somebody has died; it never takes effect while the one who made it is living", Heb. 9:15-17. This is as true today as it was 2,000 years ago.

[Be sure to **answer the questions** for this study, Lesson Five.]

A Few Words Worth Remembering

Someone said the message of God's Word, the Bible, is the total answer to mankind's total need. It is the Good News of forgiveness, faith, peace, power, purpose and heaven. In it man discovers what he is to believe, what he is to do, and what his future holds. If a person's Bible is 'falling apart,' it may be an indication that the person is now fairly well 'put together.'

Jesus, when telling his parable of the sower, said: "But the one who received the seed that fell on good soil is the man who hears the word and understands it. He produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown", Matt. 13:23. [Here, the seed is God's message to us through Jesus.]

So, we may wish to pray, "May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer, Psalm 19:14.

raised him from the dead. Also, he said it was now their task to share with all the world the good news of what God wanted to do through Jesus for all people everywhere, see Matt. 28:1-20. Jesus said that God was preparing for a future resurrection of all people from all the years of time to an unending personal eternal life with him (with God) in heaven. This life, he said, would be without suffering or pain. It was **for all people everywhere**, everyone who would accept and obey God's message given through his personal messenger, Jesus Christ, see Jn. 14:1-4.

What they saw and heard convinced his apostles and many others. They went out almost immediately, beginning in Jerusalem, telling of these happenings and telling what Jesus had promised. Groups of followers, called churches or assemblies, were formed from Jerusalem to Rome and far beyond into parts of Africa, Asia and Europe. These apostles of Jesus (eyewitnesses) plus a few other witnesses wrote the NT. The first four books are called the "**Gospels**." The Gospels give details of what Jesus did and said.

Tips #4 & 5: The word 'gospel' means 'good news.' The word 'church' does not refer to a building but to an assembly, a congregation of people.

His apostle John wrote, "**Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name**, Jn. 20:30-31." See also: Lk. 1:1-4 and Acts 1:1-3.

A book called "**Acts**" followed these four accounts of Jesus' life and teaching. '**Acts**' tells some of the 'acts' or 'happenings' in the growth of this group now known as **Christians**, see Acts 2:1ff. All the other NT books are **letters** written by the apostles and sent to various Christian individuals, churches and Christian leaders. The apostle John, the last living apostle, wrote the last book in the NT, called '**Revelation**', about 95 A.D. Much of it is in word pictures. It urges Christians to remain faithful in spite of present and future persecutions. Christians are urged to live with Jesus example of living and keep their mind on the **eternal** life that is to be theirs after their physical death.

The early Christians treasured these writings. They were carefully copied and circulated. Soon the four Gospel records of Jesus life plus the book of Acts, which is a history of the beginnings of Christianity, along with the twenty-one letters and the book of Revelation were brought together as a group of books called the **New Testament**. God was directing Jesus' apostles and the other writers while they wrote. Lesson #2 will begin by telling about God directing them. This is often called the "**inspiration**" of these writers.

[Now be sure to **answer the questions** for this study, Lesson One.]

LESSON TWO

WHY THE BIBLE IS A VERY SPECIAL BOOK

The 'Inspiration' of the Bible

What do we mean by the “**inspiration**” of the Bible? The words “inspire” or “inspiration” have had various meanings through the years. They range all the way from anything that causes a person to do something better or feel better than average to the direct guidance of God in what certain people do, say or write. We are using the word “inspiration” to refer to the direct guidance of God given to a prophet or an apostle. With this guidance from God they have passed his message on to us without error. These are truths God decided are necessary for our salvation and service. This is why Jesus’ apostle, Paul, could make the following statement when he spoke about all the apostles and prophets in the church in NT times. He said, “...we **have the mind of Christ,**” 1 Cor. 2:16. And, he said, “**All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work,**” 2 Tim. 3:16-17.

God’s divine inspiration is what makes the Bible a “**one of a kind**” book. It is the Word of God and not just another religious book. The details of how God made his message known to these writers are not fully known. We do know that God’s Holy Spirit was involved. The Bible repeatedly makes this clear, see Jn. 16:5-15. We also know that these men yielded their minds to God’s guidance as they wrote. The apostle Peter wrote, “**Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet’s own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit,**” 2 Pet. 1:20-21.

They made themselves available as God’s spokesmen through whom he gave his message to the world. The apostle Paul says it this way, “**We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words,**” 1 Cor. 2:12-13. As God revealed his thoughts to them, they put those thoughts into words in print using their own writing style and language.

The Bible is given by God to make known to us God’s purpose for our life here

Test #2: does what the prophet says agree with what God has already said? “**If a prophet, or one who foretells by dreams, appears among you announces to you a miraculous sign or wonder, and if the sign or wonder of which he has spoken takes place, and he says, ‘let us follow other gods (gods you have not known) ‘and let us worship them,’ you must not listen to the words of that prophet or dreamer. The Lord your God is testing you to find out whether you love him with all your heart and with all your soul,**” Deut. 13:1-3.

Some of the Many Ways the Bible is Misused by its Readers

1. Reading a little here and a little there. Some just read one paragraph, or a chapter at a set time each day, so that it takes weeks or months to read one book of the Bible. We would seldom read any other book this way. This type of reading makes it very difficult if not impossible to gain a proper or accurate picture of what is being written.

2. Reading all the comments written about the Bible before you read the Bible. Comments can come later. Give the Bible a chance to speak for itself. Read the Bible seeking to know what it says not just what others say about it.

3. Concluding that every part of the Bible is equally important and valid for today. Suppose someone told you that you are going to lose one of your fingers or one eye. Wouldn’t you be willing to part with a finger instead of an eye? In fact, there are even some fingers that are much more important than others. Every part of the Bible is necessary to make a perfect whole, but some parts are essential while others are not. In fact, some parts of the Bible are no longer valid for our use today except as examples. Also, the NT is much more important than the OT. It is essential because the NT introduces us to Jesus, the Savior, who is our teacher and tells us how to obtain the salvation he offers us.

4. Concluding that all parts of the Bible have one and the same purpose. Different parts of the Bible were written for different purposes. The OT, often referred to as “the law,” has already fulfilled its primary purpose. Paul reminded early Christians, with Jewish backgrounds like his, of this fact in his letter to Christians in the Roman province of Galatia, (now a part of modern day Turkey). He said, “**What, then, was the purpose of the law? It was added because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come. . . . Before this faith (faith in Jesus) came, we were held prisoners by the law, locked up until faith should be revealed. So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith. Now that faith has come, we are no longer under the supervision of the law,**” Gal. 3:19, 23-25. Many things recorded in the OT are now only of value to us as an example or warning. Referring to such events, Paul told the Christians at Corinth in Greece, “**These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warning for us, on whom the fulfillment of the ages has come,**” 1 Cor. 10:11. See also the rest of 1 Cor. Chapter 1.

But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through redemption that came by Christ Jesus. God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished – he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies the man who has faith in Jesus,” Rom. 3:21-26.

This is only possible because Jesus, God’s only Son, gave his life as the sacrifice to God for our sins. Jesus’ sacrifice covers or blots out our sin. In return, we must accept this sacrificial gift for our sins on the terms or conditions God has given through his son, Jesus, in the NT. The NT teaches that no human being will ever be good enough to receive eternal life (live with God forever) based on one’s own personal goodness. In other words, being good is not good enough!

The Prophets and Their Message in the Bible

The message of a prophet is called “prophecy.” Not everything God said through them was about the future but the prediction of future events set a prophet apart from all other speakers and writers. Almost all of these were men through whom God communicated specific messages to people. Some of their predictions had to do with events that were to take place during their lifetime; others would take place in the next few generations; and, finally, some would take place with the coming of the Messiah or Christ, the ‘anointed one,” their great future king. Christians see these prophecies fulfilled in the first coming of Jesus and on through his second coming at the end of time when final eternal decision about each person’s future is made by God through his son Jesus.

Some people in recent times say they can do what the Bible prophets did including predicting the future. But there have been tests from ancient times to separate true prophets from false ones and modern day prophets have failed the tests over and over again.

Test #1: does the prophet’s prophecy always come true? “You may say to yourselves, ‘How can we know when a message has not been spoken by the Lord?’ If what the prophet proclaims in the name of the Lord does not take place or come true, that is a message the Lord has not spoken....”** Deut. 18:21-22.**

and his eternal plan. The primary purpose of the Bible is not to tell us scientific facts about this world nor is it to give a history of all that has happened to mankind throughout the ages of time. Yet, it does contain some facts about our world and human history. The message of the Bible is the story of God’s love, God’s caring and his patience as he reaches out to his human creation. God is trying to get us to choose to accept him and his ways so we can live with him in his eternal home forever. That home is called **heaven!**

This is the message of Jesus Christ who said, “**I am the way, the truth, and the life,”** Jn. 14:6. And, this is what Jesus was talking about in the NT when he said, “**The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life,”** Jn. 6:63. It is the story of mankind’s wanderings away from God and return to him through Christ ... the story about **real** life, peace and eternity. This is why dozens of writers writing the books of the Bible across many centuries of time have one central theme, one message. **It contains truths to be accepted and believed, commands to be obeyed, warnings to be taken seriously and promises to be enjoyed both here and in eternity.**

Accuracy of the Text of the Bible. Is it Without Error?

Originally each Bible book was written as a **scroll**. Scrolls are long rolls. The rolls were made of (1) the skin of sheep or goats and called parchment with each section sewn to the next section or (2) they were written on papyrus, a paper-like substance made from reeds growing in water. These two types of material were used for writing records for many centuries. The rolls were of varying size and were difficult for a reader to handle. The change to **book** form was made between 300 and 400 AD. In a book all the pages are sewn together on one side allowing the reader to turn from page to page. This was a big improvement. For many centuries before the invention of printing in Asia and Europe, all copies had to be written by hand. The copiers of the Bible had a detailed system of checking for accuracy. Also, any section or page found with an error was destroyed rather than corrected.

A group of old handwritten, rolled scrolls of the books of the OT were found in very dry and remote Israelite caves near the Dead Sea about 1947. They had been hidden there for over 2,000 years, from about 200 years before Jesus Christ was born. Part or all of every book of the OT except one small book (Esther) was found there. The most amazing thing according to scholars who examined them in detail, is that only a very few minor variations were found between these ancient copies and copies we already had that were copied hundreds of years later. The ancient texts had been accurately preserved!

The Bible describes thousands of historical events and places. If these descriptions are inaccurate or wrongly described, we have reason to question the reliability or trustworthiness of the Bible. This question of reliability or trustworthiness will be discussed in the next section of our study. Its accuracy has caused specialists in geography, history, archeology and even oil research to depend on the Bible as a very accurate source of information.

For years, Bible critics, who wouldn't believe the Bible, had used an unknown people or nation described in the Bible to point out the Bible's inaccuracy. These critics of 100 or more years ago used the Hittite Empire as their key example. The Hittites are mentioned in Scripture dozens of times but no record of them had been found. Then, about 100 years ago archaeologists uncovered some of the remains of this great empire centered in the middle of modern day Turkey. Their findings are proof that what the Bible said about them is true. Whole books have been written since then establishing the accuracy of the Bible through the findings of archaeologists and others in recent years.

So, Is The Bible Reliable or Trustworthy?

If the Bible is from God, we have a right to expect all of it to be truthful and accurate or reliable and trustworthy. Here is one example. The Bible describes thousands of historical events, the order in which these events occur and the names of many, many people of importance long ago in history. In most cases these are said to be eyewitness accounts. If these names and descriptions were filled with inaccuracies and misrepresentations, we would again have reason to question the reliability of the whole Bible.

Many who reject God and the Bible have attacked the accuracy of biblical accounts. But the Bible has repeatedly proven itself to be dependable and truthful. Ancient records and archaeological finds have proven what the Bible has said over and over again. In the 20th century, the Bible's critics were arguing that Moses could not have written the first five books of the Bible because in his day writing was an unknown. Today we know by modern day archaeology that writing was around many centuries before Moses.

The Bible has been accused of naming kings and nations that never existed. Again, these names have been verified one by one because of the work of archaeologists. Even today, only a very small fraction of known ancient remains of past civilizations have been researched. Names like Canaan, Sargon, and the Hittites were unknown outside the Bible until recent years. In one city, Ebla, discovered in 1968, they found some 17,000 clay tablet documents in royal archives dating from the time of Abraham, nearly 4,000 yrs. ago.

The same can be said of events, places, names and the order of events in the NT. One example: few, if any, personally knew Jesus better than Peter. Late in life, shortly before Peter was killed because he would not deny what he had seen and heard, he wrote: **"I think it is right to refresh your memory as long as I live in the tent of this body, because I know that I will soon put it aside, as our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me. ... We did not follow cleverly invented stories when we told you about the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received honor and glory from God the Father when the**

LESSON FIVE

GETTING THE BIBLE'S MESSAGE

12.

The Whole Bible can be Summarized in the Following Way

Part 1 -- from Adam to Abraham, in Gen.1:1 to 25:10. This is a brief summary of the history of the human race, a background for what follows.

Part 2 – from Abraham to Christ, in Gen. 25:11 to Malachi 4:6. It gives us a more detailed history of Abraham’s descendants. God chose them for a purpose, a job they did very poorly, to prepare the world of their day for the coming of Jesus, the Son of God, see Isa. 5:1-30 but especially vs. 1-7.

Part 3 – from the birth of Christ to his return back to heaven with his Father, see Matt. 1:1 to Jn. 21:25. This part gives us God’s preparation for the beginning of Christianity through his son, Jesus Christ.

Part 4 – from the opening of the book of Acts to the end of the book of Revelation, see Acts 1:1 to Rev. 22:21. This time period is from the beginning ministry of Christ’s twelve apostles to the ending of John’s ministry as the last living apostle of Christ. This time period ended shortly before 100 AD. Here we have the beginning, development and spread of the early church of Christ. This was the apostles’ job, their ministry. This fourth section ends with the apostle John’s words of encouragement about its future. These NT writers quote from or refer to specific OT passages hundreds of times. Thus, the more familiar we are with the OT, the easier it is to understand the NT.

The Main Message of the Bible

The Bible’s main message to us is to make known to us and to all the one and only true God and his will, purpose or plan for all of mankind. It was written:

- (1) to help us understand what God is like with special emphasis on his love, patience and purpose for us here on earth and after our death;
- (2) to tell of his willingness to forgive us and save us from our sins in this present world with it’s limitations and suffering;
- (3) and, to show us how to receive the benefits of his love and concern for us.

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that who ever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life,” Jn. 3:16.

“But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar, the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare,” 2 Peter 3:8-10.

thanks and offered it to them, saying, “**This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you,**” Lk. 22:7-20.

The Bible is a step-by-step unfolding, through human writers, of what God has revealed to man and communicated to us. It moves on smoothly from its beginning to its great end. Way back in the book of Genesis, we have the **beginnings**. In the book of Revelation we have the **endings**. In all the books in between we see how God is carrying out his purpose. The OT is there to lay the foundation. The NT builds upon this foundation. Some of the commands, practices, promises and hopes of the OT have been fulfilled by better things in the NT. No book in the Bible makes this clearer than the book of Hebrews, a book written to Jewish or Hebrew Christians to encourage them to stay faithful to the New Covenant and not go back to the Old one found in the OT, see Heb. 7:19, 22; 8:6; 9:23; 10:34; 11:16, 35 and 40. Notice the things listed as “**better**” in the New Covenant---a better **hope, covenant, promises, sacrifices, lasting possessions, country**—yes, a heavenly one, a resurrection, something better for us.

[Be sure to **answer the questions** for this study, Lesson Four.]

Persecution of Early Christians

The Roman Empire was by far the greatest political or ruling power in the early years (AD 30 to 300) of Christianity. This empire extended all around the Mediterranean Sea across southern Europe and northern Africa. It reached farther than the east side of today’s Iran and Iraq even to southern England on the west. Persecution of Christians by this ruling Roman power rose and fell under different emperors until Emperor Constantine gave it the right to exist.

The apostles Paul and John were prisoners for their Christian faith, Paul in Rome and John on an island off the west coast of modern day Turkey. Christianity was seen as an illegal religion. Many were imprisoned, banished, burned, beheaded, crucified, thrown to wild beasts or tortured in one of many various ways. Thousands, even millions, lost their physical lives. Early Christians would not physically fight back against the Roman Empire or any others.

Caves under the city of Rome were used for protection, for meeting places and for burial. The bones of between two and seven million Christian have been located in these hundreds of miles of caves now known as catacombs.

Early Christians did not try to defend themselves physically but rather by word and deed. The Christian way was a new way. Their goal was eternal. Christianity continued to spread and became the major religion of this part of the world in spite of multitudes of them being killed for their faith. More and more **leaders** turned to Christ and **spoke out** in defense of Christianity until the Emperor Constantine, ended their empire-wide persecution in A.D. 313.

voice came to him from the Majestic Glory, saying, ‘**This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.**’ We ourselves heard this voice that came from heaven when we were with him on the sacred mountain”, see 2 Pet. 1:13-19 with Matt 17:1-9. We believe it is reasonable to expect the same results as investigations continue. We believe the Bible is both trustworthy and reliable.

Translations and Versions of the Bible

Translations and Versions of the Bible date from its earliest years and they are many. The first translations were made into languages of people groups and countries in areas around the Mediterranean Sea. Why here? Because this is where early Christianity started and developed. This increased greatly in Europe with the invention of the printing press. Today there are thousands of translations and versions of all or parts of the Bible. Well over 90% of the world’s population can read or hear the Bible in their own language. Many, many different English translations or versions have been printed beginning with the first one in 1382 AD, over 600 years ago.

The version we use in our lessons is called the **NIV, (New International Version)**. The translators’ goals were to be accurate, to be easily and clearly understood, and to be useful for private and public reading. The NIV is actually a completely new translation begun in 1965 by over 100 scholars from a number of different nations working directly from the best available original language copies of the text. The first printing of the whole NIV version of the Bible came thirteen years later in 1978.

[Now, be sure to **answer the questions** for this study, Lesson Two.]

Where in the Bible Should You Start Reading?

Your needs and interests should come first. Also, the amount of time you have to read and how good a reader you are need to be considered.

Here are a few suggestions:

- **Genesis**, chapter one, is a good place to start. You may wish to read only the first two chapters at first, or you may want to read further.
- The opening chapters of either or both the book of **Luke** and the book of **John** in the New Testament introduces the reader to Jesus Christ.
- What is called The Sermon on the Mount in **Matt.** chapters 5, 6 and 7.
- **Romans**, chapter 12, is a very good chapter on Christian living.
- **1 Cor.**, chapter 13, is a good chapter on what our love should be like.
- **Hebrews**, chapter 11, can be called the great faith chapter of the Bible.
- **Exodus**, chapter 20, Old Testament, contains the “Ten Commandments”

LESSON THREE

FINDING YOUR WAY AROUND IN THE BIBLE

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most closely associated with Moses while the NT is with Jesus, the Christ.

The Major Sections of the Bible

The word “**Bible**” comes from the Greek word *biblos*, meaning, “book.” It came to be known as “The Book.” The word “**testament**” means, “will,” “covenant” or “agreement.”

The OT is the first major section of the Bible

It contains a number of covenants or agreements God made with different individuals and groups. One of these covenants was especially important. It was made with Abraham, the head or father of the ancient Hebrew, Israelite or Jewish people. It contained promises to be fulfilled in the near and distant future. **“The Lord had said to Abram, ‘Leave your country, your people and your father’s household and go to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you,’”** Gen. 12:1-3. Note the phrase **“all peoples on earth.”**

This covenant with Abraham was made official with the Israelite people under the leadership of Moses many years later. All of this took place in southwestern Asia and northeastern Africa. **“In the third month after the Israelites left Egypt—on the very day—they came to the Desert of Sinai. ... Then Moses went up to God, and the Lord called to him from the mountain and said, ‘This is what you are to say to the house of Jacob and what you are to tell the people of Israel: You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself. Now *if* you obey me fully and keep my covenant, *then* out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy**

“You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life,” Jn. 5:39-40. Peter also wrote about the progressive revealing of God’s plan in the following verses in his first letter: **“Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things,”** 1 Pet. 1:10-12.

The writer of the letter to the Hebrew or Jewish Christians begins with these words “. . . **In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe,**” Heb. 1:1-2.

Isaiah and Jeremiah, more than any other OT prophets, were guided by God to speak and write about future events that were to take place with the earthly coming of God’s son, Jesus Christ. In chapter thirty-one of Jeremiah, Jeremiah looks forward to a day when God will make a **new** covenant with his people. It will **replace** the **old** covenant with his people made by God under the leadership of Moses as they were leaving Egyptian bondage and heading for the land of Canaan or the Israel of their future.

“The time is coming,” declares the Lord, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them,” declares the Lord. “This is the covenant I will make with the House of Israel after that time,” declares the Lord. “I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will a man teach is neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest,” declares the Lord, “For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more,” Jer.31:31-34.

Jesus took up this theme as he shared his last Jewish Passover supper with his twelve disciples (apostles) shortly before his crucifixion. While they were eating, Jesus took some bread, blessed it, broke it in pieces, gave it to his apostles and said, **“This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me.”** Then, after they had eaten, he took the cup (grape juice), gave

Luke and Acts are a series of two books written by Luke, a medical doctor, to a man named Theophilus. The first of the two is the book of Luke. Putting Luke's opening statements in both books together, Lk. 1:1-4 and Acts 1:1-3, we can see his purpose—to strengthen Theophilus' faith in what he had been taught. The second book in Luke's series, Acts, is an account of what happened to Christ's followers after he physically left this earth. The main things Acts tells us are how we too can have the forgiveness of our sins and a personal eternal life plus how we are to use our life while here on earth. The book of Acts does this by telling us how this “Good News” or “Gospel” was being received by multitudes of people in the writer's lifetime. Jesus' sacrificial death, as God's sinless or perfect son, is presented in the Gospels. This makes forgiveness of sin and eternal life available to all people on earth. It also tells how early Christian groups (called churches or congregations) spread, growing in number, and it deals with living as Christians in everyday life.

Twenty-one letters follow the book of Acts. These letters are directed to those who are already Christians, not to non-Christians. As a reminder, reference is also made to what becoming a Christian should mean to them and to us. But the main purpose of these letters is to help guide both individual Christians and groups of Christians. They give words of encouragement and guidance in dealing with specific questions as well as with living an effective Christian life in a non-Christian world. And, we still live in a non-Christian world today.

Last of all we come to the book of **Revelation**. Its opening statement gives its purpose as **“The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him (Jesus) to show his servants what must soon take place...,”** Rev. 1:1. This letter is written to Christians (his servants). God gave this look into the present and the future through his son (Jesus Christ), to John, Jesus' apostle. John is now an elderly man in a Roman prison for his faith in Jesus on an island off the west coast of today's Turkey. This book is to be shared with all of Jesus' followers now known as Christians. Its purpose is to encourage them and us in situations otherwise often looking hopeless. It teaches that no matter what happens before the end of our physical life (persecution, suffering, even death), Christians will be on the victory side. Yes, we can be on the winning team, with a personal eternal life in a new kind of body with God and many, many others in heaven.

The Progressive Nature of God's Revelation in the Bible

By ‘**progressive**’ we mean that more and more of what God is like, his plans, his wishes and what he expects from us is being made known in the NT. As God revealed more and more, it was written in the books we call the NT.

Tip #5: Reminder: In NT days the phrase, “**the Scriptures,**” was usually used of the OT. The NT events and message from God through his son, Jesus Christ, were still being written in the first century AD. 1 to 100.

nation.’ These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites,” Ex. 19:1, 3-6.

Please notice the **“if--then”** conditional arrangement. God always makes his promises dependent upon mankind's willingness to do what he asks. Covenants or wills are still arranged this way today.

More and more statements are made about a coming Messiah or Savior as the years go by plus about a **New** Covenant or Testament that will be for **all peoples** on the earth. This New Testament would bring to completion God's agreement with man and include plans for all of mankind. Here is one example: **“The time is coming,” declares the Lord, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them,” declares the Lord. “This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time,” declares the Lord. “I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord’, because they will all know me from the least of them to the greatest,” declares the Lord. “For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more,”** Jer. 31:31-34. These words were written over five hundred (500) years before they were fulfilled, see also Heb. 8:6-13.

The NT is the second major section of the Bible

It is called the New Testament or New Covenant because it is all about this new agreement God has with mankind. Christians agreed on the books that should make up the NT soon after John, the last living apostle of Jesus Christ, wrote the last book, Revelation. This was about sixty years after Jesus' death, burial, resurrection and return to heaven. This NT, as it was usually called, was then placed with the Hebrew OT books, which the Jews and Jesus had already accepted as inspired by God. Why? Because the NT was also considered to be from God and of equal inspiration and authority. Christians now called the Jewish or Hebrew Scriptures the OT. Together this OT and NT, the Bible, **completed** God's revealed and inspired message to all mankind. This was all written before 100 AD. Please note that Islam did not originate until over 500 years later. Mohamed lived from 570 to 632 AD.

How the Books are Arranged

All books in the Bible are not listed in exact historical order. Instead they are often grouped according to their content, authorship, length or literary style. The Jews arranged their sacred books that we call the OT into three groups of books: **the Law, the Prophets and the Writings or Psalms.** The 22 to 24 books in the Hebrew-Jewish Scriptures are now separated into 39 books in the Bible we use today. The difference is not in content but in arrangement.

Today's OT books in our Bibles are arranged in four or five groups:

- (1) They begin with “the Law” [Genesis – Deuteronomy]. These **5** books, given to us through Moses, contain both history and instruction.
- (2) Next come **12** books [Joshua – Esther]. They are primarily history.
- (3) These are followed by **5** books [Job – Song of Solomon]. They contain songs, poetry and writings including both spiritual and just practical wisdom.
- (4) The final seventeen OT books [Isaiah – Malachi] were written by Israel's prophets and all except one of them is named after the author. This group is often divided into **5** major or longer prophetic books [Isaiah – Daniel], and **12** minor or shorter prophetic books [Hosea – Malachi]. The OT books are often quoted in the NT, where they are usually referred to as “the Scriptures” or by one of their group titles such as “the Law.” It may be easier to remember how many books are in each group by remembering these numbers: **5–12–5–5–12**.

There are four groups of NT books.

- (1) The first 4 books [Matthew – John] are called **Gospels**. The word “gospel” means ‘good news.’ These four books contain the ‘good news’ of the life, work and teaching of Jesus. Each is named after its author. Two of the authors were also among Jesus' twelve apostles. The other two were also first century disciples of Jesus.
- (2) The next book, Acts, is a **history** of early first century Christianity.
- (3) The largest group of books is composed of **21 letters** [Romans – Jude]. Most were written by apostles to individual churches or early Christian leaders.
- (4) The final book, Revelation, written by the apostle John, is a book of **prophecy**. It is about the present and future testing or persecution Christians would face while still here on earth. They are encouraged to reach out to their persecutors with love and acts of goodness instead of with hate and physical punishment. Christians are challenged in this book to remain faithful to Christ with their eyes set on what is to be theirs after their earthly physical life is over. It closes with word-pictures of heaven. The apostle Paul and others also encouraged Christians in this way, see Luke 6:20-38 and Rom. 8:18.

The Chapter and Verse Divisions

The books of our modern-day Bibles are divided into smaller sections called **chapters** to make it easier to locate specific statements. This was found to be so helpful that chapters were later divided into verses. **Verses** are often just one sentence in length. These divisions were added hundreds of years after the books were written and made into one collection of books called the Bible.

The number of chapters varies depending on such things as the book's content, arrangement and length. Chapter numbers start over with each book. Verse numbering starts over with each chapter. Every book begins with chapter one and every chapter with verse one. This makes it possible to find any exact statement in the Bible by referring to the book, chapter and verse. Example: **Jn. 3:16 ... John** (book); **3:** (chapter); and **16** (verse).

Different Parts of the Bible Have Different Purposes

Remember that the Bible has two main parts called the Old Testament (OT) and the New Testament (NT). The word “**testament**” has the same meaning as our English words “**covenant**,” “**will**” or “**agreement**.” So, the Bible has an Old and a New **Will**. Just as it is in a legal procedure so it is in Scripture. When there are two wills given by the same person on the same subject, the **newer will replaces the older will**. If there are some parts of the old will that the will maker wishes to keep, they **must be reentered** in the new will. The OT is the old will and the NT is the new will in the Bible, [Old Testament and New Testament].

First, let's look at the Old Testament. Christians often group the books of the OT in four sections (and sometimes five if they divide the books of prophecy into two groups) as mentioned earlier.

Tip #4: Refer back to Lesson 3, “**Finding Your Way Around in the Bible,**” for the details of these OT and NT groupings of the books.

We need to see the OT as it is to be understood by the Christian. The OT emphasis was on this physical life—physical acts, physical warning, punishments, and promises. The NT emphasis is on our spiritual life here and continuing on after our physical life is over—spiritual devotion, service and promises, see Rom. 12:1-2 and Phil. 2:5-13. This change in emphasis is one reason neither Judaism nor Islam are able to view the Bible as Christians view it. They do not accept Jesus as God's son sent to save us. We cannot now study the views of these religions. We will be studying the Christian view of the OT.

Jesus, in his “Sermon on the Mount,” in Matt. 5-7, started showing the difference or the coming change, between the OT and NT when he made his “**It has been said ... but I tell you**” comparisons plus other comparisons. The Apostle Paul clearly says the same thing in his letter to Christians in the Roman province of Galatia, see Gal. 3:15-25. In verses 24-25, “**...the law** (referring to the OT Law of Moses' day) **was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith. Now that faith has come, we are no longer under the supervision of the law,**” see also Matt. 5:17.

Second, let's look at the New Testament. The first four books in the NT are often called “**The Gospels**.” John, in his Gospel record, states the purpose of his writing. His statement can be applied to each of the four Gospels, when he says, “**Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name,**” Jn. 20:30-31, see also Lk. 1:1-4, Acts 1:1-3.

The Gospels prepare us for the shift or change from the Old Covenant (OT) into the New Covenant (NT). The New Covenant or Will took effect after Jesus death, burial and resurrection. Details are given in the book of Hebrews.

Tip #3: A prophecy is a foretelling of something before it happens.

Long ago, God gave his people certain guidelines to use in deciding if these messages were from God or from some person's imagination. If it is presented as true in the Bible, it is from God. God gave his people two ways to test these messages before the Bible message was available in writing. **The tests** were and are: (1) does what the writer says agree with what God has said elsewhere in the Bible about what a person is to do or not do? and, (2) has what was foretold actually happened or has it not happened? See Deut. 13:1-5 and 18:14-22.

4. **“Poetic” literature.** Most of us are familiar with poetry. It takes many forms in different cultures and periods of history and it is usually not to be taken literally. Example: Psalm 23 (**“The Lord is my shepherd...”**). Also, a special type of poetry found in the OT is called “parallelism.” It is common in the poetry of the book of Psalms and in some of the books of prophecy. In this Hebrew type of poetry the second line repeats the same thought as the first line only the wording is somewhat different. So, the second line does not introduce a new thought but should help explain the meaning of the first line. Example: Psalm 102:1 -- [line 1] **“Hear my prayer, O Lord;”**
[line 2] **“let my cry for help come up to you.”**

5. Another type is called **“Wisdom Literature.”** It is a gathering together of wise sayings or advice for young and old people. The OT books of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes are examples. Some of the advice given is good advice for any place or period of time, but some is not good advice for us today. Some of it may only be properly applied to people in the Old Covenant or OT period of time. It takes a wise person to always know the difference. Here is a good general rule to follow: it is no longer true if the basic idea or thought is not repeated in the New Covenant or NT, or if it is replaced by something better (on a higher spiritual level) in the NT. This will also be discussed later when we study how the purposes of the OT and the NT differ from each other.

6. Finally, we mention what is called **“typology.”** The word, ‘type,’ comes from a Greek word meaning a mark or impression left by a blow like a carpenter's hammer hitting wood. This means two things come from one thing or event. So the hammer is one thing and the mark left when it strikes a softer surface is another thing. Example in the Bible: God required animal sacrifices by his people to tell us ahead of time that there is a great and final sacrifice for sin coming in the death of his son on the cross. God also gave his people many religious events, acts and activities in the OT period to point forward to a similar event in the New Covenant or NT. Why? To help us see how wonderfully God prepared beforehand for what was to come in the future. A wise rule to follow is to only call those things types or examples that the Bible tells us are types of something to come in the future, see 1 Cor. 10:6, 11; Col. 2:16-17; Heb. 10:1-14.

The normal way of verbally referring to exact written statement is to first give the name of the book, followed by a chapter number, then a colon (:), and, finally, the verse number or numbers. Examples: Genesis three fifteen and sixteen or John three sixteen. If more than one book has the same name, the books are usually numbered **1, 2, and 3** or **First, Second, and Third** or **I, II, and III**. Examples: 2 Kings or Second Kings is the second book named ‘Kings.’ Third, III or 3 John refers to the third letter written by the apostle John.

Modern day writers have placed additional notes in some Bibles. Even though these notes, like the chapter and verse divisions, are not part of the original writings that make up the Bible, they are usually helpful. Cross-references are among the most helpful notes. They often appear in a column in the middle or on the margin of each page. They direct you from one verse, phrase or word to other places in the Bible where similar words, phrases or ideas may be found.

The Book Titles and Authors

The original manuscripts of the books of the Bible were written without titles and by approximately 40 authors as mentioned earlier. They were written much as we would do when writing a letter to someone. Now these original manuscripts or books have commonly accepted titles that are used today.

Tip #1: letters were also called **“epistles.”** Epistle is the Greek word for a **letter** or a message sent.

You will often find book titles abbreviated especially when a specific book, chapter and verse is given. Examples: Mt. or Matt. for Matthew, Jn. for John, Gen. for Genesis. The full reference in this abbreviated form will look like this: Mt. 5:13; Jn. 3:16; Gen. 1:1. Some books are named after their author. Other book titles refer to the opening word or subject matter of the book.

Example: Genesis refers to both the opening word and content.

Tip #2: **“Genesis”** is the Greek word for “origin”. The Hebrew title was their word for our three English words “in the beginning.”

The titles to the NT books of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John refer to each book's author. The Bible's human authors were various people such as kings or princes, poets or philosophers, prophets or statesmen. Some were well educated for their time and others were just common, ordinary men who worked with their hands.

Most books, other than the Bible, are soon out of date but this book has lasted many, many centuries. Most books are of interest to only a small part of the world's people in whose language the books were written. This is not true of the Bible. It is the world's most widely translated book. At least one book of the Bible has been translated into well over 2,000 languages and dialects.

[Be sure to **answer the questions** for this study, Lesson Three.]

LESSON FOUR

UNDERSTANDING WHAT IS WRITTEN

People often say, “You are just giving me your interpretation,” or “Everyone has a right to his own interpretation.” But there are ways to find the correct interpretation, the interpretation the Lord intended for us. There are certain questions beginning with words like **What, Why, When, Where, By Whom** and **To Whom** to help us get the correct interpretation? These questions need to be asked and answered regarding any written statement or document. First, a person needs to know what was in the mind of the one speaking or writing at the time it was spoken or written. Paul told Timothy what he and therefore we, must do, “**Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth,**” 2 Tim. 2:15. (So, it can be incorrectly handled!)

Philip, also a Christian leader of NT days, helped an important government official (from Ethiopia in Africa) decide what a specific section of Scripture meant. Philip asked in Acts 8:26-39, “**Do you understand what you are reading?**” The Ethiopian’s response was, “**How can I unless someone explains it to me?**” The guidelines for interpreting or understanding the Bible are the same as for almost every other spoken or written message. We regularly use these guidelines in general conversation when speaking to or listening to someone else. But we need to carefully consider the generally accepted rules of interpretation for ancient writings translated from **other** languages and from people living in different cultures and time periods than we are living in. Misinterpretation leads to misunderstanding and error. In this lesson we are sharing with you “the common sense approach” for finding out the meaning of what almost any writer or speaker writes or says.

Different Types of Literature or Written Material

Our main reason for mentioning the different types of written materials or literature is to help you accurately understand what is written. We will look at the more common types of literature.

1. Most types of literature are to be understood “literally.” This means the writer wants the reader to understand what he has written according to the ordinary or primary meaning of each word or expression. The telling of history (narration) is a very common way to put stories, happenings or events into words. Both are to be understood using the ordinary meaning of each word or expression. Most, but not all, of the Bible is like this.

2. Other types of literature are to be understood “**figuratively**” or “**symbolically.**” This means the writer intends for the reader to realize he has moved from the common literal meaning of a word or phrase and is using a word or phrase to have a meaning different than its normal meaning. Words can then be used to paint what we might call word-pictures. Example: Jesus once said, “**I am the vine; you are the branches,**” Jn. 15:5. We know that Jesus was a man, not a vine. He was using a common type of plant (grapevine) to describe a relationship. The vine or main stem does not produce the grapes but its branches do. We also know when a branch is separated or cut off from the vine it dies and cannot produce fruit. So, **people** (branches) also cannot produce fruit or good results for Jesus except they remain **IN** (connected to) **HIM**. Once a follower of Jesus separates himself from him, he, like the branch of a real or literal vine, dies spiritually. Such people end up being destroyed (or burned) just like the dead branch of a real grapevine. One more short, simple example: someone says of a young runner, “He was ‘a bolt of lightning.’ ” This means: the runner ran with amazing speed similar to the speed at which lightning travels. This type of writing is found in many OT prophetic books, in Jesus’ parables and in much of the NT book of Revelation. So also today, vital or valuable coded information is often written and sent today as secret messages.

Sometimes the writer also gives the meaning of his “figurative” message only to the ones he wants to understand it. Jesus did this with some of his parables like his parable of the weeds, see: Matt. 13:24-30, 36-43. Sometimes a figure of speech and its meanings are well known to the people the writer wants to understand them. But, the same figure of speech may be unknown to others.

Today we often talk about the language of medicine or law or about computer language. Figurative language is similar. Only those who know the intended meaning of the words or phrases used by the writer or speaker understand it. To all other people these words are like a foreign language. We need to realize that most of what is written in the Bible is not figurative but is to be taken literally and understood by the normal meaning of the words used.

Tip #1: A good basic rule is this: when interpreting the Bible take nothing as figurative or symbolic if there is a literal meaning that is a reasonable possibility. [Further advanced study will be needed in this area.]

3. “**Apocalyptic**” literature. This is a type of figurative literature. It is quite difficult to understand it correctly. Most often it is the foretelling (a prophecy about something before it happens) of what is to take place in the future.

Tip #2: “Apocalyptic” is a Greek word meaning “unveiling” or “revealing.”

Some apocalyptic writing is both figurative (not to be taken literally) and apocalyptic (about the future). It is found in OT prophetic writings and very often in the NT book of Revelation.

Here are some books to help you understand the Bible better

There are actually hundreds of helpful resources. Some may tell only their own personal interpretation or ideas instead of those generally accepted by Christians across time and place. Here we are listing just a few of the most basic study helps with the most helpful listed first.

A Newcomer’s Guide to the Bible by Michael C. Armour. This is a much more thorough and complete study of our subject but the words used make it difficult for those who do not have English as their primary or native language. College Press, Joplin, MO., published it in 1999.

Cruden’s Concordance or the short concordance in the back of your Bible. A concordance is similar to a dictionary. You can search for a specific word or topic and it will give you the books, chapters and verses where it can be found.

Halley’s Bible Handbook. This is a brief Bible commentary. It lists the latest archaeological discoveries in Bible lands. It tells how we got our Bible. It gives a brief history of Christianity plus maps and many other helpful types of information. Get the 24th edition or an even later edition.

An Expository Dictionary of NT Words by W. E. Vine. Here one can look up the meaning of all the important words in the NT in its original language of Greek but you do not need to know Greek to use it. It is written in English.

And, finally, advanced IBS and WBS Bible study courses that are available from International Bible School on paper and over the Internet.

A Brief Reminder

Every passage in the Bible regarding our need for being saved from our sins through a new birth (a spiritual rebirth), should be understood in the light of what Jesus Christ made clear in Matt. 28:16-20, Mark 16:14-20, John 3:1-36 and what the apostles said in Acts chapters one and two.

Any and every person is invited by Jesus to be spiritually born again as a child of God. This begins by hearing about Jesus Christ and coming to believe in him as our one and only savior from sin and its consequences. Eternal life with God in heaven is out there waiting for us. Each person must make the decision to turn away from sin, make Jesus their Lord, be baptized (immersed) in water and live for him. See Rom. 6:1-14. This is the beginning point for a new way of life and a new purpose for living while still in this world. The Bible is the only place where one can find out about this new way of life and living. We don’t want you to miss out on God’s offer.

Complete all questions on each page. Take the page from the booklet. Send it to the address in the Teacher Helper’s box below.

Welcome to these ‘Question Pages’ in your booklet. There is one page of questions for each lesson. You need to send your Teacher Helper one or more at a time. Questions are on both sides of the page (except for lesson one) so you will need to do the questions for two lessons before sending them in. Print your name and mailing address clearly so your Teacher Helper can write back to you. Refer back to p. 4, “Student Instructions---Begin Here,” for further instructions.

Be sure to include your name and mailing address on your envelope each time you mail your question page to your teacher.

TEACHER’S NAME & FULL POSTAL ADDRESS:

NAME: _____

ADDRESS _____

STUDENT’S NAME & FULL POSTAL ADDRESS:

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

When you finish these lessons, you may want to take a second series of lessons called **NEW LIFE**. They too will be made available to you free of charge. Also, look again at what the apostle Paul says in 2 Cor. 5:17.

**“The Book” – Advanced IBS Course Questions, Lesson One: What is This Book?
Choose the one best answer -- fill in the circle for A, B, C or D.**

- | | A | B | C | D |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. The Bible is ... (A) the second most, (B) the most, (C) one of many, (D) an ... important book(s) in the world today. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2. The Bible is the best selling book ... (A) in America, (B) in Europe, (C) in no major country, (D) in the world. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 3. The Bible teaches that God has created us like him in ... (A) spirit, (B) his nature, (C) body, (D) looks. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 4. The Bible says we differ from all other living things in ... (A) looks, (B) physical nature, (C) spirit, (D) mind. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 5. The Bible is about ... (A) God and us, (B) God and nature, (C) people long ago, (D) a western religion. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 6. The Bible’s most important part is the ... (A) Old Testament, (B) New Testament, (C) Psalms, (D) Gospels. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 7. All the books of the Bible had been written by ... (A) 400 BC, (B) 1500 BC, (C) 1,000 AD, (D) 100 AD. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 8. Almost all the writers of the books of the Bible lived in ... (A) Asia, (B) Europe, (C) America, (D) Africa. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 9. The person often mentioned in the Bible from the book of Genesis on is ... (A) David, (B) Moses, (C) Abraham, (D) Jesus. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 10. The Bible person who stands out above all others in importance is ... (A) Peter, (B) Moses, (C) Jesus, (D) Abraham. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 11. The most amazing event in Jesus’ life on earth is his ... (A) birth, (B) life, (C) death, (D) resurrection. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 12. Most of what Jesus did and taught is found in the ... (A) Gospels, (B) book of Acts, (C) letters, (D) book of Revelation. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

20.

**“The Book” – Advanced IBS Course Questions, Lesson Six: Basic Bible Study Guidelines
Choose the best answer -- fill in the circle for A, B, C, or D.**

- | | A | B | C | D |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. The best Bible Study help is ... (A) the Bible, (B) a dictionary, (C) a concordance, (D) a commentary. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2. The NT went into effect after ... (A) Jesus’ death, (B) Jesus’ birth, (C) Abraham’s birth, (D) Moses’ death. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 3. There are ... (A) two or three, (B) no, (C) many, (D) major ... differences between the OT and the NT. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 4. The main book telling about these differences is ... (A) Isaiah, (B) Revelation, (C) Hebrews, (D) John. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 5. The devil and Jesus are both quoting Scripture in ... (A) Rev. 22:8, (B) Acts 2:25, (C) Matt. 28:16, (D) Matt. 4:1-6. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 6. The time or period of time when something is spoken or written ... (A) often, (B) never, (C) seldom, (D) always ... matters. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 7. Who the speaker or writer is ... (A) often, (B) never, (C) seldom, (D) always ... matters. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 8. The person to whom this person is speaking or writing ... (A) often, (B) never, (C) seldom, (D) always ... matters. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 9. Which one was a sign of humility, hospitality and concern: (A) singing, (B) praying, (C) foot washing, (D) baptism. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 10. Jesus is and was ... (A) God’s divine son, (B) just a good man, (C) just a wise man, (D) a liar. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 11. The Bible is our guidebook along with ... (A) the Koran, (B) the Book of Mormon, (C) Papal Decrees, (D) nothing else. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 12. A proper understanding of the Bible depends on (A) good teachers, (B) the true church, (C) our own study, (D) wise scholars. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 13. Other books ... (A) often can, (B) seldom should, (C) can not, (D) should never ... be used along with the Bible. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

25.

“The Book” – Advanced IBS Course Questions, Lesson Five: Getting the Message of the Bible

Choose the best answer -- fill in the circle for A, B, C, or D.

- | | A | B | C | D |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. A prophet is set apart from all other speakers by his ... (A) predictions, (B) sermons, (C) book title, (D) name. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2. A true prophet can be known from a false one by whether or not his forecasts are ... (A) timely, (B) pleasing, (C) true, (D) new. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 3. The whole Bible can be summarized in how many major sections? (A) one, (B) two, (C) three, (D) four. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 4. How many books are there in the whole Bible? ... (A) 66, (B) 27, (C) 47, (D) 39. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 5. The best summary of the Bible's message is ... (A) 2 Pet. 3:8-9, (B) Rom. 3:21-26, (C) Matt. 4:4, (D) John 3:16 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 6. Eternal life can be ours ... (A) if we are good enough, (B) because of Jesus, (C) by our works, (D) through a priest. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 7. The Bible is often misused by reading ... (A) short sections, (B) other's comments first, (C) as if all parts are of equal value or all have the same purpose, (D) A, B, and C are all correct. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 8. The primary purpose of the ... (A) NT, (B) OT, (C) Gospels, (D) Letters ... has already been fulfilled. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 9. The New Covenant took effect after ... (A) Moses', (B) David's, (C) Jesus', (D) the OT prophet's ... death. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 10. The answer to question #9 is clearly made in the book of ... (A) Hebrews, (B) Acts, (C) John, (D) Revelation. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 11. The meaning of the words "covenant," "will" and "testament" are ... (A) different, (B) similar, (C) the same, (D) unknown. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 12. The Old Covenant ends at ... (A) Jesus' death, (B) Jesus' birth, (C) the death of the last apostle of Christ, (D) Jesus' return to heaven | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

24.

“The Book” – Advanced IBS Course Questions, Lesson Two: Why the Bible is a Very Special Book

Choose the one best answer -- fill in the circle for A, B, C, or D.

- | | A | B | C | D |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. There are ... (A) few, (B) two, (C) many, (D) no ... versions and/or translations of the Bible in existence today. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2. What percent of the world's people can read or hear the Bible in their own language today? (A) 40%, (B) 90%, (C) 90%, (D) 70%. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 3. The version we are using is the ... (A) New International, (B) King James, (C) American Standard, (D) Living. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 4. In the original, each Bible book was written as or on ... (A) a book, (B) a roll of metal, (C) a scroll, (D) clay tablets. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 5. All copies of the originals were hand written but were ... (A) still accurate, (B) full of errors, (C) too faded to read, (D) destroyed. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 6. 2,000 year old copies of the OT books were found about ... (A) 100, (B) 200, (C) 400, (D) 60 ... years ago. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 7. The Bible's reliability has been proven by ... (A) miracles, (B) archaeology, (C) genealogy, (D) signatures. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 8. Most writers of the books of the Bible were ... (A) illiterate, (B) uneducated, (C) scholars, (D) eye witnesses. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 9. To say the Bible is an inspired book means it is ... (A) uplifting, (B) influenced by God, (C) outstanding, (D) moving. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 10. The #1 purpose of the Bible is to ... (A) make God's way known, (B) reveal scientific facts, (C) record history, (D) make us wise. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 11. The Bible and God have been rejected by many because the names of some places and people or people groups ... (A) were unknown for centuries, (B) have never been found, (C) were kept secret, (D) were not located where the Bible said they were located. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 12. The 2,000 yr. old copies of OT books were ... (A) very different than, (B) exactly the same as, (C) except for a few minor, unimportant details, the same as ... the copies we have and use today. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

21.

“The Book” – Advanced IBS Course Questions, Lesson Three: Finding Your Way Around in The Bible

Choose the one best answer -- fill in the circle—A, B, C, or D.

- | | A | B | C | D |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. How many books are there in the Bible? ... (A) 66, (B) 27, (C) 47, (D) 39. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2. The meaning of the word “Bible” is ... (A) divine, (B) of God, (C) book, (D) the name of an ancient city. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 3. The word “testament” means ... (A) agreement, (B) examination, (C) writing, (D) individual. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 4. The Jewish books of the Bible are called the ... (A) Torah, (B) Prophet(s), (C) New Testament, (D) Old Testament. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 5. The books of the Bible are often grouped according to their ... (A) content, (B) age, (C) size, (D) color. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 6. Most book titles plus chapter and verse divisions ... (A) were not, (B) were ... in the original copies. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 7. Numbers like 1, 2, or 3 with a title tell of ... (A) its length, (B) its importance, (C) copies, (D) the number of books by the same name. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 8. The Bible was written by about ... (A) 12, (B) 40, (C) 7, (D) 66 different authors. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 9. The oldest Bible books were written more than ... (A) 1,000, (B) 3,000, (C) 1,600, (D) 2,000 ... years ago. - | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 10. The OT is ... (A) shorter than, (B) longer than, (C) the same size as, (D) much longer than ... the NT. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 11. The OT is most closely associated with Moses and the NT with ... (A) Mary, (B) Jesus, (C) Peter, (D) Paul. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 12. There are many, many OT reports of a coming ... (A) Savior, (B) flood, (C) destruction, (D) famine. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

22.

“The Book” – Advanced IBS Course Questions, Lesson Four: Understanding What is Written

Choose the one best answer -- fill in the circle for A, B, C, or D.

- | | A | B | C | D |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. The words “figurative” and “literal” refer to different types of ... (A) words, (B) literature, (C) places, (D) people. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2. Jesus’ parables are to be understood ... (A) literally, (B) numerically, (C) figuratively, (D) legally. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 3. Many prophecies are to be understood ... (A) literally, (B) numerically, (C) figuratively, (D) legally. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 4. The word “apocalyptic” means ... (A) revealing, (B) hiding, (C) foretelling, (D) poetic. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 5. Psalm 23 is a good example of what type of literature? ... (A) apocalyptic, (B) figurative, (C) literal, (D) poetic. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 6. A first line may repeat the idea of a second line in Hebrew ... (A) poetry, (B) parables, (C) prophecy, (D) proverbs. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 7. A ... (A) poem, (B) type, (C) prophecy, (D) cross ... is when two different things result from one item. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 8. Different sections of the Bible have different ... (A) purposes, (B) views of God, (C) interpretations, (D) not A, B or C. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 9. The 21 NT letters are written to (A) non-Christians, (B) men only, (C) Jews, (D) Christians. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 10. Most of the book of Revelation is a look into the ... (A) past, (B) present, (C) future, (D) not A, B or C. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 11. God’s way of revealing his will in the Bible is ... (A) simple, (B) confusing, (C) progressive, (D) not A, B or C. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 12. The Bible book that says the most about how the NT builds on the OT is ... (A) Hebrews, (B) Acts, (C) Mark, (D) Romans. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

23.